



Agenda for Housing Review Board Thursday, 21st January, 2021, 2.30 pm

Members of Housing Review Board

Councillors: T McCollum (Chair), P Sullivan (Vice-Chair), C Drew, C Summers, I Hall, H Parr, C Collier, C Morrison, B Taylor and S Chamberlain

Venue: online via the Zoom app.

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(or group number 01395 517546)

Wednesday 13 January 2021

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1 Public speaking

Information on [public speaking](#) is available online

2 Minutes of the previous meeting (Pages 3 - 12)

3 Apologies

4 Declarations of interest

Guidance is available online to Councillors and co-opted members on making [declarations of interest](#)

5 Matters of urgency

Information on [matters of urgency](#) is available online

6 Confidential/exempt item(s)

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 (Pages 13 - 14)

8 Housing Service Plan 2021/22 (Pages 15 - 41)

9 Housing Revenue Account budget (Pages 42 - 46)

10 Right to Buy spending 20/21 (Pages 47 - 49)

11 Review of the furniture project (Pages 50 - 56)

12 Integrated Asset Management Contract update and analysis of housing complaints (Pages 57 - 69)

- 13 Social Housing White Paper (Pages 70 - 76)
- 14 Your Home Your Wellbeing research report (Pages 77 - 82)
- 15 Covid-19 performance monitoring report (Pages 83 - 86)
- 16 Quarter 2 Housing performance indicator report (Pages 87 - 104)
- 17 Exclusion of press and public

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

- 18 Purchase of 51 St Andrews Road, Exmouth (Pages 105 - 110)

Under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, any members of the public are now allowed to take photographs, film and audio record the proceedings and report on all public meetings (including on social media). No prior notification is needed but it would be helpful if you could let the democratic services team know you plan to film or record so that any necessary arrangements can be made to provide reasonable facilities for you to report on meetings. This permission does not extend to private meetings or parts of meetings which are not open to the public. You should take all recording and photography equipment with you if a public meeting moves into a session which is not open to the public.

If you are recording the meeting, you are asked to act in a reasonable manner and not disrupt the conduct of meetings for example by using intrusive lighting, flash photography or asking people to repeat statements for the benefit of the recording. You may not make an oral commentary during the meeting. The Chairman has the power to control public recording and/or reporting so it does not disrupt the meeting.

Members of the public exercising their right to speak during Public Question Time will be recorded.

[Decision making and equalities](#)

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EAST DEVON DISTRICT COUNCIL**Minutes of the meeting of Housing Review Board held online via the Zoom app on 17 September 2020****Attendance list at end of document**

The meeting started at 2.30 pm and ended at 6.05 pm

63 Public speaking

There were no matters raised by the public.

64 Appointment of Vice Chairman

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the meeting. He welcomed Jo Garfoot, Acting Housing Service Lead, as maternity cover for Amy Gilbert-Jeans to the meeting. Jo thanked the Chair and introduced herself.

Nominations for Vice Chairman were received for co-opted tenant member Peter Sullivan.

RESOLVED: that tenant representative Peter Sullivan be appointed Vice Chairman of the Board for the ensuing year.

65 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Housing Review Board meeting held on 23 January 2020 were confirmed as a true record.

66 Declarations of interest

Sarah Chamberlain: Personal interest – works for Exeter City Council in the assets department as a surveyor for compliance.

Cindy Collier: Personal interest – housing tenant.

Ian Hall: Personal interest – mother is a housing tenant and he is a Devon County Councillor.

Christine Morrison: Personal interest – housing tenant.

Peter Sullivan: Personal interest – housing tenant.

67 Matters of urgency

There were no matters of urgency raised at the meeting.

68 Confidential/exempt item(s)

There were no confidential or exempt items.

69 Housing Review Board forward plan

The Housing Service Lead presented the forward plan and advised members that the forward plan acted as a reminder of agenda items to come forward to future meetings.

Members were reminded that they could add further issues to the next forward plan by informing either herself of the Democratic Services Officer.

The Portfolio Holder for Strategic Planning informed the Board that the Government had recently announced £12 billion funding to support decarbonisation. There was £12 billion Government funding available for a five year affordable housing programme. It was suggested that there was housing land available at First Avenue, Millway Rise, Axminster. The Housing Service Lead advised that this would be added to the forward plan for a report to be brought to the November Board meeting.

RESOLVED: that the forward plan be noted and updated to include a report on the Government's five year affordable housing programme.

70 **Update on integrated asset management contract**

The Chairman welcomed Kate Green, General Manager and Arron Kelly, Business Manager from Ian Williams Ltd to the meeting. The Board were asked to note progress that was being made with the Integrated Asset Management Contract, which commenced in July 2019, and reviewed the partnership with Ian Williams Ltd over the last year.

In January 2020 the Board received an update identifying a number of areas that were being monitored very closely in order to work towards improved performance. Since that time intense work had been carried out and was continuing with a number of officers focusing on all elements of the contract to continually seek improvements with both the day to day management and performance of the contract.

Kate Green reported that operations this year had not been business as usual and they had had to deal with an array of issues. There were daily update calls between EDDC and Ian Williams Ltd and good progress was being made with staffing. EDDC had employed a permanent contract manager and the structure was continually being reviewed. The Covid-19 pandemic had caused some operational works to be scaled back, but the contract still endeavoured to offer as much of a service as possible.

It was noted that the voids service had been difficult during the first half of the contract year, with the service taking a dip, but there was now an action plan in place which was working well. The General Manager acknowledged that there had been some performance issues at the start of the contract, but that they were now in a good position for moving the contract forward, with both parties recognising that some adjustments were required.

Members had expressed concern at the January HRB meeting but were now greatly encouraged to see the relationship between EDDC and Ian Williams improving. Concern was expressed that there was no longer a dedicated handyman and Ian Williams were asked what was being done to address this. Kate Green replied that they were trying to recruit someone, but that it was proving difficult due to the current social restrictions. They had a duty of care to tenants and operational teams to reduce the amount of time they spent in tenants' homes. The handyman role was more than just a 'fixer' and it was important that the post was permanently filled by the right person. The role combined maintenance care as well as a social service.

It was reported that a cost review of voids was being carried out independently by Echelon. Voids had been tendered for as price per void, based on some historical data.

The KPI used was length of time taken. An openbook financial review of the first year of the contract was being undertaken and the results were due any day. The results of this 12 month review would be published and it was agreed that a further update report on the contract would be brought back to the November Board meeting.

Members also queried how customer satisfaction would be measured. They were reassured that the customer care process was being refined and reviewed and that the paper format would be reintroduced, as well as using the contractors' iPads to submit feedback. Hub advisors would also call tenants for feedback following work undertaken.

RESOLVED: that the Housing Review Board note the progress being made with the integrated asset management contract that commenced in July 2019.

71 **Disrepair**

The solicitor gave a presentation to the Board about disrepair and potential legal challenges to the condition of housing stock by tenants through a number of litigious lawyer firms. He outlined why disrepair was such an important area of work for the Housing Service, ensuring that there was an understanding amongst officers and managers that disrepair needed to be prioritised. Ongoing work was required to reduce and manage future cases.

The solicitor explained the legal meaning of disrepair and why disrepair was so topical now. He outlined the litigation process including the pre-action protocol, and set out good practice so that the Council could successfully defend claims by being proactive with tenants. This included every officer asking a tenant about any disrepair in their property when they made contact with the service.

The solicitor advised that the service needed to have policies, procedures and processes in place and that Legal Services had provided a series of training sessions given by Trowers and Hamlins Solicitors to all staff.

RESOLVED: that the Board note the report.

72 **Advantage South West - renewal of subscription**

The Housing Service Lead outlined the advantages of being a member of Advantage South West, which EDDC benefitted most through procurement and the significant financial savings it allowed. Another huge advantage was the opportunity to work with other housing providers. It was reported that provision for the subscription had already been included within the current year's budget. Members were asked to note the benefits of membership of Advantage South West and to support continuing membership of the organisation.

RECOMMENDED: that Cabinet approve that the Council continue paying the annual subscription to maintain the membership to Advantage South West.

73 **Air source heat pumps**

The Compliance Surveyor presented the Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment's report which considered an element of the Council's carbon footprint

relating to its housing stock. It related to the prevalence of fossil fuel heating systems and proposed a programme of installing air source heat pumps, building on a pilot programme undertaken in Rodney Close, Exmouth in 2017, which had received some very positive feedback from tenants living in those properties.

The forthcoming stock condition survey would confirm the reliance of fossil fuel heating systems for Council homes and using this data officers would be able to formulate and deliver programmes of boiler replacement and associated energy efficiency measures designed to reduce the service's carbon footprint, consistent with the Council's ambition.

It was proposed that approximately £150,000 of the £500,000 annual boiler replacement programme be set aside to initiate a programme of mainstreaming the installation of air source heat pumps in the Council's housing stock, delivering 15 installations. There would be some procurement advantages of using a framework. An external funding application had also been made for the Green Homes Grant which was a government initiative that had set aside £50 million to encourage retrofitting of existing properties.

RECOMMENDED: that Cabinet approve the continued use and installation of air source heat pumps as a viable carbon efficient alternative to conventional boilers.

74 **Advantage South West - recruitment and skills project**

The Housing Service Lead's report set out the opportunity for the Council to contribute towards a collaborative project being run by Advantage South West to fund and recruit a member of staff to co-ordinate and deliver an improvement in the South West housing sector's ability to attract staff. It was hoped to work with other members to pro-actively encourage and retain highly skilled staff within the housing sector through shared initiatives and training and development programmes. It would also encourage engagement with schools and colleges to promote the benefits of a career in housing in order to build a workforce for the future. It was noted that the initiative would only go ahead if enough organisations signed up to the project.

RECOMMENDED: that Cabinet approve the participation in the initiative at an indicative cost of £3000 per annum for three years.

75 **Climate change action plan**

The Housing Service Lead presented a report summarising the work to be undertaken by the housing service in response to the Council's commitment to carbon reduction and increased energy efficiency.

As an organisation EDDC had committed to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040 and endorsed the Climate Change Strategy and associated action plan to facilitate this. There was a need to ensure sufficient resources were in place to achieve the aims set out in the plan. At present there was not the capacity or expertise in the housing service so it was recommended that an additional Programmed Works Officer be recruited to focus on energy efficiency measures and drive forward an improvement programme for the housing stock.

RECOMMENDED: that the Housing Review Board recommend to Cabinet that:

1. Members agree to the climate strategy actions detailed in the report.
2. Members endorse the cultural shift required to move to a carbon neutral housing service within 20 years.

3. Approval is given for the need for an additional Programme Works Officer who will focus on energy efficiency measures and drive forward the programme for improvements to the housing stock, with additional funding being designated from the Housing Revenue Account.

76 **Regulator's review: Neighbourhood & Community Standard - self assessment**

The Board considered the report of the Housing Services Manager which explained the need to undertake a self-assessment of current service delivery against the Neighbourhood and Community Standard as set out within the Social Housing Regulator's Homes Standard. This was to ensure the housing service was meeting all regulatory requirements as set out by the Regulator of Social Housing. The Neighbourhood and Community Standard set out the minimum requirements for what must be achieved in terms of neighbourhood management, local area co-operation and how the service dealt with antisocial behaviour, so that safe and clean areas where tenants lived could be provided.

Overall the housing service performed well against the standards, however it was doing less well in its response to anti-social behaviour (ASB). It was felt that a review of current requirements and processes was needed as well as an improvement in communication with tenants. The Housing Services Manager reported that she would be undertaking this as a priority. Concern was expressed that other housing providers dealt with ASB differently and it was suggested that all housing providers should get together and look at best practice.

RESOLVED: that the Housing Review Board note the contents of the self-assessment document as set out within the report.

77 **Covid-19 housing recovery**

The Housing Service Lead's report contained the housing extract from the corporate report that outlined details of actions taken across EDDC to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic. It provided a high level summary of future recovery actions. A detailed organisation-wide recovery plan was work in progress in conjunction with Devon County Council and would be submitted to Cabinet once complete.

As part of recovery planning the housing leadership team met on a weekly basis to co-ordinate recovery across the service ensuring consistency and the adoption of guidance that continued to cascade from central government. The housing service had four key priority areas, with a series of actions under each one:

- Keeping residents safe
- Protecting residents income and livelihoods
- Sustaining critical services
- Supporting communities and recovery

There had been a huge amount of focus on communication with tenants and well-being calls had been made to every single resident across all of the housing stock, and officers had been able to assist tenants with a huge range of problems. It was noted that rental income continued to remain high, but there was a need to very mindful over the next few months and tenants were proactively encouraged to contact the housing service early if they anticipated or were experiencing problems.

Members congratulated the Housing Service Lead and housing teams and thanked them for everything they were doing to support tenants. Members were concerned that Council staff were also being supported and surveyed on their health and well-being during the pandemic. The Housing Service Lead reassured the Board that there had been a large focus on the health and well-being of officers and that all staff had been requested to complete a survey by the Strategic Lead - Organisational Development and Transformation, with a generally positive outcome.

RESOLVED: that the Housing Review Board note the continued work of the housing service in relation to the response to Covid-19 as well as ongoing work that is being undertaken to recover the service.

78 **Finance report to end August 2020**

The accountant's report provided the Housing Review Board with the current position to the end of August 2020 and details of the year end forecast of the draft Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for 2020/21. The HRA showed the main areas of anticipated income and expenditure on landlord activities for the year ahead and highlighted to the Board areas of change and items of note. The report also provided the position of the HRA capital programme for both affordable housing and other capital items outside of the HRA.

At the end of the 2019/20 financial year the HRA was in £960,000 surplus. This combined with the HRA volatility reserve equated to a total of £3.6 million available reserves to deal with the Covid-19 impact, if necessary. During the year end close down due to the onset of Covid-19 the decision was made to utilise all capital reserves ahead of the more flexible revenue reserves where possible.

The Board noted the collection rate and income levels, which were materially consistent with the previous year, with the impact of Covid-19 being largely mitigated. There had been an underspend to date, primarily due to Covid-19 impacting the Council's ability to carry out certain types of work which were not currently possible with Covid-19 requirement and work restrictions. The report proposed the reallocation of work and reorganisation of the planned maintenance programme, primarily moving budgets from areas considered difficult to undertake during Covid-19 to those which by their nature would be less impacted by working restrictions.

The Board were warned of the risk of having to return right to buy receipts, although the Government had currently granted a six-month extension for the period of when development or acquisition of properties was not possible. It was hoped that this extension would be increased. The Housing Service Lead reassured members that officers were constantly looking at opportunities but it was important to look at what was realistically affordable and achievable and to balance this against other priorities, such as ensuring properties were compliant and safe, as well as the challenges and cost that related to decarbonising the stock. The Portfolio Holder for Sustainable Homes and Communities raised the point that she was setting up a Housing Portfolio working group that would debate and consider these issues and help provide direction on the best way forward.

It was noted that the Council had made an application for £500,000 of government grant funding for reducing the carbon footprint of a selection of council properties. The final allocation list of awarded grants would be announced on 28 September 2020.

RECOMMENDED: that Cabinet agree the budget reallocations within the report, note the impact assessments and approve the report on the Housing Revenue Account financial position to end of August 2020.

79 **Stock condition survey**

The Housing Service Lead updated and informed the Housing Review Board on the current position and proposal for the delivery of the stock condition survey previously authorised. There were a multiple number of reasons contained within the report why it was critical that the Council undertook this as the current data was out of date. An up to date stock condition survey was a vital element in the asset management strategy, which should underpin the financial business plan and all the financial decision making. 100% of the Council's housing stock would be surveyed. It was noted that in future there would be a five year rolling programme so that information was always up to date. There was £75,000 in the current year's budget for the stock condition survey with additional amounts available within the planned maintenance reserve to call upon if required within the year.

RECOMMENDED: that Cabinet approve the delivery of the stock condition survey by an external consultant sourced through an approved procurement framework.

80 **Formal complaints**

The Housing Service Manager's report provided the Board with information on formal complaints received in relation to the housing service for the period April 2019 – March 2020. Formal complaints were monitored carefully, using them to learn from and improve services wherever possible.

At present the Housing Service dealt with formal complaints through the corporate complaints two stage process:

- Stage 1 - complaints considered by the Strategic Lead
- Stage 2 - complaints considered by the Deputy Chief Executive/Monitoring Officer

If customers were still not satisfied they could take their complaint to the Housing Ombudsman. They could do this by waiting eight weeks from the date of the Council's final response letter and then approaching the Housing Ombudsman themselves, or by contacting a Designated Person. The Designated Person could be an MP, a local district councillor, or the Designated Tenant Complaints Panel (DTCP), which was a group of tenants supported by an administrative officer and the Housing Services Manager. Most of the complainants who chose to contact a Designated Person chose the Designated Tenant Complaints Panel, favouring the view of their peers in terms of reviewing the council's decision on their case.

Tenants were given information about how complaints were dealt with in general in the Annual Report to tenants each October.

The Housing Services Manager reported that between April 2019 and March 2020, 52 formal housing complaints were received. 15 of these went on from stage 1 to stage 2.

It was agreed that better communication was needed from Housing Officers in responding to queries from tenants to effectively manage customer expectations. Failure

to do this caused customers to complain again, and the focus then moved to dealing with complaints rather than delivery of the service.

Details of the areas of complaints were given in the report. It was noted that there had been an increase in more complex antisocial behaviour complaints since the easing of lockdown restrictions. A new Ombudsman code of conduct was being consulted on and code produced. Landlords were being asked to self-assess against the code by 31 December 2020. It was advocated that the 'designated person' provision be removed from the complaints processes, but that 'designated complaints panels' be kept, although not as a mandatory part of the process.

Members asked for clarity on when the new code would come into place and also expressed concern over the removal of the 'designated person'. The Housing Services Manager replied that the new code would come into effect from 1 January 2021.

RECOMMENDED: that Cabinet approve:

1. that the Housing Leadership Team re-iterate the importance of outstanding customer care, considering additional training and awareness opportunities where appropriate.
2. that the Housing Operational Managers group reviews processes to ensure they are effectively co-ordinating responses and updates on formal complaints and councillor enquiries raised with them.
3. that the Housing Services Manager works with the council's Information and Complaints Officer, and customers on the Designated Tenant Complaints Panel, to self-assess against the ombudsman's new code by 31 December 2020.
4. that the Housing Services Manager ensures that better communication is given from Housing Officers in responding to queries from tenants to effectively manage expectations of customers.

RESOLVED: that the Housing Review Board note the contents of the report.

81 **Sailor's Rest, Exmouth - allocations and management**

The report of the Housing Solutions Manager sought the Board's approval of the policy that determined the allocations and management procedures of the properties known as 18A and 18B St. Andrews Road, Exmouth.

A decision to use the properties as temporary accommodation or move on accommodation for homeless applicants who had been placed in temporary accommodation was made by Cabinet in May 2020 in response to the homeless crisis and huge increase in the need to accommodate people as a temporary measure as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. It had since been decided that move on accommodation was the preferred option, providing a stable accommodation arrangement for homeless applicants and also freeing up the existing temporary accommodation resources for new homeless approaches. This had been brought in for an undetermined period of time and would go some way to alleviate the pressure on the Council's homelessness budget in the general fund as well as providing income of the Housing Revenue Account. It was hoped that it would significantly reduce the use of emergency accommodation, including bed and breakfast.

RECOMMENDED: that Cabinet approve the policy to provide support and clarity to the allocation and management process for the flats at 18A and 18B St. Andrews Road, Exmouth, whilst they are being used as move on accommodation.

82 **Structure of the housing service**

The Housing Service Lead's report gave an overview of some of the changes to the housing structure and how these had been implemented over the past few months. The detail in the report set out the reasoning for the changes and included a new structure chart for the housing service. This was an objective of the housing service plan 2020/21.

It was noted that Landlord Services had been renamed Housing Services. The area generally dealt with all of the living in and support services and included the rentals team, mobile support officers, estate management, community development, tenant participation and the Home Safeguard service. The Landlord Services Manager title had changed to Housing Services Manager.

The service recognised a growing demand on mental health and as a result it was proposed to recruit into the Housing Services Team a mental health specialist support worker. This would directly address some of the issues being highlighted in the forthcoming Mental Health Strategy. Further consideration into the new role was required.

The report detailed further changes to the Housing Service Structure and areas where review was ongoing. The structure would be kept under constant review. It was vital to ensure the right resources were in place to drive projects forward at the pace required.

RECOMMENDED:

1. that Cabinet note the changes to the structure and approve the need for the recruitment of a specialist Mental Health Support Officer to work within the housing services team.
2. that Cabinet approve additional funding (£37,500 – Grade 6 with associated costs) is designated from the Housing Revenue Account.

83 **Housing performance management**

The Housing Review Board was presented with the Housing Service performance indicator report for quarter 1 2020/21, with details of selected indicators measuring performance across the Housing Service. An example of the latest weekly Covid-19 report, which had been monitoring different areas of the service since March 2020, had also been included for the Board's information.

RESOLVED: that the Housing Review Board note the performance of the Housing Service.

84 **Expression of thanks**

At the end of the meeting various Board members, the Chair and the Portfolio Holder Sustainable Homes and Communities all expressed their thanks to the Housing teams for everything they had achieved during the last few difficult months. They wished Jo Garfoot well in her new role and gave their best wishes to Amy Gilbert-Jeans on the forthcoming arrival of her baby

Attendance List

Board members present:

Councillor Tony McCollum (Chairman)
Peter Sullivan, Tenant
Councillor Ian Hall
Cindy Collier, Tenant
Christine Morrison, Tenant
Councillor Sarah Chamberlain

Councillors also present (for some or all the meeting)

M Armstrong
P Arnott
S Gazzard
G Jung
D Ledger
P Millar
E Rylance

Officers in attendance:

Sue Bewes, Housing Services Manager
Natalie Brown, Information and Analysis Officer (Housing)
Michelle Davidson, Property and Asset Management
Amy Gilbert-Jeans, Service Lead Housing
Wendy Harris, Democratic Services Officer
Rebecca Heal, Solicitor
Debbie Meakin, Democratic Services Officer
Andrew Mitchell, Housing Solutions Manager
Giles Salter, Solicitor
John Symes, Finance Manager
Alethea Thompson, Democratic Services Officer
Jo Garfoot, Acting Housing Service Lead
Kerry Spittle, Housing Contracts Manager, Property and Asset Team
Kate Green, General Manager, Ian Williams Ltd
Arron Kelly, Business Manager, Ian Williams Ltd

Councillor apologies:

Christine Drew, Independent Community Representative
Cat Summers, Tenant
Councillor Helen Parr
Councillor Brenda Taylor

Chairman

Date:

HOUSING REVIEW BOARD – FORWARD PLAN

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

Report title	Meeting date	Author
Housing Service Plan 2021/22	January 2021	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health & Environment
Housing Revenue Account budget	January 2021	Housing Accountant
Review of the furniture project	January 2021	Housing Solutions Manager
Analysis of Housing Complaints	January 2021	Acting Service Lead - Housing
Social Housing White Paper	January 2021	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health & Environment
Integrated Asset Management Contract update	January 2021	Acting Service Lead - Housing
Longitudinal Survey final report	January 2021	Information & Analysis Officer
Acquisition of 6 flats and 1 house	January 2021	Acting Service Lead - Housing
Covid-19 performance monitoring report	January 2021	Information & Analysis Officer
Stock condition survey update	March 2021	Acting Service Lead - Housing
Quarterly performance reports and regular reports		
Responsive repairs	Quarterly report	Property & Asset 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	Housing Services Manager
Systems Thinking leading & lagging measures New Tenants Survey	Quarterly report	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Forward Plan	Every meeting	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Benchmarking survey	Annual report	Strategic Lead – Housing, Health and Environment
Evaluating the achievements of the Board	Annual report	

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

Report to: Housing Review Board

Date of Meeting 21 January 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Draft Housing Service Plan 2021-2022

Report summary:

This report presents the draft Service Plan for the Housing Service covering the period 2021-2022.

The Service Plan is a document produced annually and sets out the key achievements over the past year and the forthcoming issues to be faced by the Service. This year the Plan reflects some of the service interruptions due to the pandemic and the move of the Private Sector Housing team to the Environmental Health & Car Parks Service.

A range of service improvements are identified through a number of SMART objectives.

The Plan also considers service challenges and pressures over the next three years, including climate change implications, tenant safety measures, the implications of the Social Housing White Paper, and the ambitions to increase the supply of social housing.

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

Recommendation:

To consider, comment on and approve the Housing Service Plan for 2021-2022.

Reason for recommendation:

To enable the Housing Review Board to influence the production of the Service Plan prior to it being finalised.

Officer: John Golding Strategic Lead – Housing Health and Environment

jgolding@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Corporate Services and COVID-19 Response and Recovery
- Democracy and Transparency
- Economy and Assets

- Finance
- Policy Co-ordination and Regional Engagement
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Financial implications:

At the same time as preparing the draft service plans, draft budgets have been prepared for member consideration. Service plans and budgets are aligned and link back to the Council Plan and reflect where possible the recently adopted Statement of Intent.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications on which to comment in the report

Equalities impact Medium Impact

Choose an impact level

There is an equalities section in the Service Plan, and our housing policies and practices have regard to equality and protected characteristics to ensure equality of access and service quality to all service users.

Climate change High Impact

The Service Plan contains a section on climate change and a number of proposals for reducing the climate impact of our housing stock.

Risk: Choose a risk level; Low Risk

Links to background information

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- Outstanding Place and Environment
- Outstanding Homes and Communities
- Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- Outstanding Council and Council Services

Report in full

Housing Service Plan 2021/2022

- 1.1 For some time now all the Council's services have organised an annual service planning exercise and produced a service plan, which sets out details of what the service does, achievements and future challenges and targets.
- 1.2 The Service Plan is produced using a corporate template and it shows how the service improvements link with the Council Plan/Statement of Intent. The Plan identifies the key service objectives, challenges ahead and outlines areas of performance that we should measure. It also considers efficiencies, key risks, training needs, equalities, opportunities to do things differently, and workforce planning.
- 1.3 The Service Plan links closely with our Housing Strategy and is designed to complement a number of other housing plans and policies as part of how we manage our own housing stock and the services we deliver. There is also a strong link with the Councils Public Health Strategic Plan to ensure we help more people be and stay healthy, enhance self-

care and community resilience and integrate and improve support for people in their own homes.

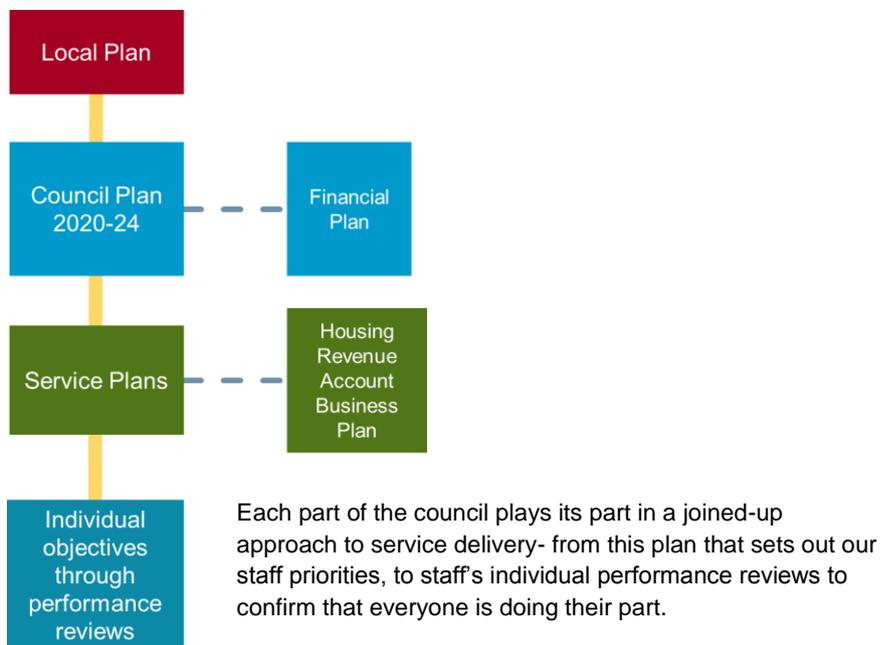
- 1.4 The Service Plan is intended as a working document and the service managers will cascade the contents of the plan at their team meetings and reflect priorities in staff objectives. It is a good discipline to complete an annual statement of what the Service expects to achieve, set out in a structured way using a template and involving staff, service users and members in the process.
- 1.5 The Plan presented contains some ambitious objectives that are reflective of challenges faced through current service delivery. The objectives are split between the three areas of the Housing Service (landlord services, property and asset, housing needs and strategy) however, a number of the objectives sit across teams, an example being the creation of a mental health strategy for housing, an area that is currently impacting on all of our services.
- 1.6 The headlines for the Service Plan include:
 - A focus on delivering our housing purpose(s).
 - A commitment to tackle homelessness.
 - Recognition of poverty as a significant factor in people's lives.
 - Revision of the HRA Business plan with updated stock condition data.
 - A focus on new development opportunities with the need to review the current acquisition programme.
 - Emphasis on the importance of compliance and keeping tenants safe in their homes.
 - A focus on mental health and how we are addressing the challenges this is presenting us as a landlord.
 - Embedding the Integrated Asset Management Contract.
 - Mapping the future of Home Safeguard with a realistic view of risks ahead including digital switchover, refresh of the marketing strategy, relocating the service, review of the staffing rota.
 - An emphasis on evidencing value for money with the need to scrutinise some areas to satisfy ourselves that we are achieving what matters most to the customer, in line with our systems thinking purpose.
 - Acting on the climate change agenda and building towards a carbon neutral council.
- 1.7 The Housing Leadership team have enjoyed being able to refresh the Service Plan as a way of setting out how we plan to get through what looks to be another challenging year ahead with a number of uncertainties in relation to national housing policy as well as competing demands impacting on our financial position.
- 1.8 The Service Planning Day, that was a virtual event this year, involved input from our senior managers, the Portfolio Holder and Chair of the Board on the day to day challenges of the job, ideas for service improvement, and the needs of our customers.
- 1.9 The draft Service Plan (**Annex 1**) will be presented to the tenant groups over the next few months and cascaded to Housing staff through team meetings and Service briefings.
- 1.10 I welcome the Housing Review Board's input into the Service Plan before it is finalised and reported to Cabinet.

Service Planning 2021-22

Housing Service

Version 2.0

April 2021 – March 2022



Service Lead: Amy Gilbert Jeans / Joanne Garfoot

Portfolio holders: Cllr Megan Armstrong

Housing Review Board Chair: Cllr Tony McCollum

Service Plan Template 2021-22: Contents Page

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Notes for Strategic Leads and Service Leads:

*Certain parts of this form will be pre-populated. This will include your turnover, full time equivalent/headcount and absence rates.

Shaded areas are for guidance.

When you have completed your Service Plan:

- ✓ Save to O:\Service Plans. Final versions will be placed on the intranet/internet
- ✓ Communicate it to your staff
- ✓ Keep it under review – make it a live document which adds value!
- ✓ Use it to formulate individual objectives

Section 1 – Brief description of service and purpose(s)

What we do and who we deliver to

Our over-riding Housing Service vision is to deliver a **decent home for all** residents of East Devon. This compliments the emerging Council Plan priority of **Better Homes for All**.

Our Housing Strategy sets out four key objectives:

- To provide a housing options service for all who are homeless or threatened with homelessness;
- To provide, maintain and manage our own council housing stock;
- To work with housing developers and housing associations to deliver more affordable housing;
- To regulate and improve other social rented, private rented and owner occupied housing.

We have adopted the following purpose(s) where we have undertaken Systems Thinking reviews in Housing:

- 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).

Our services are delivered consistent with the Council's Public Health Strategic Plan to ensure we help more people be and stay healthy, enhance self-care and community resilience, and integrate and improve support for people in their own homes.

Our approach to managing and tackling homelessness has been reviewed and articulated in our Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2019- 2023.

The strategy is based upon the results of a review of homelessness in our area and has resulted in establishing the following four priorities:

- Maximise prevention activities and outcomes;
- Increase accommodation options;
- Minimise rough sleeping;
- Improve health and wellbeing.

<p>How we deliver and ensure equal access</p>	<p>Our Housing Services are delivered through a combination of direct service delivery from our housing teams as well as a number of partnerships and contracting arrangements.</p> <p>All of the housing policies are subject to the completion of an equality impact assessment to ensure our services are fully accessible and we work in compliance with the council's corporate equalities policy.</p> <p>We are regulated by the Social Housing Regulator and operate in compliance with the regulatory standards framework.</p> <p>We actively involve tenants in all aspects of our service to ensure wide consultation and the opportunity for tenants to influence the services we deliver.</p> <p>We provide varied methods of communication for customers to access our services and ensure our web pages are kept up to date.</p> <p>We promote the work of the Housing Service using a variety of methods, including the use of social media.</p>
<p>How we compare</p>	<p>We use HouseMark for periodic benchmarking of our services and report the results to our Housing Review Board.</p> <p>We encourage tenants to complete customer satisfaction surveys to give us feedback on our services.</p> <p>We are completing a longitudinal study in partnership with a local housing association and Birmingham University to look closely at the impact of our services on current tenants as well as those trying to access our services.</p> <p>We are members of The Devon and Cornwall Housing Options Partnership (DCHOP). The group aims to improve the consistency of housing options and homelessness services across Devon and Cornwall Local Authorities by developing shared policies, practices and service standards to ensure equality of services.</p> <p>We monitor our service delivery reporting annually to national and local bodies.</p>
<p>Statutory elements of the service</p>	<p>Management of our Council housing stock (Landlord Services)</p> <p>Right to Buy Council homes</p> <p>Homelessness/Housing Advice (Homelessness Reduction Act 2017)</p> <p>Management of the housing register and operation of an allocations team to ensure our housing stock is allocated appropriately.</p>

	<p>Creation of a tenancy strategy</p> <p>Safeguarding responsibilities- Children’s Act 2004 and Care Act 2014</p> <p>Health and Safety legislation in relation to asset management including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management and control of asbestos regulations 2012 • Gas safety (installation and use) Regulations 1998 • Regulatory Reform (fire safety) Order 2005.
Current net budget (excludes Internal support charges and capital budget)	Housing Revenue Account annual turnover £19 million. General Fund budgets for Homelessness and Home Safeguard.

Section 2 – Key achievements in 2020-21

	<i>Briefly describe key achievements and what outcomes were created. This will inform Annual Report at year end.</i>	<i>Strategic link to Council Plan priorities</i>
1	Response & Recovery actions during the Covid-19 pandemic maintaining essential services to tenants, using alternative methods of communication and contact, maintaining tenant safety, switching to agile/remote working and supporting the Community Support Hub.	Better homes for all
2	Delivering and enabling 356 new affordable homes in 2019/20 with housing association and developer partners.	Better homes for all
3	Sustaining tenancies and supporting tenants during a challenging period of lockdown where vulnerable and shielding tenants have found it difficult to adjust to the ‘new normal’.	Better homes for all
4	<p>Housing Options & Allocations team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficient response to the covid-19 outbreak with minimum disruption to services, a swift response to the ‘Everybody In’ requirement and the continuation of letting properties through the pandemic. Provision of temporary accommodation to 89 households for the period from when lockdown was introduced until the end of September, support provided to all whilst accommodated. • Reacting to change created by the pandemic and the effect it had on homelessness in the district, including a project to bring the Sailors Rest, Exmouth flats into use as move on accommodation. The project included a change of proposed use and the furnishing and fitting of all rooms using repurposed funding from MHCLG. This has provided a sustainable move on process in addition to benefitting the temporary accommodation budget by freeing up units of temporary accommodation. • A project to get the HMO in Morton Road, Exmouth up and running including the furnishing and fitting of all rooms, the setting up of a key card entry system and the provision of a set of procedures. Close 	Better homes for all

	<p>management of the HMO has been in place since it became available to occupy in February 2020. The arrangement has worked well with 16 occupants having benefited from the accommodation (to date) and only one eviction being necessary since opening. Financial benefits have been recorded - in addition to the income received through rental and service charges, money that would otherwise have been spent on B&B calculated through the Housing dashboard. As of 16.10.20 it is calculated that £78,430 has been saved, based on calculating the number of nights occupied a standard B&B nightly charge of £50.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective use of the private sector and the rent deposit and bond scheme – 88 applicants assisted into the private sector through the scheme in 2019-20 and 56 in the first six months of 2020-21, providing positive outcomes for applicants and relieving pressure on social housing. • Successful bid to MHCLG for Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) funding to tackle rough sleeping. £230k received, jointly with Mid Devon for 2020-21, enabling the team to (i) employ two Rough Sleeper Navigators (ii) employ a second Private Sector Liaison Officer (iii) cover a contract with BCHA for support to six Housing First projects between both LA's and (iv) receipt of a £10,000 prevention pot. • Adjusting to the new way of working through the repairs contract by installing culture change and bringing efficiencies to the allocations and voids process whilst continually reviewing all procedures. Taking actions such as tackling the hard-to-let properties within our stock and prioritising the availability of properties when under offer to homeless applicants in temporary accommodation. Providing options for properties that cannot be let through the usual channels i.e. Manor Close being used as temporary accommodation, reducing the B&B budget whilst bringing revenue in. • Numbers of allocations throughout the year including mutual exchanges and downsizers: 325 properties allocated throughout 2019-20 including 34 mutual exchanges and 31 downsizing cases. For the first six months of this year, up until the end of September 2020, there have been 138 properties allocated including 8 mutual exchanges and 6 downsizing cases – lower numbers of mutual exchanges and downsizers due to the restrictions of the pandemic. • Housing Register review – 300 Devon Home Choice applications were removed from the E band (no housing need) of the register following the review. Currently 4,600 live Devon Home Choice applications. • Improvements to the structure of the Options team i.e. specialised roles and two Senior Housing Officers providing a more resilient, efficient set up. • Acknowledgement through Team of the year (Options) and Manager of the year (Danielle Furzey) awards in December 2019. 	
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5.	<p>Property & Assets team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following mobilisation we continue to review, implement improvements to build on the delivery of the Integrated Asset Management Contract as it moved into the second year, all for the benefit of our Tenants. • As part of the Integrated Asset Management Contract we have expanded the interface with the Contractor to encompass statutory compliance and cyclical servicing streams so that the majority of the management of these work streams is now automated. • Throughout the lockdown imposed as a result of the Covid pandemic we managed to maintain the repairs service albeit in a reduced format dealing with emergency and urgent repairs; all repairs that didn't fall into these categories were held back. A remobilisation plan was formulated and initiated once the lockdown was lifted, all held repairs were released in a controlled manner and the backlog of repair jobs was gradually cleared within agreed timeframes. • Throughout the Covid pandemic we have developed a detailed communication plan to keep our Tenants updated in relation to the repairs service, which was a challenge in itself bearing in mind the continual changes in advice and guidance from the Government. All communication platforms were utilised ranging from the Tenants magazine, the Council website, Facebook, Twitter to name a few. • Throughout the lockdown imposed as a result of the Covid pandemic we maintained the delivery of Voids, albeit on a reduced scale. • Gas compliance was delivered in line with constantly changing Government and industry advice throughout Covid lockdown period. • Following the purchase of 12 flats at Sailors Rest, St Andrews Road, Exmouth a major upgrading project was carried out to bring the block up to the required standard particularly in relating to statutory compliance ready to let. • Following the purchase of an HMO in Morton Road, Exmouth a major upgrading project was carried out to bring the block up to the required standard particularly in relating to statutory compliance ready to be used by our Housing Colleagues to assist in managing Homelessness. • Much of the planned works programmes were placed on hold due to Covid but we continued to deliver an extensive adaptation programme of work to address those Tenants with specific and challenging needs. • The fire safety upgrading work to communal areas of blocks of flats across the District continues to be delivered, this includes the installation of door entry systems. • We have procured and are about to carry out a major project to re-roof the flats at Morgan Court, Exmouth; the works include an upgrade to the insulation and thermal performance of the roof. 	Better homes for all
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	<p>Co-ordination of Housing’s initial response following the fire at the Greenhaven flats, Budleigh Salterton and then management of the follow on remedial work required.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Grant application that secured Government funding for a major green energy project to install air source heat pump installations together with other associated upgrading work in approximately 100 properties; with the funding in place the work is scheduled for completion by the end of March 2021. 	
6.	<p>Housing Services team</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Setting up systems to deal with critical areas of our work at very short notice. Making contact with sheltered tenants more frequently than our pre-Covid service. Maintaining Home Safeguard 24/7 by changing shift patterns and working practices to bring greater resilience to the service, and redeploying staff from other roles to accommodate this. Exceptionally high levels of rent gathered throughout despite the hardship tenant’s face and difficulties with claiming Universal Credit. Electronic payment of Universal Credit claims. Covid response and support of staff was powerful and sustained. Contacted every tenant to check their wellbeing, many still now having a weekly call. Devising the Recovery Plan for Housing Services (and not yet at full recovery yet). Covid-19 version of tenant magazine. Making key staff available to others e.g. EDDC Community Hub/Home Safeguard/Allocations to maintain critical services. #HousingDay 	Better homes for all

Section 3 – Looking forward : what we will do in 2021-22 (service objectives)				
Key Service Objectives (please include consultation or procurement activity required)	Financial/corporate resource	Lead Officers	Start date	End date
<p><i>Please highlight any projects so that they may be recorded and monitored in SPAR. See project guidance document for the definition of a project.</i></p>				
1) A greener East Devon (to include any climate change objectives)				

<p>Implement Phase 2 of the #inhoniton project by working with tenants in Honiton to identify areas we can manage differently and re-wild.</p> <p>Identify Housing land for Nature Recovery Networks, re-wilding and wildlife improvement corridors and liaise with tenants to deliver blue heart areas.</p> <p>SWITCH groups to make bug hotels with Countryside to encourage learning and appreciation of the natural world. The educational element links to our carbon reduction commitments.</p>	Housing Review Account funding for Countryside resource	Housing Services Manager	April 2021	April 2022
<p>Invest in the improvement of the communal areas on housing estates, including tree planting and encouraging a greater diversity of wildlife.</p>	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Services Manager	April 2021	Ongoing
<p>Encourage the Creative Cabin from the Thelma Hulbert Gallery visiting Housing estates.</p>	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Services Manager	March 2021	December 2021
<p>Carry out an updated Stock Condition Survey on our Council owned housing stock in order to collate up to date information, including energy performance, and use it to inform a new stock investment programme to decarbonise the Housing assets.</p> <p>Once the Stock Condition Survey has been completed we will use the data to update and inform the 30 year HRA Business Plan that includes detailed Asset Management considerations.</p>	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Service Lead and Property and Asset Manager	Continue work started in 19/20	Ongoing
<p>Implement the actions contained in the Climate Change Action Plan relating to housing, specifically a phased replacement of heating systems reliant of burning fossil fuels and improved energy efficient homes for tenants.</p>	Housing Revenue Account	Property & Asset Manager	April 2021	Ongoing

Invest in the improvement of the communal areas on housing estates, including tree planting and encouraging a greater diversity of wildlife through re-wilding and nature recovery corridors.	Housing Revenue Account	Landlord Services Manager	April 2021	Ongoing
Lead on the production of a corporate Poverty Strategy aimed at reducing the effects on East Devon residents.	Housing Revenue Account	Service Lead	April 2021	Ongoing
2) Better homes for all				
Produce a new Housing Strategy focusing on how we will deliver our services and how we will increase our supply of housing stock from 2020-2024.	Housing Revenue Account and General fund	Housing Service Lead	December 2020	April 2021
Refresh the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan, incorporating a review of our approach to delivering affordable housing with the aspiration of building more Council housing, as well as delivering climate change actions and new building safety requirements.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Service Lead	August 2021	April 2022
Meet the increased demand from homeless households and secure suitable temporary and permanent accommodation, supporting households who present with physical and mental health needs, poverty and other issues, to ensure they are able to sustain their tenancies.	General Fund	Housing Solutions Manager	April 2021	Ongoing
Develop the re-use and recycling furniture programme to assist residents with setting up their home, recognising the increasing amount of people arriving in our homes with few possessions.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Solutions Manager	May 2021	Ongoing
Develop our existing tenancy support and sustainability service who are tasked with pro-actively supporting tenants to maintain tenancies, to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budgeting workshops New tenant induction workshops 	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Services Manager	April 2021	Ongoing

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New tenancy 'sign up' briefings • Floating Support for vulnerable tenants in sheltered and General Needs housing • Annual visits to all tenants who reside in Council housing. 				
Refresh and clearly define our offer of sheltered accommodation ensuring clarity and a commitment to the levels of support that can be offered.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Services Manager	August 2021	March 2021
Improve void turnaround times and review the Void Standard for properties being relet as part of our Price Per Void contract, and ensure that a suitable lettable standard is achieved for new tenants achieving 'right first time'.	Housing Revenue Account	Property & Asset Manager	May 2021	September 2021
Develop and consult tenants on an EDDC Home Standard that exceeds the Decent Homes Standard and that can be applied to all homes.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Service Lead	August 2021	October 2021
Ensure that the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for the Integrated Asset Management Contract are closely monitored and standards set are met or exceeded.	Housing Revenue Account	Property & Asset Manager	April 2021	Ongoing
Ensure that all of our major building components are loaded onto our asset database, and the database maintained as items get replaced and upgraded.	Housing Revenue Account	Property & Asset Manager	April 2021	Ongoing
Publish a five year planned maintenance and cyclical decoration programme to provide tenants with visibility of planned works.	Housing Revenue Account	Property & Asset Manager	May 2021	Ongoing
Maintain up to date Fire Risk Assessments and publish documents and renewal dates.	Housing Revenue Account	Property & Asset Manager	May 2021	Ongoing
Continue to review and monitor outcomes from the Homelessness Strategy in order to reduce homelessness. Review service delivery and demand at Honiton and Exmouth offices to ensure our triage arrangements and resourcing is 'fit for purpose'.	General Fund	Housing Solutions Manager	April 2021	September 2021

Develop and expand on Year 2 of the Integrated Asset Management Contract to further increase customer satisfaction. Look to implement the first series of social value objectives, review the Handyperson offer and consider the inclusion of the planned works programme under the contract. Introduce a Programme of Property MOTs.	Housing Revenue Account	Property & Asset Manager	June 2021	October 2021
Implement a robust process for dealing with Disrepair Claims, ensuring that this is embedded into all team processes. Prepare to meet the requirements of the Homes Fitness for Human Habitation Act.	Housing Revenue Account	Property & Asset Manager	April 2021	Ongoing
Complete and publicise the final phase of the Your Home - Your Wellbeing Project.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Solutions Manager	June 2021	September 2021
Develop the Axminster Fairshare project working with Tesco in Axminster and Nourish to collect food from the supermarket, cook and freeze it, and distribute to people with an identified need. Aim to do more for rural areas and link with other work e.g. new applicants for Universal Credit who have limited income for the first six weeks.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Services Manager	June 2021	Ongoing
Identify areas of Housing land that are being used by residents without permission and ensure the appropriate signage is posted at all entrances and exits to prevent future claims of easements over our land.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Services Manager	August 2021	Ongoing
3) A balanced economy				
Deliver the priorities from the emerging poverty strategy and action plan.	Housing Revenue Account & General Fund	Housing Service Lead	April 2021	Ongoing

Work towards a ratio of 70/30 spend on Planned to Responsive repair works.	Housing Revenue Account	Property & Asset Manager	June 2021	Ongoing
Provide and enable budgeting advice for tenants through our own staff and partner organisations (HomeMaker and CAB) to reduce the incidence of poverty.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Services Manager	September 2021	Ongoing
Create a comprehensive KPI dashboard of performance information to provide greater visibility of Service health and compliance assurance.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Service Lead	August 2021	Ongoing
4) Outstanding council and council services				
Deliver Covid-19 Response & Recovery Plans to maintain housing services for tenants.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Service Lead	April 2021	Ongoing
Review multi-agency and key stakeholder relationships to ensure understanding of processes and information sharing is effective and GDPR compliant.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Service Lead	August 2021	October 2021
Review the Service against the Social Housing Regulators Standards and ensure that we are fully compliant.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Service Lead	August 2021	December 2021
Review compliance procedures by an external body to drive continuous improvement.	Housing Revenue Account	Property & Asset Manager	June 2021	October 2021
Develop and introduce mobile/floating support service to assist vulnerable tenants, particularly those with mental health issues, sustain their tenancies.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Services Manager	April 2021	Ongoing
Improve our approach to safeguarding by implementing the protocol developed for Registered Providers.	Housing Revenue Account & General Fund	Housing Service Lead	April 2021	Ongoing

Embrace the changes anticipated in the Building Safety Act, including the appointment of building safety managers.	Housing Revenue Account	Property and Asset Manager	April 2021	Ongoing
Continue to develop and enhance the Open Housing System in order to continually improve efficiency and the customer's experience of contact with our service. Work alongside colleagues Corporately with the roll out of Firmstep in order to develop and release the tenant portal.	Housing Revenue Account	Housing Service Lead	April 2021	Ongoing
As part of pro-active succession planning, explore the creation of a housing apprentice post that can work across housing teams to support the housing sector as a career path.	Housing Revenue Account & General Fund	Housing Service Lead	April 2021	Ongoing

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

1. Being prepared for implementing Response & Recovery Plans to ensure business continuity and maintaining services for tenants should local restrictions be applied to East Devon. We anticipate further homelessness pressures, increased levels of homelessness, reduced rent payments and ongoing challenges around working in tenant's homes. We also need to ensure resilience in Home Safeguard and support for vulnerable residents.
2. Operating the Housing Revenue Account under the self-financing regime and managing high levels of debt whilst continuously improving services, tenants' homes, and delivering our development and climate change aspirations.
3. Managing the impact of Universal Credit and other potential changes under future welfare reforms, which could lead to a loss of income for the housing revenue account, as well as place more residents in financial hardship leading to increasing numbers of residents in the district living in poverty, exacerbated by the pandemic.
Produce and implement the Councils Poverty Strategy and Action Plan.
4. Continuing to manage the impact of Right to Buy sales as part of the government's drive towards home ownership, which continues to result in an overall depletion of the stock, and the challenge of committing receipts with the additional funding required for the acquisition of new stock.

<p>5. Maintaining 100% compliance at all times to ensure that tenants' homes are safe whilst continuously improving and implementing best practice in the sector. Embracing changes in the Building Safety Act and incorporating these into operational practice.</p>
<p>6. Embedding the Integrated Asset Management contract and ensuring delivery of a high quality service, confirmed by tenant satisfaction responses and KPI measures. The social value elements of the contract need to be delivered.</p>
<p>7. Having sufficient resource in place to re-introduce some of the Planned Works projects that have been put on hold due to Covid, to continue to deliver the Fire Safety Projects and the one off major projects e.g. the lift replacement project at Poplar Mount, Axminster and staircase/porch replacement project at Manor Close, Seaton.</p>
<p>8. Growing numbers of homelessness households approaching our housing options service for assistance as required under the Homelessness Reduction Act. This is leading to increasing usage of temporary accommodation. Addressing the increasing level of rough sleeping and customers presenting with a wide range of support needs.</p> <p>Continue to contribute towards the resettlement of refugees and asylum seekers as required through central government policy.</p>
<p>9. Continuing to manage and meet housing needs and deliver a supply of new affordable homes.</p>
<p>10. Continuing to support our ageing population to stay in their own homes, manage the continuing rising demand for property adaptations across all tenures.</p>
<p>11. Overcoming the problem of insufficient subsidy/grant/opportunities to provide new affordable homes and the ongoing challenges of spending RTB receipts.</p>
<p>12. Upgrading the Home Safeguard call handling system and improving service resilience.</p>
<p>13. Implementing and combining the work of the Housing Service with the health and wellbeing priorities as set out in our Public Health Strategy.</p>
<p>14. Meeting the needs of the rising numbers of people suffering from mental health issues means we must respond appropriately and effectively in order to support people and limit consequences such as failure to sustain tenancies. This affects a number of front line teams and impacts staff and customers in different ways. There is the need for us to strengthen our links with the local mental health trust as well as specialist mental health support agencies.</p>
<p>15. Improving the energy efficiency of homes and reducing carbon emissions across the district to meet our aspiration of carbon neutrality and minimum levels of energy usage. Ensuring we are in line with central government aspirations for Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) ratings of dwellings and respond to changes accordingly.</p>
<p>16. Recruiting and training of professional/technical staff to have the right staff in the right job. Promoting housing as a career of choice in order to attract ambitious, forward thinking individuals who can continue to drive the housing service forward.</p>

17. Creating and sustaining a positive, 'can do' culture in the Service with high staff morale and a Happy, Healthy, Here approach to the work environment.
18. Ensuring that our approach to compliance issues in relation to management of our stock and continuing to ensure this is core business with robust policies and procedures in place, and sufficient staff capacity to meet the legal and good practice requirements. Monitor closely outcomes from the Grenfell enquiry ensuring that all new legislation is implemented.
19. Investing in wider housing assets such as community centres; play areas; mobility scooter stores, green open spaces, re-wilding etc.
20. Collecting and using up to date stock condition data information, review and refresh the home improvement programme in relation to the delivery of new kitchens, bathrooms, electrical wiring, and heating systems, and other major stock investment decisions.
21. Preparing the service for the 2021 digital switchover and manage the impact on the Home Safeguard operating equipment ensuring no disruption to customers of the service. Ensuring service resilience and business continuity during staffing absence, increased demand, severe weather etc.
22. Continuing to respond to and manage the increasing number of disrepair claims and ensuring the service is compliant with the Homes- Fitness for Human Habitation Act.
23. Implementing the actions from the Climate Change Action Plan to reduce carbon emissions and work towards becoming a carbon neutral Council.

Section 3 b– Looking forward: options for doing things differently – this section is vital due to the funding gap we face over the next few years.

Please outline any opportunities to do things differently.

1. Adapt to agile and remote working to deliver continuously improving tenant services as a response to the pandemic whilst ensuring that staff, contractors and tenants are covid secure.
2. There is the need to keep the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan under constant review to ensure we are managing debt appropriately, and due to the borrowing cap being lifted, looking for potential opportunities to deliver more affordable housing. We need to ensure we are maintaining strong links with potential partners and key stakeholders as there may also be opportunities to jointly deliver more affordable housing. The 'big ticket' items are tenant safety/new affordable housing/decarbonisation expenditure.
3. Continue to implement the OpenHousing management system with a drive towards tenant self- service portals being rolled out. This potentially will cut down on demand for services in the current format and will lead to a review of resources to make any necessary changes to service delivery. Open Housing

<p>should also be driving efficiencies with how we deliver services, ensuring that up to date data in relation to tenants and properties is stored appropriately to ensure ease of access to information.</p>
<p>4. Strengthen the 'housing hub' or 'customer and business improvement' concept as part of a focus on more generic working and a way of delivering more customer focused housing services.</p>
<p>5. Manage the new Integrated Asset Management contract and work in close partnership with our new contractors to provide a focus on asset management principles as opposed to reactive response works. The new contract will transform current service delivery and will bring a number of benefits in terms of a more customer focused approach to services. The contract will also set out to deliver some ambitious social value objectives that will benefit our tenants in a number of ways.</p>
<p>6. There is the need to undertake a complete review of the Home Safeguard service as a cost/benefit exercise to determine the best way forward for the service. We need to review the options for attracting more business at the same time as realistically assessing staffing requirements to ensure we can deliver a robust, reliable service given the critical nature of the service delivered. We need to carefully consider commercial opportunities as well as ensuring our business continuity plans are fully costed and fit for purpose.</p>
<p>7. Undertake a stock condition survey to inform future stock investment decisions, and maintain up to date stock data.</p>
<p>8. Respond to the findings of the longitudinal survey and the Viewpoint Survey and ensure we use the information to influence our service delivery.</p>
<p>9. Consider a proactive approach to adapting sheltered housing units to ensure that they are 'fit for purpose' rather than being reactive to needs as they arise.</p>
<p>10. Prepare for the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Bill 2020 and participating in county wide activities that support those who suffer from domestic abuse.</p>
<p>11. Expand the use of social media to communicate with our customers to raise the profile of the work of the housing service.</p>
<p>12. Continue to work with Environmental Health, StreetScene and Countryside on shared goals and aspirations as set out in the Council plan.</p>
<p>13. Improve complaint handling and resolutions through better communication and liaison with tenants, being proactive and adopting a stronger customer focus.</p>
<p>14. Expand and maximise our membership of Advantage South West (ASW) to assist us in relation to resolving procurement challenges as well as other ASW housing driven projects.</p>
<p>15. Focus on decarbonising the housing stock as part of our climate change response and improve the energy efficiency of tenant's homes.</p>
<p>16. Provide a greater emphasis on poverty prevention, financial resilience, reduced indebtedness, affordable warmth, and financial equality.</p>

17. Use the Doughnut Economic model to review policies and projects having regard to climate change and wider considerations.

Section 3 c – Looking forward: Changes to measures and performance indicators - what we will measure, how often and for whom

Measure/indicator	How often – monthly, quarterly, bi-annually, annually	For whom? Cabinet, Overview and Scrutiny	Link to Corporate Priorities (listed on page 3 1,2,3 or 4)	Responsible Officer for production of management information	Retain this measure (yes/no) or new
1. Rent collected against rent due	Monthly	Housing Review Board	Encouraging communities to be outstanding	Housing Service Lead	Yes
2. Void period- end to end times	Monthly	Housing Review Board	Encouraging communities to be outstanding	Housing Service Lead	Yes
3. Integrated Asset Management contract suite of KPIs	Monthly	Housing Review Board	Encouraging communities to be outstanding	Housing Service Lead	Yes
4. Number of new affordable homes delivered/ number of homes lost through RTB	Monthly	Housing Review Board	Encouraging communities to be outstanding	Housing Service Lead	Yes
5. Housing Strategy	Annually	Scrutiny Committee and Housing Review Board	Encouraging communities to be outstanding	Housing Service Lead	Yes
6. Housing Revenue Account Business Plan	Quarterly	Housing Review Board	Encouraging communities to be outstanding	Housing Service Lead	Yes

7. Housing Revenue Account budget	Quarterly	Housing Review Board	Encouraging communities to be outstanding	Housing Service Lead	Yes
8. Allocations and changes in the Housing Register	Quarterly		Encouraging communities to be outstanding	Housing Solutions Manager	Yes
9. Number of Council tenants downsizing	Monthly	To be captured in quarterly KPI monitoring report	Encouraging communities to be outstanding	Housing Solutions Manager	Yes
10. Number of Safeguarding referrals made (children's/adults)	Quarterly	Housing Review Board	Encouraging communities to be outstanding	Housing Services Manager	Yes
11. Covid dashboard	Weekly	Housing Review Board	Encouraging communities to be outstanding	Housing Service Lead	Yes

Section 4 – Resources and workforce planning

Full time equivalents/Headcount as at 01/04/2020	FTE = 112.20 Headcount = 127
Turnover (April 2019 to March 2020)	Voluntary Turnover = 5% Voluntary & Non Voluntary Turnover = 7%
Absence (April 2019 to March 2020)	Days lost per person: 4.2 days

Section 5 – Training and development

Team based skills/development required – please identify training required that is not currently available	Who for	Expected outcome	When
1. All managers to ensure completion of mandatory management training modules	Managers	Awareness of all management policies to ensure implementation.	During the plan period
2. Following a review of health and safety training, all staff must ensure completion of all mandatory health and safety training requirements as set out in the H&S training matrix	All staff	Competent staff that can manage health and safety risks accordingly, ensuring safe systems of work.	During the plan period
3. Customer Service and dealing with difficult customers and service requests/complaints	All staff	Improved customer service and complaint handling	During the plan period
4. Equalities and poverty	All staff	Awareness of our responsibilities	During the plan period
5. Safeguarding Children and Adults	All staff	Awareness of Council's policy and reporting procedures	During the plan period
6. Prevent (radicalisation) and Countylines	All front line staff	Awareness of how to report concerns	During the plan period
7. Data protection and information security	All staff	Awareness of the Council's policy and housing specific requirements	During the plan period
8. Social media policy and use	Selected staff	Appropriate and positive use of social media	During the plan period
9. Systems Thinking	Managers	Take forward the next series of reviews	During the plan period
10. Continuing professional development/ professional training as appropriate	Selected staff	Maintaining high standards of professional knowledge and conduct	During the plan period
11. Open Housing document and mobile device training	All staff	All users able to benefit from the housing management system	During the plan period

12. Mental Health awareness training	Selected staff	To ensure staff are competent and aware of our legal position in relation to dealing with tenants with mental health issues.	During the plan period
13. Compliance training as required; to include but not limited to asbestos awareness/ fire safety/legionella and electrical safety.	Selected staff	To ensure staff are competent and aware of legal expectations in relation to the management of our buildings.	During the plan period

Section 6 – Risks			
New/emerging risks description – See attached Risk Register for current service risks	Impact [minor, significant, serious, major]	Likely-hood [remote, unlikely, likely, very likely]	How managed/controlled What action will you take to reduce/minimise risk
1. Pandemic implications on service delivery, rent collection and business continuity	Serious	Very likely	Response & Recovery Plans implemented. Agile working, risk assessed to protect staff and customers.
2. Failure to protect against tenancy fraud	Serious	Very likely	Occupancy checks on tenants in temporary and general accommodation, Social housing fraud initiative, Tenancy 'sign up' checks, Tenancy Fraud Strategy.
3. Fraud in respect of Rent Collection, allocations and Right to Buy purchases	Significant	Unlikely	Internal procedures, Systems Thinking review, OpenHousing. Manual controls. Working in partnership with the fraud team to share information.
4. Loss of rental income	Serious	Very likely	New tenancy 'sign up', Systems Thinking Regime, Procedures for income management, Rent payment methods. Monitoring closely the impact of universal credit.

5. Right to Buy (sales differ from Business Plan expectations) and spend not in line with MHCLG agreement	Significant	Unlikely	Cancel agreement, Costs could be reduced, Loans could be increased.
6. Safeguarding adults and children	Serious	Very likely	Safeguarding Policy. Risk Assessments, Mobile Support Officer's Procedure Manual, Devon County 'Pathways'. Regular team meeting agenda item. Contractor toolbox talks.
7. Sheltered housing improvements ensuring the stock is 'fit for purpose'	Significant	Unlikely	Funding availability, Tenant involvement. Liaising with Occupational Therapists to design sheltered housing appropriately at void stage.
8. A major homelessness incident	Major	Unlikely	Training for an emergency, Out of hours contact, Emergency and Rest Centre Plan, Devon County Council joint working.
9. Failure to achieve Housing Strategy targets	Major	Likely	Monitoring performance, Assign actions to lead managers, SPAR.net monitoring.
10. Failure to provide accurate or helpful housing/homelessness advice	Serious	Very likely	Staff training, Staff supervision, Scrutinise decisions, Procedures in place.
11. Failure to maintain a Housing Register	Serious	Very likely	Staff training, Policy and procedures, Devon Home Choice.
12. New-Build Council Homes/acquisition scheme failure	Major	Very likely	Robust development proposals, Development expertise, Homes England bids and grants, Joining Partnership South West development consortium.
13. Failure of Responsive Repairs contractor and failure to mobilise new contracting arrangements.	Serious	Very likely	Contract performance monitoring, Contract conditions.
14. A compliance failure on gas/solid fuel safety; fire safety; asbestos; health & safety; legionella	Major	Likely	Policies and procedures in place to ensure robust approaches taken to compliance. Priority given to this work. Competent contractors. Auditing and checking processes. Contract monitoring meetings
15. Loans taken out for self-financing	Serious	Unlikely	Set aside provision for repayment, Tracking Welfare Reform.
16. Unforeseen expenditure on council homes	Serious	Likely	Stock survey information required urgently, Insurance, Improvement programmes, HRA Business Plan refresh required.

17. Housing staff lone working	Major	Very likely	Policies in place to mitigate the risk, Home Safeguard monitoring, Health and Safety training, bespoke Lone Working arrangements.
18. Failure of private water supply	Serious	Likely	Water supply sampling, Risk assessments, Advice.
19. Fraud in respect of housing grants	Serious	Very likely	Capital expenditure monitoring, Monitoring of grant approvals.
20. Home Safeguard system failure/interruption to service. Failures due to digital switchover	Major	Very likely	Disaster recovery arrangements, maintenance contract, UPS system, staff trained on system failure. Joint agreement with Exeter City Council. Liaison with Telecare Services Authority to ensure position on digital switchover
21. Social Housing Regulator intervention due to a service failure	Major	Unlikely	Awareness of the standards expected by the Regulator with policies and procedures in place to achieve compliance. Housing Review Board, tenant involvement processes, customer complaint process

Section 7 – System thinking

Which services have been reviewed	We have reviewed the key to key process including allocations, voids, tenancy set up, We have also reviewed repairs, voids, and rents.	
Future systems to be reviewed	Service	Date of review
	Estate management Housing enabling Support Service and Home Safeguard	During the plan period

Section 8 - Equalities and safeguarding

New / emerging equalities risks	Impact Level [High, Medium, Low]	How managed/controlled
1. Housing Strategy	Medium	Equalities Analysis undertaken on the plan.

2. HRA Business Plan	Medium	Equalities Analysis undertaken on the plan.
3. Homelessness Strategy	High	Equalities Analysis refreshed with new strategy.
4. Devon Home Choice	High	Equalities Analysis undertaken on the Allocations policy.
5. Tenant Involvement Strategy	Medium	Equalities Analysis undertaken on the strategy.
6. Failure to raise a safeguarding concern	High	Equalities Analysis undertaken on the Safeguarding policy.
7. Poverty and mental health	High	Equalities Analysis undertaken as part of the research into the causes of poverty.

Report to: Housing Review Board

Date of Meeting 21st January 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Draft Housing Revenue Account Budget 2021/22

Report summary:

This report presents the draft Housing Revenue Account budget for 2021/22 for consideration.

Recommendations from this meeting will be presented back to Cabinet on 3rd February 2021 when members will finalise budget proposals to recommend to Council.

Recommendation:

That the draft revenue and capital estimates are adopted before forwarding back to cabinet for recommendation to Council.

Reason for recommendation:

There is a requirement to set a balanced budget for 2021/22

Officer: Rob Ward – Accountant rward@eastdevon.gov.uk

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Corporate Services and COVID-19 Response and Recovery
- Democracy and Transparency
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Policy Co-ordination and Regional Engagement
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Financial implications:

Financial details are contained within the report

Legal implications:

No legal implications arise which require comment.

Equalities impact Low Impact

An analysis of budget changes has not highlighted areas that give rise to any equality issues that need highlighting.

Climate change High Impact

The budget approval gives the Council the resources necessary to undertake its business which will significantly contribute to the carbon footprint of the Council. The Council is committed to reducing its carbon net emissions to zero by 2040 and resources have been factored into the budget to meet this priority.

Risk: Low Risk;

Risks have been considered in preparing the budgets and the financial implications have been assessed at the point of preparation. Various budget assumptions have been made including the treatment of inflation and interest rates; estimates on the level and timing of capital receipts; the treatment of demand led pressures; the treatment of planned efficiency savings/productivity gains; levels of income; financial risks inherent in any new arrangements; capital developments; the availability of funds to deal with major contingencies and the need for any provisions. In each of these areas the Council's financial standing, management and track record have been considered in order to prepare robust budget proposals. Other specific areas of risk have been highlighted where appropriate within the report and within the budget book at service level.

Links to background information

[Notes on Spending Review 2020](#)

[Financial Plan 2021 -2031](#)

Link to [Council Plan:](#)

- Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- Outstanding Council and Council Services

1. Process

- 1.1 The Constitution requires Cabinet to approve the draft revenue and capital budget prior to consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The Housing Review Board will undertake the same function in relation to the Housing Revenue Account budgets.
- 1.2 Recommendations from these two meetings will be reported back to Cabinet at its meeting on 3rd February, along with any comments from the business community. At this meeting members will be required to recommend to Council a budget and the Council Tax requirement for 2021/22.

- 1.3 At the same time as preparing the draft budget, draft service plans have been prepared for member consideration. Service plans and budgets are aligned and link back to the Council Plan and reflect where possible the recently adopted Statement of Intent.

2 **Housing Revenue Account Proposed Budget 21/22**

The Overall Financial Picture

- 2.1 The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is underpinned and influenced by a business plan, this plan needs a refresh which has been delayed with other work commitments. The revised Plan needs to:

- Undertake a full conditions survey to inform future programme costs.
- Consider the implication of the new maintenance contract.
- Reflect additional work on asset management planning and compliance requirements,
- Consider the end of rent reductions.
- The implication of Universal Credit,
- Reconsider the debt level and use of Right to Buy Receipts linked to future development ambitions, and
- The implications of the climate change action plan.

This work is progressing for inclusion in the 2022/23 budget, the picture for the draft 2021/22 budget is very much stand still in that it continues to invest in our existing properties at a similar level; it provides an acceptable surplus which will need to be prioritised between competing demands:

- The purchase programme to counteract the impact of continuing Right to Buy (RTB) sales and the development ambitions to significantly add to our stock/social housing. This is a key priority in the Statement of Intent.
- To ensure new compliance requirements are met.
- To implement the carbon reduction actions.

- 2.2 In accordance with central government policy, the increase in any individual tenants rent is limited to inflation + 1% for the forthcoming financial year. Inflation is taken as the Consumer Price Index (CPI) rate at the prevailing rate for September 2020, which was officially registered at 0.5%. The draft budget assumes an increase in Council House rents of 1.5% with a factor included for a reduction in stock numbers and voids giving £17.8m, an increase of £0.264m. The average house rent is currently £82.17 per week with 4,184 dwellings. There are 727 garages with a current rent of £15 per week, no increase is proposed.

Draft Revenue Budget 2021/22

2.3 The budget book details the draft estimates for 2021/22.

2.4 The budget has been prepared to maintain council homes to a high standard with a comprehensive planned programme of expenditure, adaptations and routine repairs. The 2021/22 draft budget maintains significant sums for:

- Major repairs totalling £4.2m covering new doors, boilers, kitchens and bathrooms, including change of tenancy expenditure, replacement of wooden fascias with uPVC and roof replacements.
- Day to day repairs, programme maintenance and one off works totalling £4.3m.

HRA BUDGET SUMMARY by SERVICE LINE & ACCOUNTING TYPE			2020	2021	Variance
Rep Cat 1	Rep Cat 2	Rep Cat 3	£	£	£
1 INCOME	1 Gross Property Rent inc Garages	1 Gross Property Rents	-17,567,740	-17,831,260	-263,520
		2 Garage Rents	-425,530	-336,180	89,350
	2 Other Income	1 Other Income	-542,120	-603,680	-61,560
1 INCOME Total			-18,535,390	-18,771,120	-235,730
2 EXPENDITURE	1 Repairs And Maintenance - General	1 Responsive Maintenance	1,862,440	1,953,350	90,910
		2 Annual Programmed Maintenance	1,098,260	1,033,300	-64,960
	2 Repairs And Maintenance - Special	1 Compliance	318,050	790,050	472,000
		2 Other	859,100	560,730	-298,370
	3 Supervision And Management	1 Supervision And Mgt General	4,275,600	4,418,290	142,690
		2 Supervision And Mgt Special	1,738,360	1,994,300	255,940
	4 Other Expenditure	1 Other Exp non Sewerage	227,900	231,700	3,800
		2 Sewerage	54,230	54,390	160
	5 Capital Charges & Bad Debt	2 Reval Deprn and Impair	950,420	950,420	0
		3 Major Repairs Expenditure	3,876,000	4,226,690	350,690
2 EXPENDITURE Total			15,260,360	16,213,220	952,860
3 FINANCING	1 Interest on Balances	(blank)	-39,000	-23,700	15,300
	2 Loan Principal & Interest repayments	(blank)	2,503,900	2,547,440	43,540
	3 Other	1 Gain on Disposal	-3,161,910	-3,161,910	0
		2 Loss on Disposal	2,001,980	2,001,980	0
		4 Other	-10	-10	0
	4 MIRS	1 Rev Gain on Disposal	3,161,910	3,161,910	0
		2 Rev Loss on Disposal	-2,001,980	-2,001,980	0
		3 Rev Rev, Dep & Impair	-950,420	-950,420	0
	5 Cont to Capital	830,000	0	-830,000	
3 FINANCING Total			2,344,470	1,573,310	-771,160
Grand Total			-930,560	-984,590	-54,030

2.5 Main Variations to highlight:

The Net movement on the budgeted HRA surplus is an overall increase of £54k to £0.985m

Income increased by a total of £254k year on year;

- The predominant driver of the increase is the aforementioned rent increase of £264k.
- These were partially offset by a decrease in forecast income from garages (-£90k) due to unrentable units and a reduction in interest income as a result of the current and forecasted continued suppression of interest rates.

Expenditure increased by £200k year on year;

- Although the allocation of expenditure on premises has shifted year on year to meet demand, incorporating the catch up work required due to COVID restrictions, the total budgeted expenditure remains materially consistent.

The primary driver of the annual increase is within employee costs as new roles are required to meet the demands of the service, notably within the Landlord Services area with the appointment of a Mental Health officer and within the Asset and Property team with the appointment of a Climate Change officer.

- 2.6 The HRA draft budget currently shows a surplus of **£0.985m**; this level of surplus in the past has been directed to replacement housing to match the Right to Buy receipts. It is proposed that this sum is held for the purpose of additional housing and climate change measures. Reports on priority and proposed actions to be considered will be presented to the Housing Review Board through 2021/22.
- 2.7 The HRA Balance is maintained within the adopted range of £2.1m and £3.1m, being projected to be retained £3.1m level at the end of 2021/22. There is an additional £1.6m being held in the HRA debt Volatility Fund which remains unchanged.

Budget Strategy for future years

- 2.8 The HRA Business plan needs refreshing as outlined in 2.1 above to ensure properties can be maintained at a high standard whilst investing in new properties and meet carbon reductions priorities whilst keeping the HRA Reserves within the adopted levels.
- 2.9 The intention is revised Business Plan will be prepared in 2021/22 for approval through the HRB, Cabinet and Council.

3 Housing Revenue Account Current Position & Forecasted Outturn

- 3.1 The data to the end of December 2020 is currently being worked on and an update of the current HRA position and forecasted year end outturn will be presented separately at the meeting.

Report to: Housing Review Board

Date of Meeting 21st January 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Update on spending Right to Buy receipts 2020/21 financial year

Report summary:

To provide the Housing Review Board with an update on right to buy spending for 2020/21 and the challenges faced due to Covid-19. The report provides information on the amount of receipts spent or committed to spend in the financial year and the amount that will be returned to Government.

Recommendation:

1. To note the contents of this report and spend information.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that members are fully aware of the challenges in spending receipts and to inform them that we will be having to return receipts and pay an interest charge.

Officer: Joanne Garfoot, Acting Housing Service Lead

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Corporate Services and COVID-19 Response and Recovery
- Democracy and Transparency
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Policy Co-ordination and Regional Engagement
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Financial implications:

Financial implications are considered within the body of the report

Legal implications:

Local authorities can spend their RTB receipts themselves, to fund the development costs associated with the provision of social rented housing, as defined in Section 68 (1) (a) of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008.

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Medium Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; [Click here to enter text on risk considerations relating to your report.](#)

Links to background information .

Link to [Council Plan:](#)

Priorities (check which apply)

- Outstanding Place and Environment
- Outstanding Homes and Communities
- Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- Outstanding Council and Council Services

Report in full

1.0 Background

- 1.1 A report was taken to the board in January 2020 which set out the options for spending right to buy receipts in the 2020/21 financial year. It was recommended and agreed that we would pursue a range of options in order to spend the receipts. These options included continuing with our acquisition programme of buying suitable properties from the open market to add to council stock, look into building new council houses on council owned land, using the receipts to provide grant to registered providers and returning some of the money to Government.
- 1.2 This report provides an update on spending of the receipts to-date and the challenges that we have faced as a result of Covid-19 and lockdown restrictions.

2.0 Required spend in 2020/2021

- 2.1 The level of spend significantly increased this financial year compared to the previous 2 years. The below table shows the amounts required to be spent each quarter:

	RTB amount 30%	Contribution from PWLB 70%	Total Spend
Quarter 1	337,910	788,457	1,126,367
Quarter 2	369,658	862,536	1,232,194
Quarter3	328,121	765,615	1,093,736
Quarter 4	729,743	1,702,733	2,432,475
		Total	5,884,772

3.0 Challenges

- 3.1 Due to resourcing issues following a member of staff leaving and not being replaced it was decided in February that the Property and Estates team would take over the acquisition programme from quarter 2, with Housing overseeing and supporting.
- 3.2 Whilst quarter 1 started off promisingly with a number of sales agreed, unfortunately on 26th March the Government introduced lockdown measures in response to Covid-19 which in effect suspended the UK's property market for 2 months. We managed to complete on 4 purchases during quarter 1 which had been agreed before the lockdown period.

3.3 The restrictions were eased late in May which allowed us to view properties again, however the market was very slow to start up again with very few properties coming onto the market. With the announcement in July of a stamp duty holiday the number of properties coming to the market increased significantly and we were able to agree a number of purchases. Over time the numbers reduced again and we struggled to find suitable properties and also the pool of purchasers increased resulting in lots of competition. The stamp duty holiday is set to end on 31 March 2021 and as this date approaches the number of new properties coming to the market is reducing even further.

4.0 Relaxation of rules by Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

4.1 In response to concerns raised by local authorities on spend and the impact of Covid-19 on the housing and building market we were granted a temporary relaxation in June on the deadlines for spending receipts with quarter 1 and 2 rolled up until the end of quarter 3 (31 December 2020). This provided some leeway but did not in our opinion go far enough. It became apparent very early on that we were not going to be able to spend all the receipts by the end of December and that we would need to pay back some of the receipts.

4.2 At the end of October we were consulted again on projected spending of receipts and the challenges still being faced. On 15th December we received confirmation that we were being granted a further relaxation of the rules until the end of March 2021. Unfortunately this latest extension is not long enough for us to spend all the receipts. We will continue to look for suitable properties to buy on the open market but given resourcing issues and the demands put on the housing market industry with the stamp duty holiday ending it is unlikely that we will meet the deadline of the end of March.

5.0 Current position

5.1 To date we have completed on the purchase of 9 properties and have a further 4 going through. One of these currently under offer is a block of 7 x 1 bedroom units. The total number of properties once all completed will be 19 additional units. We have spent circa £1.57m on these acquisitions and when the remaining properties have completed we will have spent circa £3.06m.

5.2 This will result in a shortfall in spending and we will be required to pay back circa £844k in receipts and £121k in interest on the returned amount. This amount may reduce after accounting for repairs to the properties acquired and any other purchases that we manage to complete on in the meantime.

5.3 Whilst it is disappointing that we will have to return receipts, this year's spend requirements was always going to be a challenge and that was before Covid-19. Investment in staffing and a clear strategy for spending receipts is needed to ensure we are best placed to spend the receipts and provide the much needed replacement affordable housing for our stock. This will also ensure that we are getting the right type of properties and properties that will meet our climate change agenda.

5.4 It should be noted that it is the first time we have had to pay back any receipts since entering into our agreement with the Secretary of State in 2012.

Report to: Housing Review Board

Date of Meeting 21 January 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Update on the Review of the Furniture Project

Report summary:

This report summarises progress made so far on the review of the furniture and household item recycling service known as 'the Furniture Project' and also as 'the Magic Garages'.

The report gives a brief history of the inception of the service, and highlights that it is currently unsustainable to continue delivering the service in its current format. A number of options have been developed, and initial thoughts on these options have been presented.

The report highlights the benefits of the current service in relation to the Council's broader strategic aims.

Recommendation:

That the Board consider the options as set out in section 7 of this report and give a steer as to which option should be further explored with consideration to the financial implications of each of the options.

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure that the review of the Furniture Project continues to be relevant to members

Officer: Andrew Mitchell, Housing Solutions Manager, amitchell@eastdevon.gov.uk.

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Corporate Services and COVID-19 Response and Recovery
- Democracy and Transparency
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Policy Co-ordination and Regional Engagement
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Financial implications:

The financial implications are considered and discussed within the body of the report.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications to consider set out in the report.

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; Failure to continue with the Furniture project will negatively impact individuals who are homeless or who are in temporary accommodation

Links to background information .

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- Outstanding Place and Environment
- Outstanding Homes and Communities
- Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- Outstanding Council and Council Services

Report in full

1. Background

- 1.1 The development of a furniture recycling service, known as the Furniture Project began in early 2019. People approaching the Housing Options team from homeless situations were being housed but unable to purchase many of the basic furniture and other household items to adequately equip their homes.
- 1.2 In February 2019, when EDDC moved into new offices at Honiton, furniture and other items (such as toasters, kettles etc.) were being offered out to staff. Our Temporary Accommodation Officer (TAO) was able to secure a good number of these items, recognising that they could be put to good use helping people as they moved from temporary accommodation into more secure homes across the district.
- 1.3 From its informal beginnings the scheme has now developed into a furniture and household item recycling service, sourcing unwanted items and offering them free of charge to those in need, identified through the day to day work of the TAO and the Housing Options team, including furniture left behind in void council properties.
- 1.4 Initially items were stored in two vacant EDDC garages in Seaton, but as the service has developed so our storage needs have expanded and we now occupy four garages with additional items also stored in the home of the TAO.
- 1.5 The Furniture Project has become an integral part of the allocation process for new tenants who are entering their tenancies with little or no furniture and money. We want to set tenancies up to succeed, as acknowledged in the Homelessness Strategy, and recognise that the basic furniture and household items that many of us take for granted are key ingredients into turning a house into a home. In the last year, the Furniture Project has supported over 40 families in this way.

- 1.6 The primary role of the TAO is to secure and provide temporary accommodation for an increasing number of homeless households, support them whilst they are in temporary accommodation, and then help them move on into more secure homes. However, this continuing expansion has placed an unsustainable burden on the TAO, especially with the increase in homelessness seen to date and expected to remain in the future as a result of the Coronavirus pandemic.
- 1.7 In an ideal world, the Furniture Project should be a service that the TAO can tap into for assistance in moving households into temporary accommodation. Instead, the maintenance of the service is taking up an increasing amount of the TAO's time.
- 1.8 The TAO post lies within the Housing Options team and is funded by the general fund. At present, all funding for the service is coming from the general fund and in particular through the Homelessness Prevention Fund.
- 1.9 This report summarises both how the service currently operates, and also a number of options being considered in relation to the ongoing delivery of the Furniture Project. It also examines, if the service continues, whether funding and responsibility for this service would be better placed within the Housing Revenue Account and our function as a Landlord.

2. How the service works

- 2.1 When a person or household presents to the Housing Options team, if it is determined that they are in need of assistance from the Furniture Project they are referred to the TAO as the person who runs the scheme.
- 2.2 If the items a household needs are available, then they are provided to them when they move into their accommodation free of charge. If not, then they are referred to other existing services (who charge for items).
- 2.3 The council currently either pay for items to be delivered from the garages to the accommodation – we have an arrangement with a local delivery firm for this, or the EDDC officer will deliver them in their own vehicle.
- 2.4 All electrical items are PAT tested for safety purposes before they are passed to households. This testing is also free, as the TAO has received the relevant training to carry out the tests.
- 2.5 The person receiving the items from EDDC is required to sign a property disclaimer stating that EDDC has provide the products with no guarantees or warranties.
- 2.6 Items for the Furniture Project are sourced through a number of informal channels, mainly through word of mouth, including donations through local Facebook groups, people who are downsizing from larger properties, and items from abandoned tenancies or house clearances. This is largely undertaken by the TAO.

3. Cost of the Service

- 3.1 It is difficult to quantify the exact cost of the service as it currently operates, in part due to the informal approach undertaken – there are consequently no formal procedures in place for reporting costs, such as a specific cost code to identify expenditure. Most charges are therefore applied against the general prevention of homelessness.

- 3.2 Some costs can be identified; we have utilised a local delivery service for moving some larger furniture, mainly from house clearances. In 2020 as at 8th December we have spent £1,887 for this. We also spent £475 on van hire in last financial year 2019/20.
- 3.3 In terms of officer time, the service is estimated to take up an average of two days per week though this does not include anything undertaken out of hours. Also, the amount of time varies from week to week. Staff time is the main issue and driver in seeking this review.

4. A Developing Service – is it sustainable?

- 4.1 As previously stated, the Furniture Project started off as a very informal effort; some excess furniture became available and we knew people who needed it. However, it has since expanded and continues to develop as more opportunities become available and more needs are identified.
- 4.2 The service has been used to furnish our new Place of Safety, as well as for the preparation of our Housing First properties.
- 4.3 Carpets have proven to be a big requirement for people moving in to EDDC stock from temporary accommodation. We have managed to secure off-cuts from local companies for free on occasion.
- 4.4 We have also identified carpets left in EDDC properties when they become void that could be reused for new tenants. Carpets are currently removed as part of the void process to enable important health and safety checks to take place, but if suitable storage can be found then these could be retained for future use.
- 4.5 The EDDC StreetScene team currently remove bulky furniture for households across the district. These are currently disposed of but it has been suggested that these could also be reused for struggling tenants.
- 4.6 Although these opportunities are exciting, the service has already expanded to the extent that it is unsustainable in its current format and a decision needs to be made as to how and whether the Furniture Project can continue.
- 4.7 Section 6 of this report runs through the wider strategic benefits of the current service and Section 7 summarises the options under consideration at this time.

5. Strategic Benefits of the Furniture Project

- 5.1 The Furniture Project scheme supports a number of other strategic priorities for the council.
- 5.2 There is plenty of evidence linking a safe, secure and stable home to improved health and wellbeing, not least within EDDC's own longitudinal study, Your Home: Your Wellbeing. The provision of the basic necessities for a home to those who cannot afford it sets a foundation for a safe and secure home.
- 5.3 People presenting to the homelessness service are often in a position of severe financial deprivation, unable to afford furniture and household items, or else having to choose between these and other essential costs such as food or heating. The Furniture Project is helping to battle poverty in our district through the provision of essential

furniture to those most in need. In practice, this will enable people in financial difficulty to better afford rent payments when there have been some cases where it has been a choice between furniture and rent.

- 5.4 As we all seek to work in a greener way, including through the approach of the circular economy, the redistribution and recycling of furniture and electrical goods (including large appliances such as refrigerators and freezers) is clearly in line with this philosophy.

6. Options for the future

- 6.1 It should be noted that work on the review of the Furniture Project has been held back due to a need to prioritise urgent services in response to the Coronavirus pandemic. More work will be required to assess the viability of each of the following options, and members are invited to suggest additional ideas for consideration if appropriate. Similarly, if members feel an option outlined in this section should no longer be considered then this report provides an opportunity for them to be discounted.

6.2 Option 1: Keep the service in-house, funded through HRA budgets

- 6.2.1 A newly designed service, initially only available to Council tenants, providing furniture, household items and carpets to tenants for free.

6.2.2 Benefits of an in-house service include:

- Certainty that all items are given to households in need
- Good relationships with other housing departments can help with the logistics of moving furniture in at the right time (e.g. to tie in with void repairs and allocations processes)
- Potential to link easily with Estate Management and repairs in recycling items left in void properties.
- Potential to link with Suez for redistribution of bulky furniture collected from residents.
- The provision of this service reinforces a positive impression of the Council as an organisation that is here to help those in need as a landlord of social housing.

6.2.3 Challenges include:

- Funding for staffing required; at least one person but maybe more.
- Current storage facilities are not suitable – an alternative may need to be found at an additional cost
- Delivery of items, particularly heavier ones, currently require the hire of a van to move them. Consideration is needed as to whether to purchase a van or continue with van hire.
- Overall costs of running the service in house are currently unknown although staffing costs, including on costs, for employing one person for one day a week would be £6,000 and one person for two days a week would be £12,002 (based on a new position being evaluated at scale 5)
- Health and Safety considerations of moving heavy furniture
- Systems and processes will need to be set up to ensure the service is run safely and adhering to any legal requirements.

- Establishing if this service would be acting in competition for other existing companies or charities who rely on income from selling second hand furniture etc. Is this service effectively a council funded charity?
- Will a formal service attract the same level of donations?

6.3 Option 2: End Service and utilise existing alternatives

6.3.1 The current service is unsustainable. Tenants can be signposted to Turntable in Exeter, HospiceCare, and other companies that sell cheap furniture and other items. Also, social media, Ebay and other local websites could be used by tenants to procure cheap items.

6.3.2 Benefits include:

- No cost to the council at a time where budgets are severely restricted
- Support for existing local companies and charities
- Encouraging self-reliance

6.3.3 Challenges include:

- The poorest people will lose out. Most alternative options come at a cost: the current service offers assistance to those who are unable to afford even the cheapest second-hand furniture.
- The Furniture Project was borne from the fact that existing services could not meet the needs of some people in our district due to affordability

6.4 Option 3: End service and replace with a voucher scheme

6.4.1 This option would provide financial assistance to households in need to purchase furniture from other companies.

6.4.2 Benefits include:

- Support the most vulnerable, giving them a good starting point for their tenancy
- Potentially lower cost than continuing the service as no storage or staffing costs

6.4.3 Challenges include:

- Need to decide what the vouchers would cover (just items of furniture, or delivery as well)
- Need to negotiate with outside companies to accept voucher scheme
- Need to develop full rules of usage for vouchers and administration for distribution and reimbursement of companies

6.5 Option 4: Limit service to furniture/items acquired through void clearance of council stock

6.5.1 This option involves collecting and storing remaining furniture, household items or suitable floor coverings/carpets left in properties when they become void.

6.5.2 Benefits include:

- Enables the service to continue in some form, whilst reducing staffing time in acquiring new items.
- May be able to link in with Ian Williams' commitment to Social Value.
- Currently required to store tenant items left in properties for a period so potential for savings.

6.5.3 Challenges include:

- Many of the challenges identified in 7.2.3 will apply to this option

7. Recommendations

7.1 That members consider and agree if any of the Options in Section 7 of this report should be disregarded for further evaluation.

7.2 That members approve the options identified in Section 7 for further evaluation

Report to: Housing Review Board

Date of Meeting 21 January 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Update on Integrated Asset Management Contract

Report summary:

Our Integrated Asset Management Contract commenced on the 1 July 2019, we have now had the contract in place for over a year.

This report will update Members on progress made over the last year, during Covid-19 and our annual review of our partnership with Ian Williams Ltd.

Recommendation:

For information only

Reason for recommendation:

To ensure Members are up to date with ongoing contracting arrangements covering the reactive repairs and void management of our housing stock

Officer: Graham Baker - Property & Asset Manager

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Corporate Services and COVID-19 Response and Recovery
- Democracy and Transparency
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Policy Co-ordination and Regional Engagement
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Financial implications:

As mentioned within the body of the report, consistent and quality monitoring of the contract is required to ensure the financial benefits that are expected from the Integrated Asset Management

Contract (IAMC) through the Price per Property (PPP) and Price per Void (PPV) models are achieved.

Legal implications:

There are no issues raised in the report on which Legal Services need to comment at this time, but if performance continues to fall below that which is set out within the contract then there needs to be consideration of penalty clauses. Early legal advice needs to be sought.

Equalities impact Choose an impact level

Medium Impact

We have involved tenants throughout the process through the Housing Review Board, tenants groups and as part of the evaluation process. We have continued to involve tenants throughout mobilisation through tenant groups and through direct representation on a number of working groups.

Climate change Medium Impact

We have engaged with Ian Williams as one of our key Partners in relation to their Carbon Footprint and this work is ongoing.

Risk: High Risk

Not having sufficient contracting arrangements in place presents risks to management and maintenance of tenant's homes.

Links to background information [HRB Agenda 24 January 2019](#) (Item 10) [HRB 20 September 2018](#) (Item 11) [HRB 21 June 2018](#) (Item 13) [HRB 11 January 2018](#) (item 11) [HRB 12 January 2017](#) (item 14 and 15) [HRB 9 March 2017](#) (item 11) [HRB 15 June 2017](#) (item 9) [HRB 7 September 2017](#) (item 10) [HRB 28 March 2019](#) [HRB 20 June 2019](#) (item 11)

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- Outstanding Place and Environment
- Outstanding Homes and Communities
- Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- Outstanding Council and Council Services

1. Background

- 1.1 At the January 2020 meeting an update was provided to the Board identifying a number of areas that are being monitored very closely in order to work towards improved performance. Since that time, intense work has been carried out and is continuing with a number of Officers focusing on all elements of the contract to continually seek improvements with both the day to day management and performance of the Contract.
- 1.2 In the Autumn of 2020 we commissioned our Consultants Echelon to carry a the first detailed review of the Contract, their Report is currently being reviewed in detail; generally the Review looked at how the Contract is progressing, areas that need attention and areas that are working well. We are currently reviewing the recommendations of the Report and working with Ian Williams to agree and implement the recommended changes and improvements.

The general conclusion of the review is that the overall, the contract is making a reasonable positive contribution to central office overheads and profit. The individual workstreams are varied in that dwelling repairs made a significant positive contribution and compliance made a reasonable positive contribution whilst voids only made a small positive contribution and non-dwelling repairs made a loss

2 Staffing-

Ian Williams EDDC

2.1 Ian William’s are currently fully staffed at management level but the operative’s numbers fluctuate, they are constantly reviewing their operative levels and carry out recruitment as required to maintain the required levels. An area that is being explored is reviewing the skillset of the operatives to ensure that as well as having the required number of operatives they have the required skills to deliver on the Contract.

The recruitment of multi-skilled operatives in East Devon proved difficult which in turn impacted on their ability to complete a range of jobs on one visit.

We are continuing to monitor their sub-contract base to ensure that they have the required resource in place to both carry out specialist work as required and to provide additional support to the direct delivery teams as required; it is evident that they need to increase their level of sub-contract support.

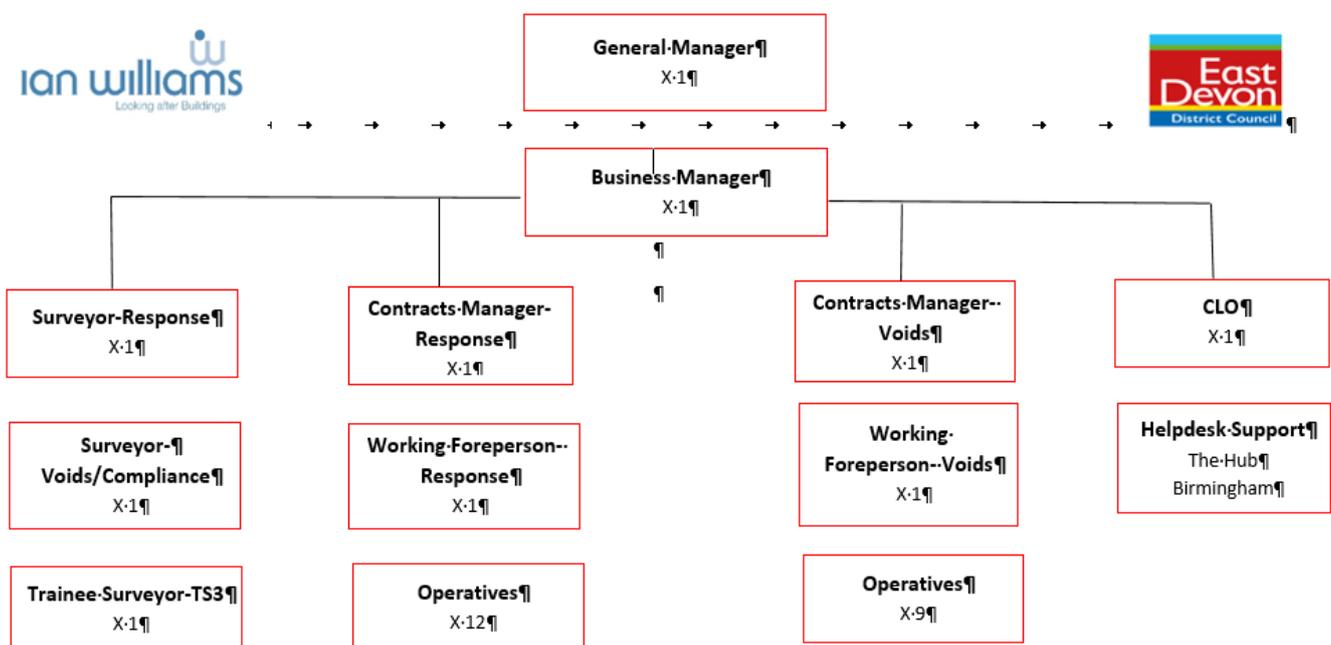
Ian Williams are currently advertising and interviewing for a Void Supervisor Role, to manage all voids, this role will work hand in hand alongside their Void Contract Manager to help assist in all areas of the voids. This will then allow the Void Contract Manager to focus more time on compliance and the overall void performance.

In addition Ian Williams have created a ‘Customer Liaison Officer’ role to work closely with EDDC’s Business Development & Customer Improvement Manager to manage complaints and tenant issues/queries relating to repairs/voids.

Ian Williams office staff are currently based working from home due to the current pandemic, this will be ongoing until it is safe to work in an office environment once again.

Below is the current Ian Williams structure:

....



Under the Contract there is a requirement for two schedulers from Ian Williams to be co-located in Exmouth Town Hall but this very quickly reduced to one due to resignation. This arrangement has always proved a challenge and was under review prior to the Covid 19 lockdown. Once Covid restrictions are lifted the Contract will be reviewed to decide if we return to co-location or continue with the present arrangement that is contrary to that set out in the Contract.

The absence of these schedulers has resulted in all scheduling being carried out by the central Hub/Call-Centre located in Birmingham. This arrangement throws up operational challenges which can take time to address.

At present whilst Ian Williams deliver the handyperson service the demand is such that it doesn't justify the employment of a permanent dedicated Handyperson operative that is a requirement of the Contract.

We are aware of the significant importance of the Handyperson service to our tenants and have advised Ian Williams that this role must be reinstated as required by the Contract, coupled with this EDDC will also be carrying out a review and re-branding/advertising of the service, this is currently ongoing with our Housing Business and Customer Improvement Manager working closely with our housing services team.

With the continuing impact of the Covid pandemic the demand for the Handyperson service remains low which is understandable bearing in mind the demographic of the Tenants that the service is aimed at.

2.2 **EDDC**

We are continuing to stabilise our own staffing arrangements and have been working closely with human resources to ensure that the Property & Asset team is back up to full capacity at the earliest opportunity.

We currently have the following vacancies:

- 1no. Senior Technical Officer (Asset Management & Climate Change)
- 1no. Programmed Works Officer
- 1no Programmed Works Officer (Climate Change)
- 1no. Technical Officer
- 2no. Reactive/Void Surveyors
- 1no. Repair Advisor

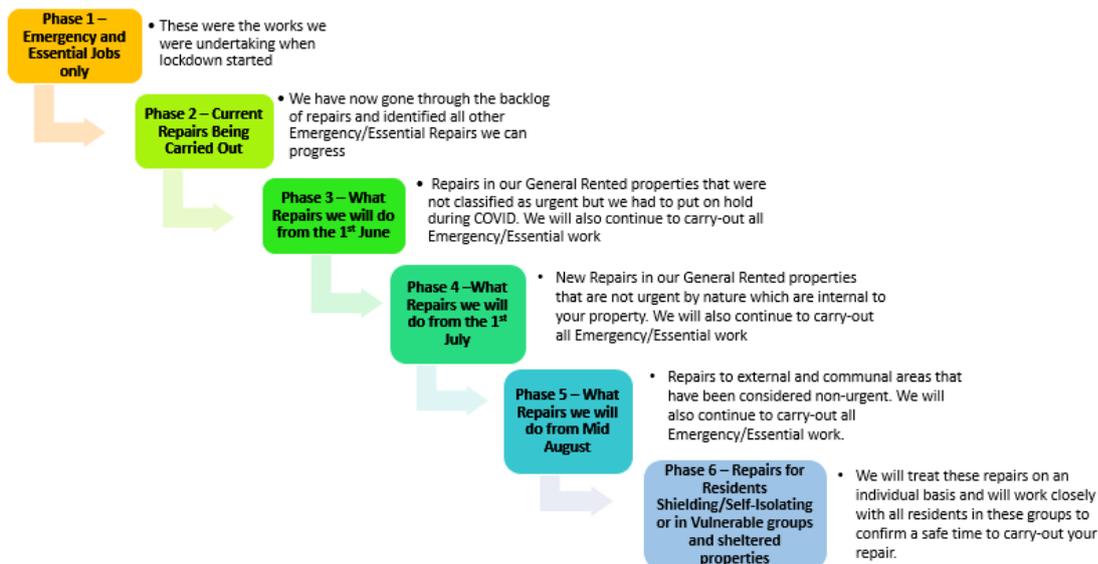
Recruitment is currently under way to fill these roles.

2.3 We have recently recruited two Repair Advisors to help manage the demand on the service, this has now partly addressed the understaffing issue on our frontline team. They are learning and understanding the contract to enable them to deliver the best possible service to our Tenants and colleagues within the wider Housing Team.

3. **Covid 19 Pandemic**

3.1 Once the restrictions imposed by the initial lockdown imposed in March of last year were eased we implemented a six part re-mobilisation plan all as set out below:

REPAIRS SERVICE RE-MOBILISATION PLAN



3.2 As part of the re-mobilisation plan both Ian Williams and EDDC recognised the importance to portray a consistent approach with communications.

3.3 The re-mobilisation plan was efficiently delivered and the Contract returned to ‘business as usual’ during September 2020 (with the exception of work to properties where residents may still be shielding/self-isolating) but with the caveat that Health & Safety working restrictions for operatives still apply.

3.4 The void side of the service has still to return to normal and as set out in the Contract as at present Health & Safety restrictions prevent the pre-inspection process being carried out while a property remains occupied other than that they are being in accordance with the Contract.

4 Current position

4.1 Following challenges thrown up by the Covid 19 as already stated the IAMC Contract has now returned to a relative state of normality.

4.2 We have now entered the second year of the Contract, as part of this milestone our external Consultants, Echelon have carried out the annual review all as set out in the terms of the Contract.

4.3 Whilst focus will remain on the core elements of the Contract we are looking forwarding to working with Ian Williams to:

- Enhance and develop the compliance and cyclical servicing work streams that have been introduced into the Contract.
- Review and re-launch the handyman service.
- Introduce a programme of property MOT’s.
- Introduce scheme service days.
- Develop the Social Value delivery side of the Contract.

4.4 Following an announcement by the Prime Minister on 4th January 2021 we have now entered a further national lockdown due to an escalation in the Covid pandemic, the lockdown is not as restrictive as that imposed in March 2020 and we are therefore able to maintain the delivery (business as usual) of the IAMC Contract subject to compliance with all statutory Government Health & Safety guidance.

- 4.5 Whilst we and our Contractors are able to maintain delivery of the service we remain mindful that some of our Tenants may fall into the vulnerable/shielding categories defined by the Government and as such access to properties may be restricted and impact on the ability of Contractors to carry out required work.
- 4.6 The nature of the Covid pandemic is such that Government Guidance is forever changing, as a Property & Asset Team we, with our Contractor closely monitor all such information as it is released, this being the case we are able to react and tailor the service to deliver the best possible service in line with such Guidance.
- 4.7 In addition we also have a robust communication plan in place to ensure that all changes are relayed to our colleagues in the wider Housing Team and importantly to our Tenants, all platforms are utilised to deliver these messages.

5. Complaints:

- 5.1 We regularly review and monitor complaints resulting from both reactive repair and void works, the intention is always to address and complaints in a timely manner to avoid them escalating.
- 5.2 As well as addressing complaints we are now adopting a 'lessons learnt' discipline as part of any review to identify what has gone wrong and why, then hopefully put measures in place to prevent re-occurrence.
- 5.3 Complaints are an Agenda item at all monthly Operational Group meetings.
We are looking into remobilising our Repair Group, as this was on hold due to Covid-19, complaints will be discussed in this group.
- 5.4 Our Housing Business and Customer Improvement Manager has created a quarterly complaint and issues review for Ian Williams, this highlights trends and areas that need quick improvement. This highlights the lessons learnt and in which area (ie. Contractor, Council etc.)

6. Customer Satisfaction:

- 6.1 During Covid Customer Satisfaction surveys fell off the radar, we have now re-focused our efforts in gathering data in this area as we fully understand the importance of such feedback, indeed is one of the reportable key performance indicators (KPI's).
- 6.2 Following consultation with our Repairs Service Review Group the questionnaire has been adjusted and the questions altered to better suit the tenants and the KPI requirements of the Contract. Paper surveys are now being distributed by our Contractor and are supported telephone surveys carried out by our Repairs Advisors, all of which is giving us a clear informed indication on Ian William's performance.
- 6.3 We are finalising a void questionnaire that we will be left behind at our recently tenanted properties, this will then enable the incoming tenant to advise us on the property and their feedback on the service. This is in the final consultation stage with our colleagues in the Allocations Team as the feedback will also relate to elements within their service.
- 6.4 KPI monitoring has proved challenging during the Covid period, as restrictions are lifted KPI reporting has returned to a semblance of normality.
- 6.5 A single KPI Report is produced and reviewed in detail at the monthly Operational Meetings and signed off as agreed; the KPI's are then presented quarterly to the Core Group for final agreement/acceptance.
- 6.6 Our KPI's are now running in line with the contract, this has made improvements on both sides, such as; Voids, Post Inspections and Data being accurately recorded and monitored.

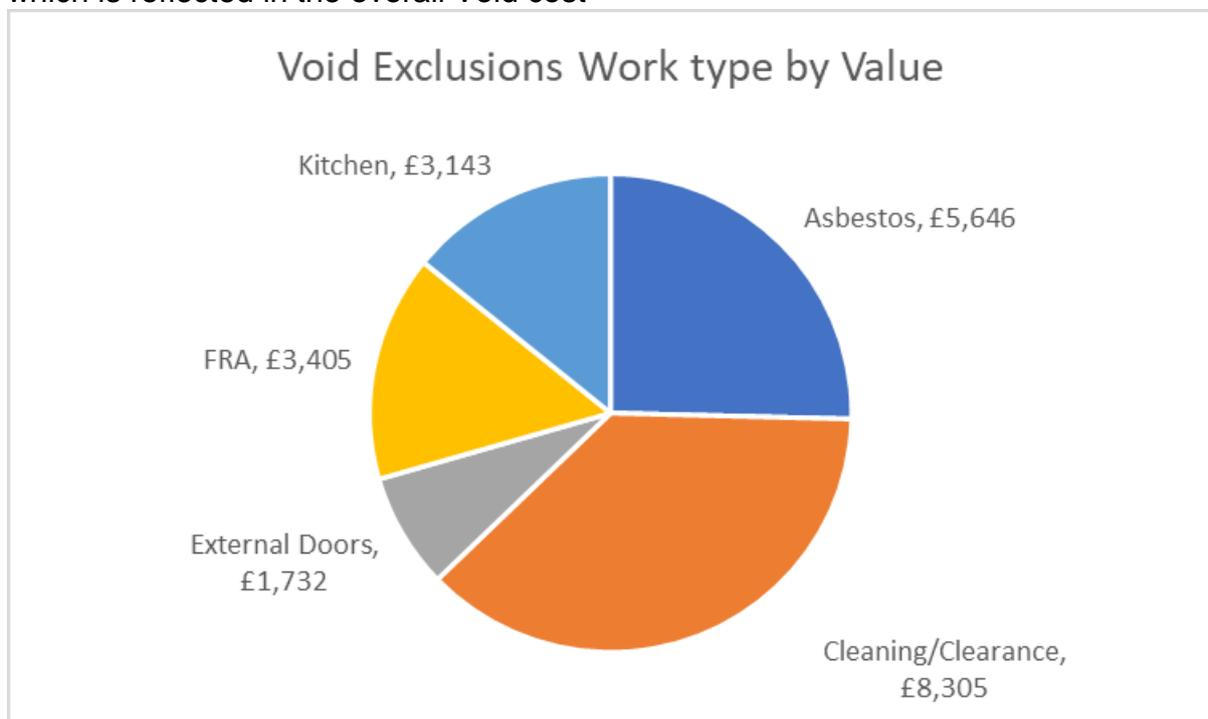
7. Cost Analysis

7.1 We are working closely with finance to carefully monitor costs. We hold a monthly financial meeting to discuss payments, trends and budgets to ensure we remain on target.

7.2 Voids

Voids are monitored on a property by property basis and highlighted as to whether they are above or below the PPV threshold. In our November 2020 KPI report, this highlighted our average PPV cost is at £3,461 this has dramatically improved, July's KPI was £6,088 which was high, this was due to the constant exclusions being added onto most voids. We have seen a huge improvement on costs to our void properties.

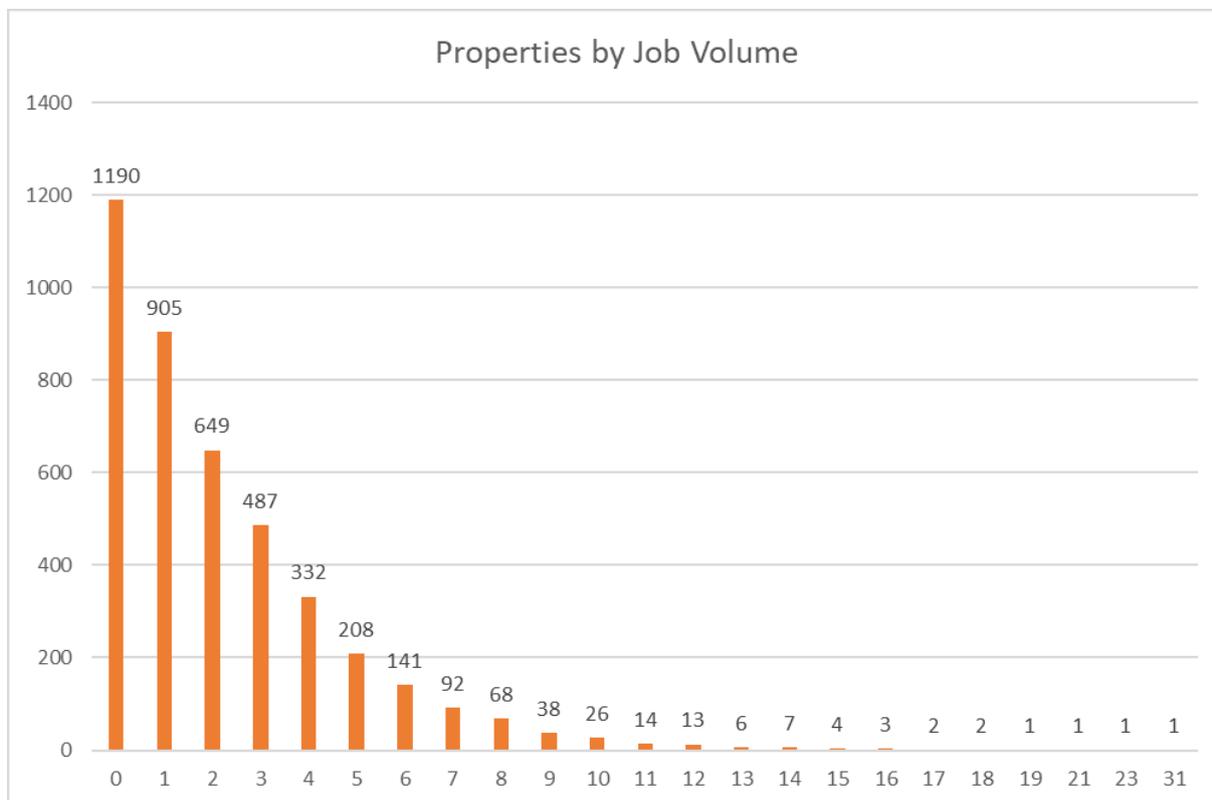
Exclusions from the PPV is constantly reviewed on voids, the following diagram illustrates typical exclusions; the pie chart relates a sample of 15 voids reviewed on a desktop basis and shows the highest 5 types of exclusion/expenditure which covers 57% exclusion related spend in a the sample (NOTE: this sample was taken from Voids carried out early in the Contract and whilst highlighting the issues exclusions are now generally being reduced which is reflected in the overall Void cost



7.3 Price Per Property (PPP) Analysis

All PPP costs incurred are separately reviewed on a month by month basis with the Price Per Property monthly payment of £118k.

The following diagram indicates the properties by repair volume during the first nine months of the Contract:



7.4 On average 2.25 repairs are carried out per property, and as shown in the graph, a total of 1,190 properties have had no repairs carried out in the year. This equates to 28% of EDDC tenanted properties. The number of repairs per property is moderately higher than would be expected for a nine-month period. The number of properties with no repairs is also slightly lower than average, which we would typically expect to be around 30-35%. There may be multiple reasons for this higher volume of repairs such as the demographics of the residents and residents' trust in the service, due to this it is difficult to reduce repairs volumes.

7.5 At the high demand end of the scale, there are a total of 15 properties which have had over 15 orders in the year.

7.6 For the high-volume properties, the majority had quite varied types of repairs. These properties/repair volumes are currently being reviewed.

8. PPP Exclusions

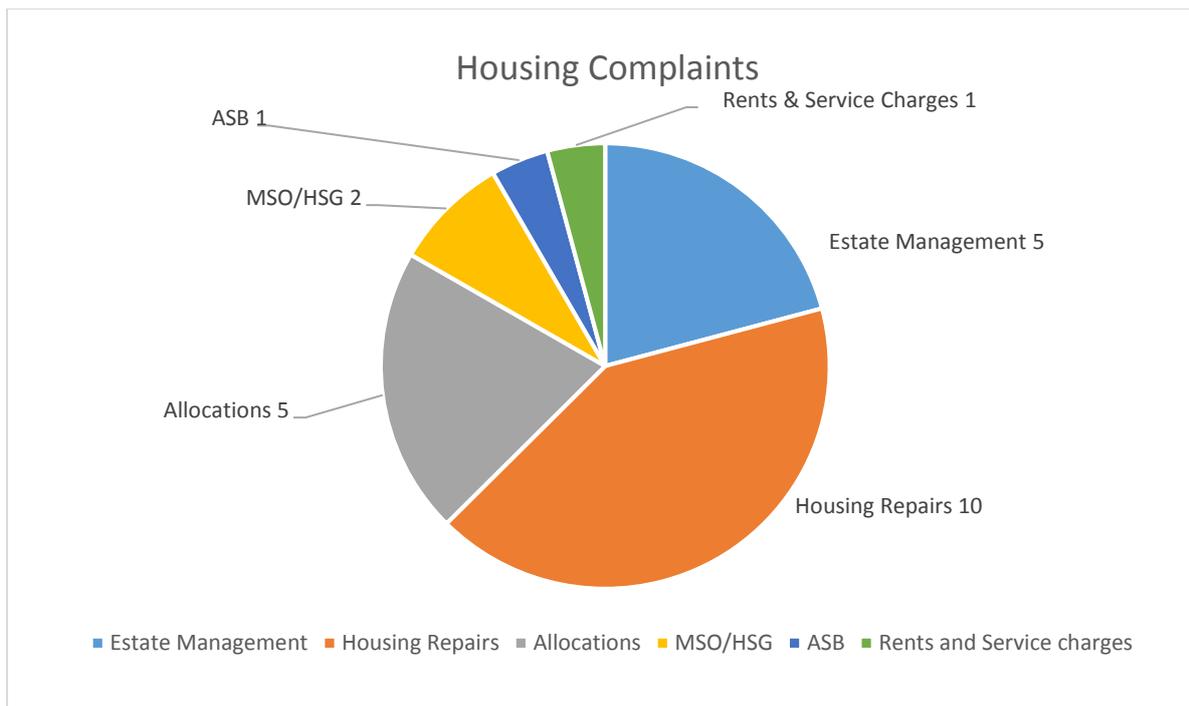
8.1 All works that are excluded from PPP are separately monitored on a property by property and job by job basis. Each one is flagged as to being above or below the 1k agreed job limit. Where a job is below the £1k limit this will be reviewed to ensure we are comfortable that the reason for the exclusion that was made at the confirmation stage was correct.

9. Conclusion

9.1 Following our report in September 2020, we have seen a vast improvement across board to the Ian Williams contract including:

- Our costings per void has decreased.
- Further training had been provided by external consultancies across board, to heighten the awareness of how the contract works.

- We are looking forward to building on our working relationship with Ian Williams and further improving the delivery of the IAMC Contract.



Service	Number of complaints	Service failure	Decision making	Staff conduct	Complaint covers 2 areas	Complaint covers 3 areas
Housing	24 (38, 18, 15, 23)	20 (28, 9, 4, 11)	2 (6, 6, 8, 11)	2 (4, 3, 3, 1)	0 (0, 0, 0, 0)	0 (0, 0, 0, 0)

Complaints for Housing have come down on the whole but complaints for repairs still remain high. The above chart shows how the complaints from April to September inclusive have been divided and repair complaints are twice as high as the next highest group. They mostly consist of service failures.

Of the 10 listed for repairs these consist of a mixture of poor communication from both EDDC officers and Ian Williams and other factors including long delays, contractor activity and attitude. Please see the below table for a brief description of the complaint and the response feedback.

Complaint	Feedback following investigation
Complaint about the lack of communication in response to enquiries about damp investigations on the gable end of the property.	Ian Williams were meant to go out in January following the changeover of contractors but this did not happen due to a backlog of work. Arranged for a surveyor to attend so see what repairs needed doing and to assess the scale of the damp in the house. Further repairs were agreed.
Complaint about the workmanship of an electrician and plumber sent by Ian Williams to install a new shower. They did not use dust sheets or clean up after themselves and left shards of ceramic tile on the floor. There	Apology made for the contractors who attended and confirmed that the level of workmanship and care taken was not acceptable. Ian Williams have also privately

<p>was subsequently a leak on the shower and the plumber tried to insist the shower was defective. They thought the contractors showed a clear overwhelming lack of respect in their home and complete disregard of safety.</p>	<p>apologised. All works have since been completed.</p>
<p>Complaint that at the void and when the electrical inspection was carried out the fuse in the socket that the washing machine plugged into was not checked and there was an incorrect fuse installed. This meant that when the tenant plugged in the washing machine it broke beyond repair.</p>	<p>Ian Williams confirmed that this socket had been checked and there was a correct fuse installed but as it is not stated on the certificate it is the tenant's word against Ian Williams' electrician. On the certificate it states only 15% of sockets were checked. As we cannot categorically confirm that the correct fuse was installed we agreed as a gesture of goodwill to make a contribution towards a new washing machine.</p>
<p>Complaint that EDDC will not arrange for latex levelling screed to be applied to the lounge and bedroom flooring before the tenant has a new carpet laid.</p>	<p>We have confirmed that this is the tenant's responsibility.</p>
<p>Complaint that Ian Williams did not turn up to fix the toilet in the bathroom and that repairs staff and Ian Williams staff were rude and unhelpful when they called in for an update.</p>	<p>Works carried out recently which include a repair to the shower screen; fitting a grab-rail; installing a new plug; fitting a new toilet seat; and a replacement cistern with isolation valve. As far as we are aware, and based on the notes made by our contractor, the toilet is working, having had a temporary fix. Statement of need has been received and is now awaiting a bathroom upgrade. Until this takes place any further repairs in the bathroom will be temporary repairs only.</p>
<p>Complaint about longstanding damp issues in the property but we have carried out a survey and established that the damp and mould is caused by lifestyle and overcrowding. This is essentially not a structural issue with the property but caused by the way the tenants live in the property. AirTech survey recommends a PIV unit to be installed but as the tenant is bidding on properties to move she does not want the upheaval of the works if she is not going to be staying long-term.</p>	<p>Advised that the works need to be booked in and carried out as there is no guarantee that she will be successful in bidding on a property in the next 12 months.</p>
<p>Complaint that we installed a standard kitchen instead of an adapted kitchen which meant the tenant was not able to move back in following a stay in hospital and a nursing home whilst the works were being carried out at her flat. As she was not able to move in before lockdown in March 2020 she then</p>	<p>A decision was made by EDDC to install the standard kitchen to enable the tenant to move back in as the relatives of the tenant were pushing for this to happen as soon as possible. An OT assessment had not been carried out despite EDDC advising the tenant's family that this was necessary</p>

<p>had to spend months in the nursing home which was very stressful.</p>	<p>before an adapted kitchen would be installed. Subsequently an OT assessment was carried out in June and the kitchen and bathroom has since needed completely adapting to enable the tenant to be self-sufficient at a great cost to the council.</p>
<p>Complaint that EDDC officers have not treated the tenant fairly or with compassion with regards to the temporary accommodation and repairs to the property after the flood damage.</p>	<p>We Apologised for the issues the tenant faced with the accommodation and that their possessions whilst already damaged had been left uncovered in the back garden; and for the issues with contractors not emptying the dehumidifiers which caused a further leak. The initial temporary accommodation was limited due to what was available at the time due to the lockdown. More suitable accommodation was found for the family which they stayed in for a few weeks prior to them moving back into their home. An offer of compensation was also made for the poor communication, issues with the temporary accommodation and for the errors made with the dehumidifiers and uncovered possessions. Offer has not been accepted.</p>
<p>Complaint about the peeling paint on the facias and lean to at the back with supporting pole and EDDC and Ian Williams lack of communication; not keeping her updated and sending contractors out that don't know what they are there to do and also not completing the work to the level she expects.</p>	<p>After several visits and survey it was decided that the work, which was originally put onto a painting programme early next year for the facias, could be carried out as reactive as the complainant is frequently contacting the repairs team about it. The facias are now being over cladd along with the adjoining property as well as the lean to. The tenant is not happy with this action but it has been decided that the long term maintenance of the facias means that this approach is better. More jobs have since been reported by the tenant and when contractors are attending the tenant is questioning why they are there and then complaining about their attitude. This has now progressed to stage 2.</p>
<p>Complaint that repairs and the contractors had been contacting him by phone and in writing at his new address regarding a gas safety check for his previous address.</p>	<p>Apologised and arranged for repairs to update their system and remove his contact details for the previous address.</p>

We have since received a further 5 stage 1 complaints for repairs which are still open but a brief description of each complaint is below.

<p>Complaints received Since October</p>	<p>Feedback following investigation</p>
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<p>Further complaint received but the tenant has raised a lot of new issues regarding how the complaint has been handled and the repairs carried out and how officers have dealt with the issues she has raised.</p>	<p>Explained why some actions were taken in respect of arranging officers to be present at the property when the contractors were on site. The tenant had moved back into the property when they were supposed to still be in temporary accommodation and were questioning the contractors on site and interfering with their work. It was agreed that officers needed to be on site during the works to ensure they could proceed without hindrance. This caused some distress to the tenant who also complained that EDDC officers had been discriminatory towards them by asking them to remove the TV from the wall in the lounge. This has now progressed to stage 2.</p>
<p>Complainant reported an issue with the hot water in June but it still has not been fixed. The neighbour had a new boiler and the water tanks in the loft were removed. It seems that the tank was also removed for this property by accident and has left the tenant with no hot water or heating as the heating system cannot fill up.</p>	
<p>Tenant reported a leak at the bathroom tap but when plumber attended initially he could only do a temporary fix as a part needed ordering. This has taken some time and the leak has got worse flooded the bathroom damaging laminate and carpet flooring.</p>	
<p>Tenant has had a broken boiler since 18th October and has had to use electric heaters which are very expensive to use. She is struggling to keep up to the cost of using these and had been promised a contribution to this cost but this has not materialised.</p>	
<p>Tenant reported to us in September that night storage heater in lounge was not working. IW have been out and confirmed that it needs replacing but some weeks later, and despite numerous chaser phone calls, she is still waiting for something to be done. Property is cold and both she and husband have long term health conditions</p>	

Report to: Housing Review Board

Date of Meeting 21st January 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Social Housing White Paper

Report summary:

This report summarises the recently published White Paper on Social Housing. The contents of the White Paper are likely to be translated into legislation and will signal a significant change in the governance of social housing. The proposals recognise the importance of social housing and the need to prioritise tenant safety, involvement, satisfaction, complaint handling and good housing management.

Much of the detail contained in the White Paper is centred on consumer regulation, in effect a social housing charter, and recreates a stronger regulatory regime providing the Regulator of Social Housing with more powers. Complaint handling, tenant satisfaction and tenant engagement is being prioritised alongside tenant safety.

Recommendation:

That the Board note the contents and recommendations of the Social Housing White Paper; and

Recommend that the Housing Service - start to make preparations for the forthcoming legislation and ensure that our policies and procedures are up to date in respect of tenant safety and tenant involvement; and

We improve our complaint handling processes to improve tenant satisfaction; and

Review the resources and capacity to deliver the new requirements; and

We revisit our Systems Thinking purposes to ensure that we focus on What Matters to tenants and reduce failure demand; and

We work with tenant representatives to embrace the sentiments and contents of the White Paper.

Reason for recommendation:

To assist the Housing Review Board with its understanding of the contents of the Social Housing White Paper and to begin to plan for the greater emphasis being placed on consumer regulation for council tenants.

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

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

Climate Action

- Coast, Country and Environment
- Corporate Services and COVID-19 Response and Recovery
- Democracy and Transparency
- Economy and Assets
- Finance
- Policy Co-ordination and Regional Engagement
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Financial implications:

To be completed by Finance.

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications on which to comment. This is a paper which seeks to review and refine current operational procedures in line with recommendations set out in the White Paper.

Equalities impact High Impact

The White Paper is designed to empower tenants and create a stronger form of consumer regulation and redress.

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Medium Risk; The implications of not addressing the contents of the White Paper will be damaging to the Council’s reputation as a social landlord.

Links to background information [Social Housing White Paper](#)

[CIH What you need to know about the Social Housing White Paper](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- Outstanding Place and Environment
- Outstanding Homes and Communities
- Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- Outstanding Council and Council Services

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Three years after a former Communities Secretary promised a Social Housing White Paper that would be a “wide-ranging top-to-bottom review of the issues facing the sector” and the “most substantial report of its kind for a generation”, the much-anticipated policy document was published in November 2020.
- 1.2 The 76-page document looks to realign the relationship between landlord and tenant, through greater transparency and accountability, and drive a more consumer-focused social housing regulatory regime.
- 1.3 The white paper puts forward a series of proposals that will change how social landlords operate – from new tenant satisfaction measures, to improved complaints processes, to the removal of the ‘serious detriment’ tests. Disappointingly the White Paper does not cover some of the big issues around social housing such as how much is needed, who it is for and how much should be paid. The White Paper is mainly about consumer protection and redress, it is a charter for social housing and recreates a lot of the consumer regulation issues that this government scrapped in 2010 along with the Tenant Services Authority.

- 1.4 A summary of the White Paper has been reproduced in **annex 1**.
- 1.5 The advance notice of changes mean that we should use the time ahead to prepare for the changes being signalled. This should be a driver to improve our customer satisfaction responses and complaint handling. Complaints are a sign of service failure that creates waste and damages our reputation.
2. **Chapter one** of the white paper addresses the catalyst behind the need for change: the Grenfell Tower fire.
 - 2.1 The document says that the tragedy revealed “significant failings”, which proposed changes will seek to remedy.
 - 2.2 One such measure is to launch a consultation on mandating smoke and carbon monoxide alarms in social housing. The government says it is “unacceptable” that around 200,000 social homes are without a working smoke alarm and more than 2.3 million are without a working carbon monoxide alarm.
 - 2.3 Responses to the Social Housing Green Paper showed “overwhelming support” for consistency in safety measures across social and private rented housing, according the document. A separate consultation will look at ways to improve protection for social housing tenants from poor electrical safety.
 - 2.4 Improvements to the sharing of fire safety data between relevant bodies will also be driven as part of the white paper proposals. Under the new plans, the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) will be expected to prepare a memorandum of understanding with the Health and Safety Executive to ensure sharing of information with the new Building Safety Regulator, proposed in the Building Safety Bill.
 - 2.5 Through the new Building Safety Regulator a resident’s panel will be established to “assist in determining its priorities and informing any guidance that it publishes on resident engagement”. A person responsible for complying with health and safety requirements will also be legally required, under the White Paper proposals. The document says: “We want to make sure that residents know how to communicate with their landlord or building manager on fire and structural safety issues, and that they feel confident their voices are heard.”

Chapter two: to know how your landlord is performing

Box A: Draft Tenant Satisfaction Measures		Box A: Draft Tenant Satisfaction Measures	
Theme	Draft tenant satisfaction measures	Respectful and helpful engagement	Number of complaints relating to fairness and/or respect, relative to the size of the landlord
Keeping properties in good repair	Decent Homes Standard compliance		Tenant satisfaction that their landlord listens to their views and takes notice of them
	Responsive repairs completed right first time		Tenant satisfaction with landlord's engagement with tenants
	Tenant satisfaction with landlord's repairs and maintenance service		
Maintaining building safety	Compliance with health and safety obligations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gas safety • Electrical safety • Fire safety • Asbestos • Water safety • Lift safety 	Responsible neighbourhood management	% of communal areas meeting the required standard
	Tenant satisfaction with the health and safety of their home		Number of complaints relating to communal areas, relative to the size of the landlord
Effective handling of complaints	Number of complaints relative to the size of the landlord		Tenant satisfaction with landlord actions to keep communal areas clean and safe
	% of complaints resolved within agreed timescale		Tenant satisfaction with landlord contribution to the neighbourhood associated with their home
	Tenant satisfaction with landlord's complaints handling		Number of complaints relating to anti-social behaviour, relative to the size of the landlord
			Tenant satisfaction with landlord's handling of anti-social behaviour
		Overall	Tenant overall satisfaction with the service their landlord provides

- 3.1 One of the white paper's aims is to increase the transparency and accountability of social landlords, particularly for the tenants who live in their homes. To do this the government will call on the regulator to come up with a better way for landlords to measure their performance and give tenants more opportunity to hold them to account on actions and performance.
- 3.2 At the heart of this will be a new set of tenant satisfaction measures that will see all landlords measured on a set of criteria that tenants will have access to and can compare with other landlords.
- 3.3 These measures will cover a number of areas, including building safety maintenance, the effective handling of complaints, whether landlords are keeping up with repairs, and whether they are engaging with residents in a respectful manner. This will then be reflected in an overall tenant satisfaction assessment.
- 3.4 Landlords will also have to provide details on chief executives' salaries, executive remuneration costs and management costs, relative to the size of the landlord.
- 3.5 The White Paper also aims to make it easier for tenants and leaseholders to access information in relation to their landlord's housing management. This will be driven by a new 'access to information' scheme that will allow tenants to access information from their landlord or be supported by politicians or journalists to do so. This will relate to information about the organisations themselves, but also about contractors working for the landlords.
- 3.6 Housing associations will only be able to refuse giving out information on grounds similar to that of the exemptions used under the Freedom of Information Act – such as commercial confidentiality.
- 3.7 Tenants will be able to challenge these decisions if they feel that their landlord has unreasonably withheld information from them. If this is the case, landlords will have to carry out an internal review, and if it is not resolved at that stage, the Housing Ombudsman will review and take a decision on the case.

- 3.8 The White Paper also proposes increasing transparency around the way in which social landlords spend their money. As part of this, the government will work with the regulator to ensure that residents are provided with a clear breakdown of how income is being spent. This will also give tenants the opportunity to challenge certain decisions.
- 3.9 A responsible person for consumer standards will be needed for every social housing organisation. This person will ensure that the landlord is delivering good customer service and drive culture change where deficiencies are found.
- 4. Chapter three: to have complaints dealt with promptly**
- 4.1 Changes to the Housing Ombudsman will be a key part of the White Paper's aims. The document sets out the government's plan to strengthen and improve the organisation's role in dealing with resident complaints.
- 4.2 Prior to the White Paper being published, the government had already agreed to increase the organisation's resources in an attempt to speed up the time it takes to make decisions.
- 4.3 In July the Housing Ombudsman launched a new Complaint Handling Code, against which landlords are being asked to self-assess by the end of this year. From 2021, the Ombudsman will have the power to issue complaint handling failures to landlords that do not comply with the code.
- 4.4 In addition to these previously announced changes, the government has said it will launch an awareness campaign so social tenants know their rights and the routes to complaint. Social landlords will be required to advertise information about their complaint procedures in their offices and shared residential spaces.
- 4.5 The government also reiterated a commitment made as part of the Building Safety Bill to remove the requirement for complaints to the Housing Ombudsman to first be raised with MPs, councillors or a designated tenant panel.
- 4.6 In an attempt to ensure landlords are accountable for their responses to complaints, from March next year the ombudsman will publish the details of cases it has determined on its website and data on individual landlords' complaint volumes, categories and outcomes. This information will be shared with the RSH to inform the regulator's assurance of landlords' compliance with its consumer standards.
- 4.7 The relationship between the Housing Ombudsman and the RSH will be further strengthened by introducing a statutory requirement for both bodies to co-operate with each other in undertaking their responsibilities. The Housing Ombudsman will become a statutory consultee for any proposal concerning changes to the RSH and vice versa.
- 5. Chapter four: to be treated with respect backed by a strong regulator**
- 5.1 This chapter represents the focus government direction. In its introductory passage, the government makes no mistake about declaring that "unlike the successful economic regulation regime, the current regime of consumer regulation is not strong enough to ensure that social landlords... deliver to the expectations set out in our new charter".
- 5.2 Broadly speaking, the aim is this: to move back to a proactive approach to consumer regulation, in line with the regime for economic standards and returning to the days before the Tenant Services Authority was scrapped by the coalition government in 2010. Consultation work following the green paper indicated "strong support" for this shift from residents and landlords alike, the document states.
- 5.3 That means a number of changes in practice, the most eye-catching of which are: the scrapping of the 'serious detriment' test (which currently blocks the regulator from intervening on consumer issues unless it believes tenants are at risk of severe harm) and the introduction of a new inspections programme.

- 5.4 Ministers envisage a three-stage system here, where desktop reviews of metrics like tenant satisfaction are complemented by four-yearly inspections of all social landlords owning more than 1,000 homes, with specific reactive investigations at organisations of concern.
- 5.5 This approach will be backed up by stronger enforcement powers for the RSH, including the ability to challenge landlords with performance improvement plans and inform them of inspections just two days before they happen. The vision is for a consumer regulation function that is “proactive, proportionate, outcome-focused and risk-based”.
- 5.6 Unsurprisingly, there will be an emphasis on safety – with social landlords required by law to name a person with responsibility for compliance. Transparency is also a key watchword, building on measures set out in previous chapters, with this to become a part of the RSH’s statutory objectives.
- 5.7 Clearly getting all this off the ground will require significant resourcing, and the White Paper promises to make sure the RSH can hire “senior leadership and staff with the right expertise in consumer regulation”.
- 5.8 As for when these measures will come into effect, the paper notes that they must be “carefully designed” and “involve extensive engagement with the sector”, but pledges that necessary legislation will be passed “as soon as parliamentary time allows”.
- 6. Chapter five: to have your voice heard by your landlord**
- 6.1 This part of the White Paper makes proposals on how engagement between tenants and landlords can be improved, as well as how tenants can be empowered to make their voices heard.
- 6.2 One way the government intends to do this is by making sure the RSH requires landlords to show how they have sought out and considered ways to improve tenant engagement.
- 6.3 From a government perspective, the White Paper also commits to ensuring ongoing ministerial engagement with social housing tenants. This will ensure residents are kept at the heart of future policymaking, the document says.
- 6.4 The government says it will also work with national tenant-led bodies to deliver new opportunities and an “empowerment programme” that will be open to all social housing residents. The programme will deliver a range of learning and support activities, with the aim of giving residents the tools to better influence their landlords and hold them to account.
- 7. Chapter six: to have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in**
- 7.1 The White Paper highlights the impact that the COVID-19 pandemic has had on reinforcing the need for a decent and safe home. It suggest that housing standards in the social sector are often far worse than those of the private rented sector.
- 7.2 In response to this divide in housing quality, ministers have confirmed that they will review the Decent Homes Standard. The standard sets the minimum quality that social homes should meet. The document states that the government aims to complete the first part of the review by autumn 2021.
- 7.3 The government says that responses to the idea of a review in its Green Paper revealed that many feel the current Decent Homes Standard is not “fully effective” and that there were calls for more investment in areas such as green spaces and crime prevention methods, including CCTV and better lighting.
- 7.4 The White Paper acknowledges the relationship between housing and physical and mental health. The government says it will continue to engage with the latest evidence on the link between housing and health, including Covid -19 transmissions.
- 7.5 As part of efforts to improve mental well-being, the government has urged all social landlords to adopt policies to allow tenants to be able to keep pets.

- 7.6 A review of professionalisation will also be held to consider how well housing staff are equipped to work with people who have mental health needs.
- 7.7 When it comes to anti-social behaviour, social tenants are not always clear on who they are supposed to report incidents to. In response, the government has said it will clarify the different responsibilities that police, councils and housing associations have in tackling the issue.
- 7.8 The White Paper says: “We will work with the National Housing Federation and Local Government Association to encourage social landlords to inform residents of their right to make a community trigger application.” This would result in a review of anti-social behaviour in an area.
- 7.9 The document recognises shortcomings in the social housing allocation systems, saying that “systems sometimes fail to match adapted (or adaptable) homes to people who need them, often because of a lack of data about the accessible social housing stock in the area”. As a result, the government will consider how to improve joint working between local authorities and housing associations to ensure social housing is allocated efficiently.
- 8. Chapter seven: to be supported to take your first step to ownership**
- 8.1 The White Paper contains a reminder of the government’s unceasing determination to promote homeownership?
- 8.2 This final chapter is less weighty than the others. Instead, it focuses mainly on setting out previous affordable housing policy announcements and restating ministers’ priorities. So that includes, for instance, mention of the upcoming Affordable Homes Programme (AHP), the 2018 removal of the council Housing Revenue Account borrowing cap, and the overhaul of developer contributions mooted in this summer’s Planning White Paper.
- 8.3 The new shared ownership model and proposals for the Right to Shared Ownership also feature prominently. Beyond the expected enthusiasm for homeownership and “beautiful” housing, there are one or two vague statements that may be welcome to the sector. Ministers “want to see a step change in local authority delivery”, for example, and the new AHP will allow providers “to develop homes for social rent anywhere in England”.
- 8.4 There is recognition of the government’s support for community-led housing and a promise to “consider how best to maintain that support going forward”, but no new policy suggestions.
- 8.5 This chapter is perhaps most interesting for one thing it does not make reference too. There is a commitment to publish “the full evaluation” of the Voluntary Right to Buy pilot that is currently being completed in the Midlands, but no repetition of the Conservative manifesto promise to “evaluate new pilot areas”.
- 8.6 The Regulator of Social Housing already sets consumer standards and its role is to intervene where failure to meet the standards has caused, or could have caused, serious harm to tenants. These apply to all registered providers, including local authorities.

The 4 consumer standards are:

- Home Standard
- Tenancy Standard
- Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard.

I suggest we complete our self-assessment against these standards as part of our preparations for the new legislation.

Report to: Housing Review Board



Date of Meeting 21 January 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A

Your Home Your Wellbeing Research Report

Report summary:

This report presents the results and conclusions of a three year research partnership between East Devon District Council's (EDDC) housing department, the University of Birmingham's Research Centre on Household Assets and Saving Management (CHASM), and LiveWest.

The objective of the partnership was to build a richer understanding of people's experience of their home and the relationship between their home, landlord and wellbeing.

Over 3,500 social tenants, private renters (those on the Devon Home Choice housing register) and those in shared ownership responded to the survey. 58 respondents were also interviewed, some of whom were contacted over all three years of the study.

The key findings are below and a comprehensive report can be found as an appendix to this report.

- Having a good home matters to life overall life satisfaction and happiness
- Social housing has a positive impact on all aspects of wellbeing. It helps to reduce levels of anxiety, particularly for those facing mental health challenges, are less likely to report that they are struggling financially and are more likely to report that they are satisfied with their life.
- Respondents who do not feel safe or who feel they have no control in their home are more likely to report lower levels of life-satisfaction and are more likely to be anxious. Respondents who feel that they have privacy and control in their homes are more likely to report being happy.
- Satisfaction with the local area in which a home is situated is associated with higher levels of happiness and life satisfaction, and with lower levels of anxiety
- Half of all of those who we surveyed report that they are struggling to make ends meet. Those struggling to make ends meet are more likely to be anxious and less likely to be happy or satisfied with their life
- Respondents were likely to report that they experience poor mental health if they are less than 65 years old, are living alone, are living with non dependent children or feel like their home affects their wellbeing in a negative way
- Universal Credit is not working well for everyone and, in particular, it has a negative impact on the wellbeing of claimants with mental health challenges

What is at the heart of this research is a home is truly more than bricks and mortar.

As a social landlord what we do really does make a difference to the lives of our tenants from ensuring our stock is maintained to a high level to the additional support services we provide to our tenants as a social landlord.

The report also supports the growing national consensus that something needs to be 'done' about housing for many people living in East Devon. It is well documented that there is not just a shortage of housing across all tenures but for many people they are living in unsuitable and unaffordable homes and with few options for how to improve their housing situation. The result for many people is housing insecurity and financial struggle, with resultant negative impacts on wellbeing.

Recommendation:

1. Where appropriate to use evidence from this research to support housing's decision making and service planning
2. Ensure all teams within housing have access to the advice and expertise of the mental health specialist for supporting East Devon tenants
3. Better understand the housing needs of those on the Devon Home Choice register and support them on their housing journey
4. Continue to invest in our homes and neighbourhoods and ensure repairs and the programme works done to our properties are of a high standard
5. Support our universal credit claimants by helping them to maintain their tenancies and offer budgetary and financial advice where necessary
6. Continue to work with others to provide more housing opportunities and choices for people living in East Devon.

Reason for recommendation:

As a social landlord we must continue to provide a good quality housing service to our tenants but also remember East Devon's housing situation is no different to the national picture with many people continuing to be in housing need or with limited housing choices. We must work with partners and within our Council to address the housing situation faced by many whilst also celebrating social housing successes.

Officer: Natalie Brown, nabrown@eastdevon.gov.uk, 01395 515783

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action
- Corporate Services and COVID-19 Response and Recovery
- Democracy and Transparency
- Economy and Assets
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Financial implications:

There are no financial implications

Legal implications:

There are no legal implications on which to comment.

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Choose a risk level; [Click here](#) to enter text on risk considerations relating to your report.

Links to background information [Your Home Your Wellbeing Final Report](#)

[Your Home Your Wellbeing Year 2](#)

[Housing and Wellbeing Summary](#)

[Housing and Wellbeing Summary Final](#)

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- Outstanding Place and Environment
- Outstanding Homes and Communities
- Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- Outstanding Council and Council Services

1 Purpose of the research

1.1 To provide better data about the homes and services we, and others, provide and the relationship a home has on wellbeing.

1.2 Understanding customer experiences and satisfaction is pivotal to any service provider. We take pride in knowing how our tenants rate our services and we use satisfaction and performance information to benchmark how we are doing compared to others and to tell us about areas which need improvement.

1.3 Major change in policy from rent reductions to welfare reform has started to challenge housing providers and tenants in new ways. Now is the time to put in place research which can measure these changes. If not, we will not be able to properly interpret our satisfaction data and will land up making unsatisfactory inferences about the data.

1.4 It is also timely to start considering a different approach to how and what we ask our tenants. For too long satisfaction questions have been landlord driven with tenants being asked to rate our services but it is time to put the tenant rather than the landlord at the heart of our research. Finding out about the effects our homes and services may have on our tenants should be the research priority. This would allow us to reach a deeper understanding of tenant experience, going beyond snap shot satisfaction surveys and looking at the relationship between social housing and longer term life chances and opportunities.

1.5 Housing affects us all and for too long we have only focused on our social tenants without understanding what the housing situation and aspirations are for others living in East Devon.

2 Background

2.1 As a landlord we have a responsibility to ensure we provide a decent home and service for all our tenants. Over the years the role of social housing providers has changed and we now no longer just provide housing but we offer additional support services that we believe are of benefit to our tenants and communities. As our remit grows and changes it becomes increasingly important we understand what our role is and the impact our housing and our services have on our tenant's quality of life now and for the future. Recent evidence suggests housing tenure can impact on individual social, economic and psychological well being. It has explored whether housing could do more to reduce the disadvantage of those who spend time living in it, what the

actual effect social housing tenure may have on its residents, how these effects might be created, when and on whom the effects might be strongest and what the implications are for all involved.

2.2 Traditionally, we have relied on one off pieces of research (eg. STAR survey) to measure our tenants experiences and satisfaction with our services. This kind of research is useful to monitor the 'standard' of our services and benchmark satisfaction levels with those of other housing providers. However, there are disadvantages and questions are being asked about whether these surveys remain fit for purpose. There is a sense of frustration amongst some providers around how experiences of particular services affect overall reported satisfaction and the fact that a landlord might be meeting all service targets but tenants are still dissatisfied with the service, and the organisation overall (HCAT, 2015). Understanding what else might be going on and what other factors might be influencing and determining tenant satisfaction is becoming an increasingly more attractive research proposition.

2.3 A longitudinal study is an observational research method in which data is repeatedly gathered from the same subjects over a period of time. The advantage of this methodology is that it can measure the impact of policy change and can map our tenants' journey providing us with a deeper understanding of what the relationship is between tenant wellbeing and home helping us to shape our future approach for social housing service delivery. It can also help us to measure change and make more accurate inferences about our tenants experiences and expectations. The practical insights would also provide original and important contribution to the current policy and research debate, and provide us with an opportunity to influence the national debate.

2.4 Birmingham University and LiveWest agreed to partner us on this project. Amongst many benefits it brings the research quedos, objectiveness and an academic robustness to the study. It was also be a great opportunity to work in partnership with a local social housing provider and academic institution providing us with information about those living in different tenures across East Devon.

3 Key Findings

3.1 Our three years of data strongly suggests that social housing has a positive impact on individual wellbeing relative to other tenure options examined. Of our 4 wellbeing items, the most noticeable differences between social tenants and DHC registrants is in the levels of anxiety; the proportion of EDDC/LiveWest renters or shared owners who feel anxious are 12 percentage points (pp) (34% v 46%) lower than DHC registrants, and also those less satisfied with their lives at 13.9 pp (66.3% v 52.4%) lower. This data strongly suggests that social housing as a tenure has an important (positive) influence on wellbeing. This headline result is also maintained once a range of differing personal characteristics were controlled for as part of the multivariate analysis.

3.2 The value of security of tenure in social housing was also important. One interviewee, who was a recovering drug user and who used to sleep rough, moved into a social home in 2018. He told us that "*Getting a flat has made such a difference to my life, it's made a huge difference..... I now feel safe, you know I go home, lock the door, if I don't want to answer the door if someone knocks, I don't have to, but I generally do because I feel safe there, 'cos I am*". In subsequent interviews the stability of the social home continued to feature highly as an important factor in this participant's wellbeing.

3.3 There is a strong relationship between wellbeing and experiences of the home and that good experiences of the home translated to improved personal wellbeing and with landlord. Respondents who are satisfied with their landlords are 3.4 pp more likely to report being satisfied with life. Respondents who do not feel safe in their home are 3.4 pp less likely to report that they are satisfied with life.

3.4 Respondents who are satisfied with their local area are 13.2 pp more likely to report being happy, 8.5 pp more likely to report being satisfied with life, and 4.1 pp less likely to report being anxious. Positive perceptions of neighbourhood cohesion are related to higher levels of wellbeing. More specifically, respondents who hold positive perceptions of neighbourhood cohesion are 4.4 pp more likely to feel happy and 7.4 pp more likely to be satisfied with life.

3.5 Good social landlords play a significant role in the wellbeing of social tenants – over and above the material outcomes of the services and work they undertake. After controlling for a wide range of other factors, respondents who are satisfied with their landlords are 25.7 pp less likely to say there is a problem with their home that negatively affects their wellbeing. Satisfaction with maintenance and repairs are both associated with more happiness and less anxiety.

3.6 There are many factors that influence a person's sense of wellbeing. In our analysis we also sought to control for a number of such influences that are well documented in wellbeing research beyond the core features and physical aspects of the home that were our primary focus in this study. These include things such as physical health, marital status and employment history. But there are also other influences on wellbeing that intersect with social housing and which are not as well understood in the existing evidence and research base. A key example of this is financial wellbeing, and in particular in the context of this study's focus; the impact of housing costs and the benefits system. Across all of our sample, 49% of respondents say that they are struggling to make ends meet and the survey was able to identify the most prevalent characteristics of individuals who are most likely to report that they are struggling to make ends meet - female respondents, those with dependent children, respondents who are claiming universal credit and those who reported poor mental health. Overall respondents struggling to make ends meet are 10.1 pp more likely to be anxious, 10.1 pp less likely to be happy and 10.7 pp less likely to feel satisfied with life. Compared to the general population, the respondents to our survey are disproportionately from low income groups. But the results we have presented above point to a more complex set of interactions occurring in this population that create financial issues that go beyond the fact that this is lower income group than the average UK population

3.7 The richness of the data has also given us insights into respondents' experiences of home. Top problems for social tenants were paying bills, keeping warm and noisy neighbours and for those on the register it was the cost of rent, paying bills and having a suitable home. Women, those reporting poor mental health.

3.8 Being able to interview a number of the respondents over a number of years for the duration of the research has supported the findings of our quantitative data that having a secure and affordable home has huge benefits for positive wellbeing. Those who had moved into a social home during the study or just before it began spoke of the huge impact it had on their, and in some cases their family's quality of life. a working age man who had lost his well-paying job after some serious health difficulties, and who had been living in a social home for nearly a year when we interviewed him, for the first time, in the third year of the project. Describing a private landlord who refused to make important repairs and threatened retaliatory eviction, he told us he was in a "very bad place". The first impression on moving into a social home was being "*thankful for a clean place with straight walls*".

3.9 Attached to this report is a longer and more in depth report of the study. Three infographics for each year of the study are also included which presents the key results in an interesting and more visual way.

4 Conclusions

4.1 The research has provided us with better data about the homes and services we provide and their impact on the wellbeing of our tenants and others living in East Devon.

4.2 Understanding customer experiences and satisfaction is pivotal to any service provider. This 3 years study has shown a reduction in satisfaction amongst our own tenants with our service and this is something we need to listen to and improve upon. However, it has also shed light on a group of people living in East Devon who are really struggling and where we can we must try to act. We can, for example, continue putting pressure on private landlords to improve their homes and maintain standards, further understand those on the Devon Home Choice waiting list and

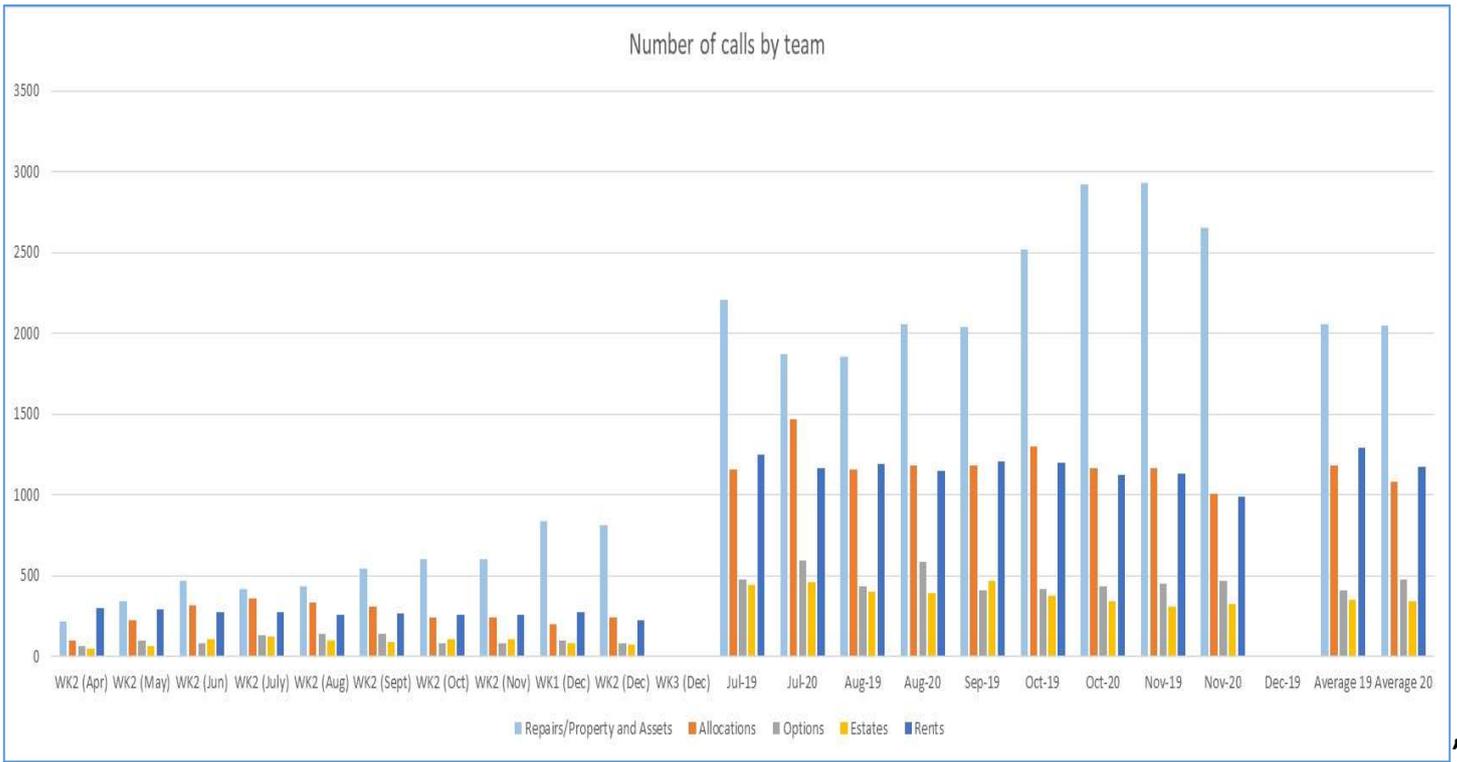
ensure the right people are being housed in the right homes at the right time and for those who might not be eligible for a social home to find innovative ways to help them in their housing journey.

4.3 With cuts and the closure of local temporary housing solutions, we are seeing an increasing number of people who are vulnerable and with highly complex needs needing to be housed. Support for them is falling to the landlord which, as the research has found, is a hugely important factor in improving their wellbeing. However, this presents challenges for the service from finding the right home in the right place to extra resource into helping maintain tenancies to officers needing expertise to deal with some of the issues. The research has provided additional evidence supporting what officers have been saying are the difficulties for the last couple of years and as such a new mental health specialist is going to be recruited to support the teams. Officers are also continuing to refer tenants and work closely with partner agencies, like homemaker, who can provide financial support. Many officers (such as our rental officers) are also offering this support. Whether more additional support is needed in this area is something that might be worth looking into.

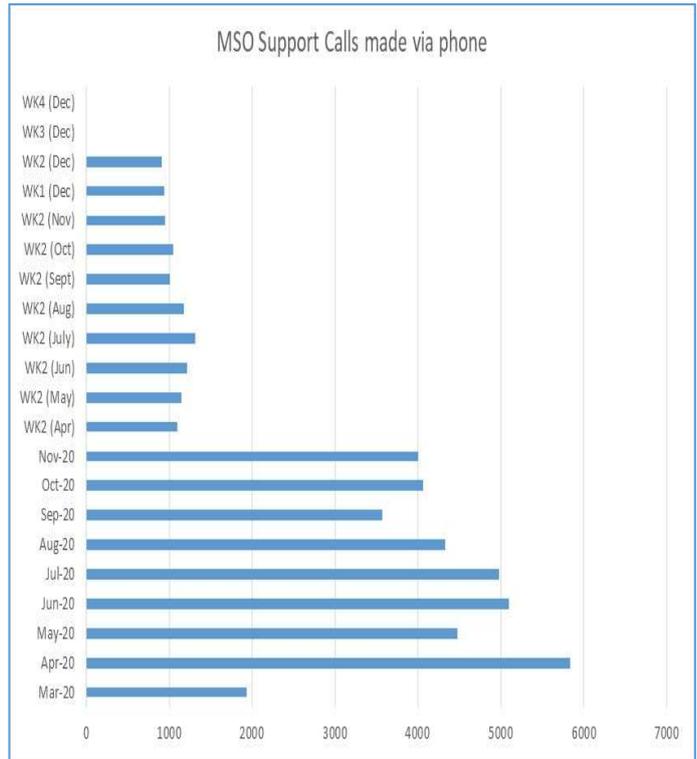
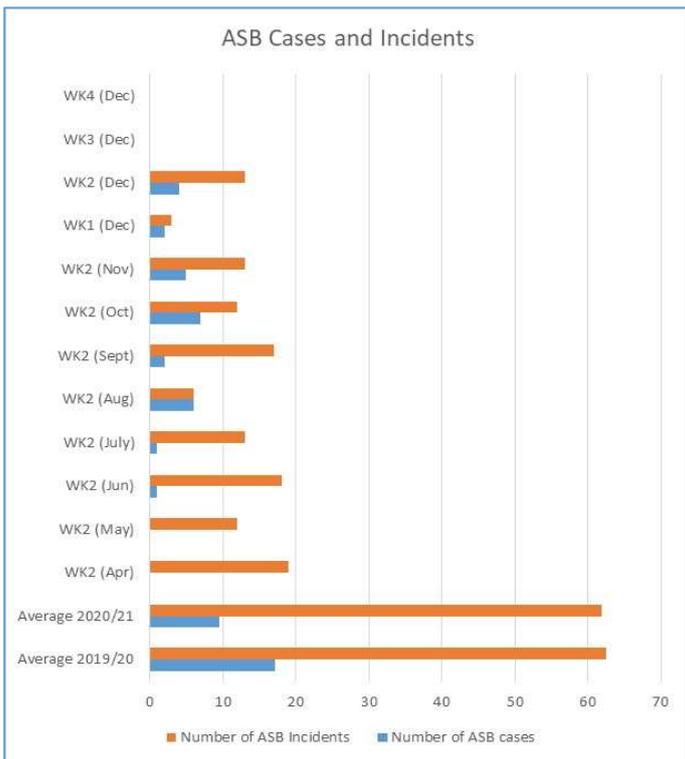
4.4 Continuing to ensure we manage our repairs contract to a high standard remains a priority since a good home is associated with happiness and less anxiety. The results of this survey could also support an opportunity to look at planned works in a different and more flexible way taking into account the impact not doing a certain job might be having on the tenant rather than making decisions based on when upgrades or new planned work is due.

4.5 Finally, social housing in England has often been treated as a tenure of last resort. As a result, much of the political and policy debate about social housing has revolved around negative narratives of dependency and social disadvantage, with social tenants labelled and stigmatised. Even when social housing is not treated in this negative way, policy makers can be still guilty of discussing social housing like it is missing something important. When the social tenant is at the heart of the conversation the focus is often on hard metric measurements, such as employment and educational outcomes which disproportionately represents social housing in a negative light. However, this research measures life outcomes and success in a different way: what kind of home makes for a happy and fulfilled life? And in asking this we realise that social housing has much to offer society and to celebrate.

Phone Call Demand



Landlord Services



	Apr-19	Apr-20	May-19	May-20	Jun-19	Jun-20	Jul-19	Aug-20
Number of homesafeguard call handled	13,532	10,870	13,410	10,745	12,567	9,408	13,930	9,949

Average weekly support call volume prior Covid19 was 369.

Number of welfare calls to General Need Tenants

April 20	May 20	Jun 20	July 20	Aug 20	Sept 20	Oct 20	Nov 20	Dec 20
203	1218	1517	641	316	142	166	165	123

Rents

% Rent Collected	2020	2019
As at 26th April	71.5%	78.2%
As at 10 May	95.0%	96.5%
As at 17 May	92.1%	93.9%
As at 24th May	88.6%	91.0%
As at 31st May	97.9%	100.9%
As at 8th June	92.5%	99.4%
As at 15th June	91.5%	97.5%
As at 21st June	93.6%	94.7%
As at 28th June	93.0%	101.1% (as at 30th June 2019)
As at 12th July	98.1%	98.4%
As at 19th July	96.3%	96.8%
As at 26th July	99.3%	97.1%
As at 2nd Aug	99.8%	96.2%
As at 09 Aug	98.9%	99.3%
As at 16 Aug	97.6%	98.2%
As at 23 Aug	69.3%	97.0%
As at 30 Aug	100.2%	100.5%
As at 13 Sept	99.3%	98.9%
As at 20 Sept	98.6%	97.8%
As at 27 Sept	96.9%	97.1%
As at 11 Oct	99.6%	99.4%
As at 18 Oct	98.7%	98.7%
As at 25 Oct	97.7%	96.2%
As at 1 Nov	101.1%	100.2%
As at 8 Nov	99.8%	99.7%
As at 15 Nov	99.3%	99.3%
As at 22 Nov	98.6%	98.5%
As at 29 Nov	97.9%	100.5%
As at 06 Dec	100.1%	99.9%
As t 13 Dec	99.6%	99.7%

*Please note collection rates may differ depending on when date data is extracted.

As at 30th November 2020, of the arrears £146,234.39 is from tenants on UC compared with in 2019 when it was £86,099.76

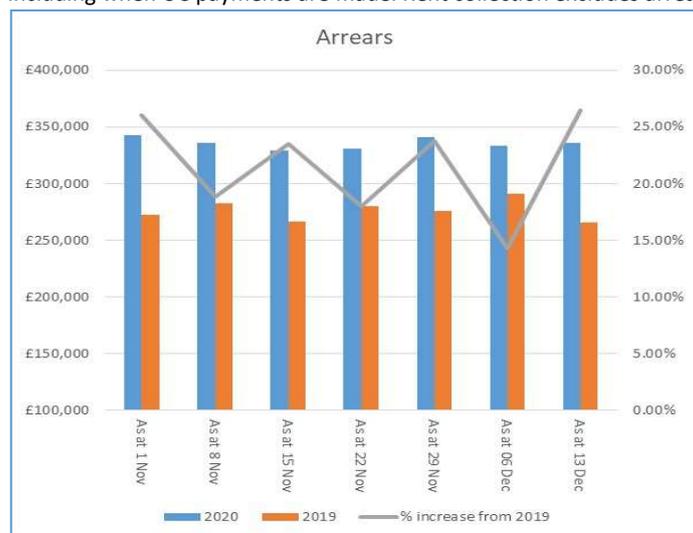
This is an increase of **£60,134.63**.

Month	No UC Claimants
Feb	468
Mar	487
Apr	519
May	531
June	555
July	543
August	514
September	514
October	859
November	892



Unlike housing benefit, which hits the rent account at the start of each week and means if the tenant receives full benefit they will never show a rent arrear, the Universal Credit is paid in arrears every 4 weeks. Tenants will be in arrears initially until we get this payment from the DWP which puts a lump sum for the month into their accounts. In the fourth week of our collection figures you can see where this lump sum hits the accounts and collection is increased. The tenants also have a lead in time of 5-6 weeks between making their claim and receiving the first payment, so will automatically be in arrears unless they have some savings to pay us with. We cannot apply to have UC paid directly to us until the tenants has arrears of 8 weeks or more outstanding, so payment is generally reliant on the tenant themselves. Any arrangements we have had with the DWP to also pay an amount on top of the rent to clear arrears was stopped temporarily in March/April 2020 while the DWP redeployed staff to cope with the influx of new claims, as this was a manual process for them so they didn't have the manpower to continue it. This also caused a temporary drop in our collection, which will increase again slightly when they are able to take these on again in July/August 2020. The DWP will shortly be introducing a payment system which means we will receive the 4 weekly direct payment on the same date that the tenant receives their UC payment, which will mean our income stream becomes more steady and we will no longer have the lump sum from all our direct payment cases on one date of the month.

*rent collection rate fluctuates across months for a number of reasons including when UC payments are made. Rent collection excludes arrears



As at 13 December **7** properties are with allocations. **22** voids are with IWS as jobs

43 are at preinspection stage

*presinspection stage – properties still tenanted

Voids

86 open voids* (5 move on accommodation - St Andrews & Morton Road) as at 13 December 2020) and **43** open voids as at 09 November 2019

*Please note a breakdown of these voids as at 09 December

- 3 hard to lets
- 4 long term/major work voids
- 11 new properties
- 3 temp accom
- 5 unlettable

4 voids started between 07 and 13 December 2020.

Table 1: Number of open voids by mgt type

	General Needs	Sheltered
As at 06 December	43	38

*not include move on accommodation

264 voids from 1 April to 30 November 2020 and 76 voids from 1 April to 30 November 2019

Allocations Team

83 diary entries in Open Housing which relate to Covid19 from allocations as at 27 November 2020

158 coc*/new Devon Home Choice Applications in Nov 2020 (COC* – change of circumstances)

99 new lets from September to November 2020 compared to 76 in 2019

7 voids with allocations as at 13 December 2020

Options Team

As at 16 December 49 (incl 3 legacy cases) households are in temporary accommodation and 249 current cases

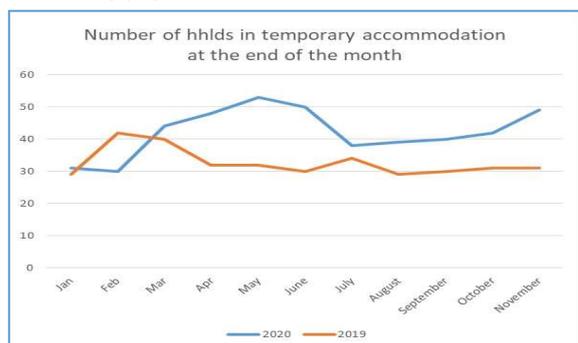
650 approaches since April 2020 and 33 approaches since December 01 2020

13 hhlds going into temporary accommodation in December 2020 and 5 since 01 December 2019.

52 approaches since April 2020 with COVID19 as a reason as at 16 December

Top 4 reasons for approaching in November 2020–

- Family not willing to accommodate
- Relationship with partner ended (non-violent)
- Domestic Abuse
- Other

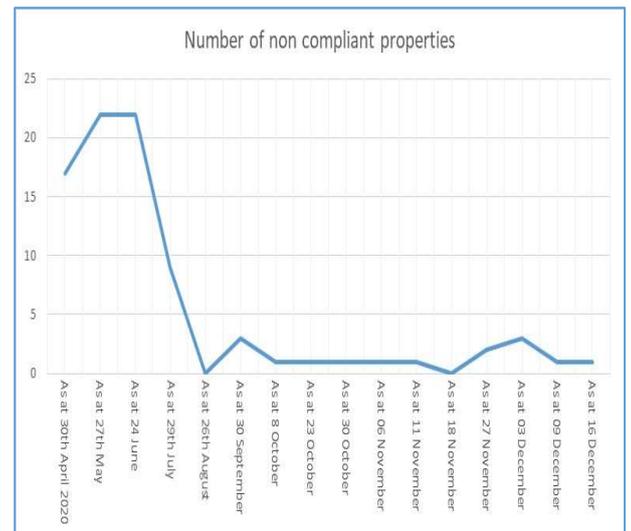
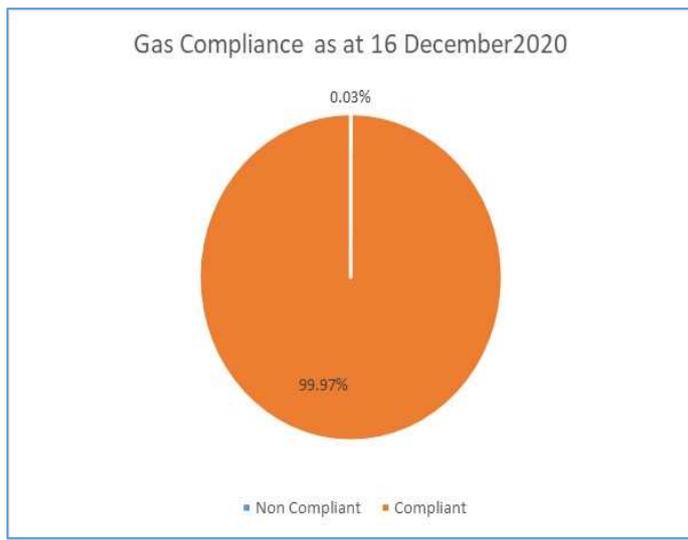


Number of DHC Applications (including updates to form)

*since date of extraction some applicants would have withdrawn, been housed etc

Month	2019	2020
Apr	149 (7 homeless applications)	88 (2 homeless applications)
May	113 (9 homeless applications)	172 (5 homeless applications)
Jun	125 (10 homeless applications)	219 (13 homeless applications)
July	141 (14 homeless)	185 (6 homeless application)
August	161 (10 homeless applications)	199 (7 homeless applications)
September	148 (8 homeless applications)	202 (13 homeless applications)
October	155 (14 homeless applications)	194 (12 homeless applications)
November	130 (17 homeless applications)	158 (8 homeless applications)
December	46 (3 homeless applications)	58 (4 homeless applications)
Total	1130 (93 homeless applications)	1357 (101 homeless applications)

Repairs and Gas Compliance

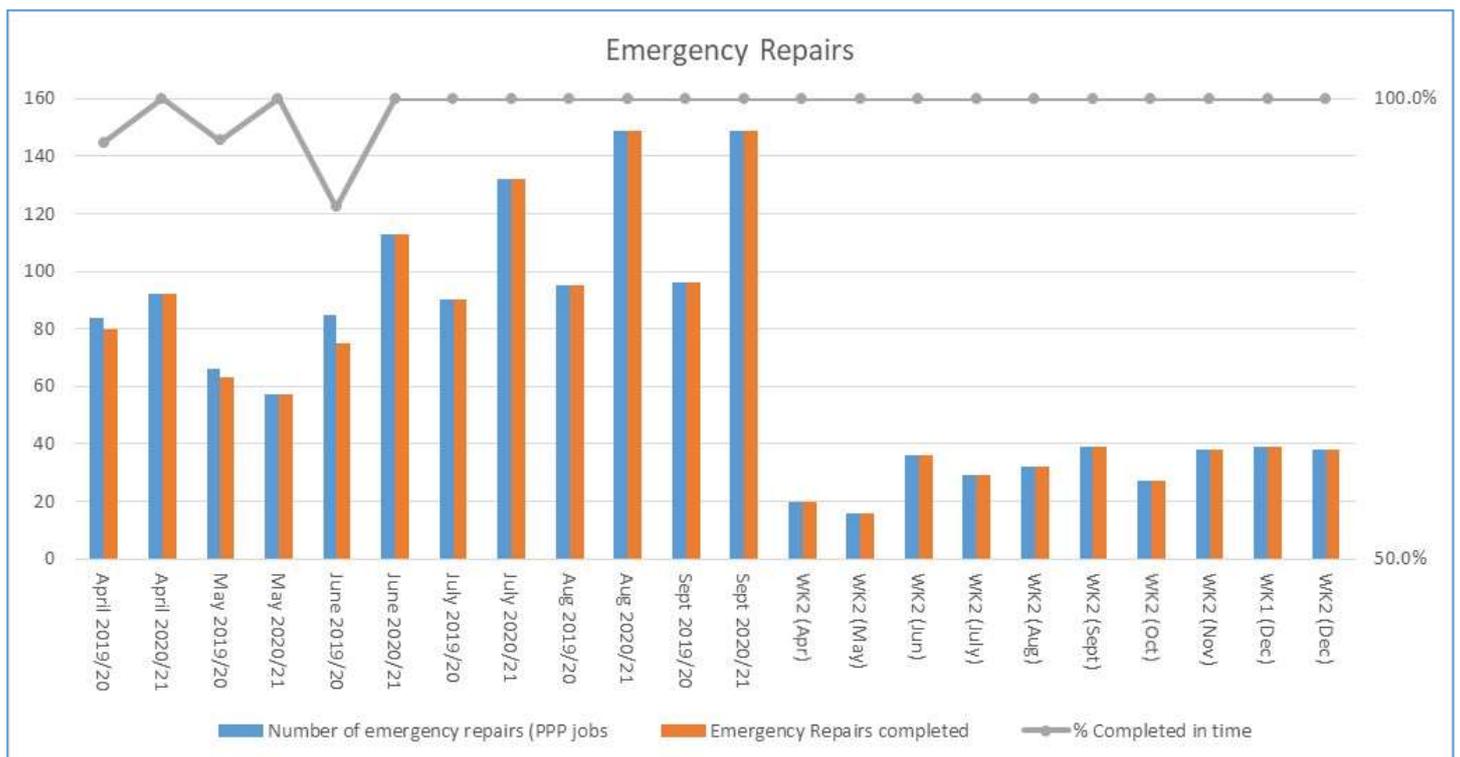


As at 16 December 2020

- 1 property non-compliant (St Andrews Road)
- As at 16 December **1056** open repair jobs of which 4 jobs are on hold because of COVID19 compared with **801** open repair jobs of which 4 were on hold because of COVID19 as at 06 November 2020.

Table 1: Routine Repair Jobs Completed as at 09 December

	2019/2020		2020/2021	
	Total	% Jobs In Target	Total	% Jobs In Target
TARGET STATUS				
In Target	9112	88.12	6784	90.20
Not in Target	1228	11.88	737	9.80
Total	10340		7521	



Report to: Housing Review Board

Date of Meeting 21 January 2021

Document classification: Part A Public Document

Exemption applied: None

Review date for release N/A



Q2 Housing Performance Indicator Report

Report summary:

The Housing Performance Indicator Report for Quarter 2 2020/21 details selected indicators measuring performance across the Housing Service.

Recommendation:

1. The Housing Review Board is invited to consider the performance of the housing service.

Reason for recommendation:

To provide the Board with an up to date insight into current performance of the housing service.

Officer: Natalie Brown, nabrown@eastdevon.gov.uk, 01395 515783

Portfolio(s) (check which apply):

- Climate Action
- Corporate Services and COVID-19 Response and Recovery
- Democracy and Transparency
- Economy and Assets
- Coast, Country and Environment
- Finance
- Strategic Planning
- Sustainable Homes and Communities

Financial implications:

There are no financial implications

Legal implications:

To be completed by Legal.

Equalities impact Low Impact

Climate change Low Impact

Risk: Choose a risk level; Click here to enter text on risk considerations relating to your report.

Links to background information .

Link to [Council Plan](#):

Priorities (check which apply)

- Outstanding Place and Environment
- Outstanding Homes and Communities
- Outstanding Economic Growth, Productivity, and Prosperity
- Outstanding Council and Council Services

Housing Service

Quarterly Performance Indicator Report

Quarter 2 2020/21 Financial Year

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Background Information

Performance against 2019/20 quarter has been included to provide some context to the statistics.

	Performance is worse than 2019/20 quarter figure by over 5%
	Performance is within 5% of 2019/20 quarter figure
	Performance is better than 2019/20 performance figure

0.0 Summary

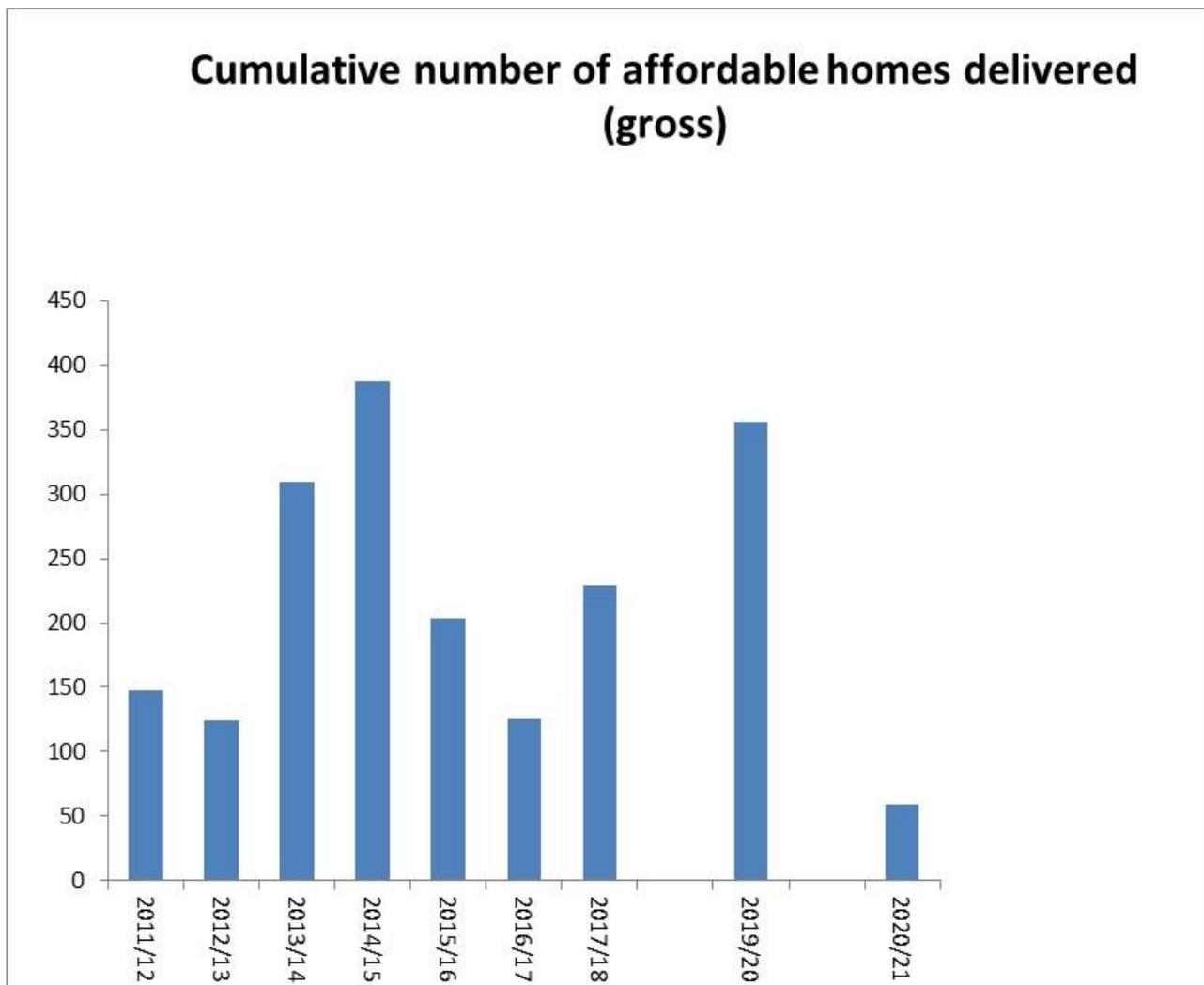
Description	2019/20	2020/21					Progress against 2019/20 quarter 2
	Cumulative Total	Apr- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Cumulative Total	
Total supply of social rent housing and intermediate housing	356	19	40			59	
Total New ASB Cases	164	56	47			103	
No. of new stage 1 complaints	52	11	12			23	
Calls answered under 1 minute (%)	97.0	98.6	98.6			98.6	

Description	2019/20	2020/21					Progress against 2019/20 quarter 2
	Cumulative Total	Apr- Jun	Apr-Sep	Apr - Dec	Apr- Mar	Cumulative Total	
% of rent due collected from current & former tenants (property (incl garage) is occupied & not including all arrears brought forward & prepaids) - Year to date	100.2%	98.9%	96.7%			96.70%	
Percentage of routine repairs completed within target time	90.4%	94.7	88.6%			91.7%	

1.0 Affordable Housing Completions

Performance Indicator	2019/20	2020/21					Performance against 2019/20 quarter 2
	Cumulative Total	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Cumulative Total	
Number of affordable homes delivered (gross) (LAA)	339	15	40			55	
EDDC Acquisitions	17	4	0			4	

Source: Affordable Housing Team



2.0 Anti-social behaviour

Performance Indicator	2019/20	2020/21				Cumulative Total	Performance against 2019/20 quarter 2
	Cumulative Total	April- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan-Mar		
No. of new ASB cases							
Alcohol related (H)	3	1				1	
Child behaviour*	4	1				1	
Communal Fire*	1	2	1			3	
Communal Garden*	1	3				3	
Communal Internal*	1					0	
Communal Open Space*	4	2	4			6	
Condition of Garden*	6	3	2			5	
Condition of Property*	33	12	4			16	
Criminal Behaviour (O)	3	3	4			7	
Dangerous Animal	3	0	4			4	
Domestic Abuse (I)	7	0	1			1	
Drugs, substance misuse, dealing (G)	14	1				1	
Garden Nuisance (L)	11	8	5			13	
Harrasment*	13	1	2			3	
Hate Related (C)	1	0				0	
Illegal Occupation, Squatter*	10	3	3			6	
Litter, Rubbish, Fly Tipping (K)	0	0				0	
Misuse of Communal Areas (M)	0	0				0	
Noise (A)	21	7	9			16	
Nuisance from Vehicles (F)	0	0				0	
Parking Dispute*	1	2	1			3	
Pets & Animal Nuisance (E)	0	1				1	
Physical Violence (J)	7	3	1			4	
Prostitution, Sex Acts (N)	0	0				0	
Untaxed Vehicle*	0	2				2	
Vandalism & Damage to Property (D)	2	0	2			2	
Vehicle Nusiance*	0					0	
Verbal Abuse (B)	18	4	4			8	
Total New ASB Cases	164	56	47	0	0	103	

Source: OpenHousing

3.0 Complaints

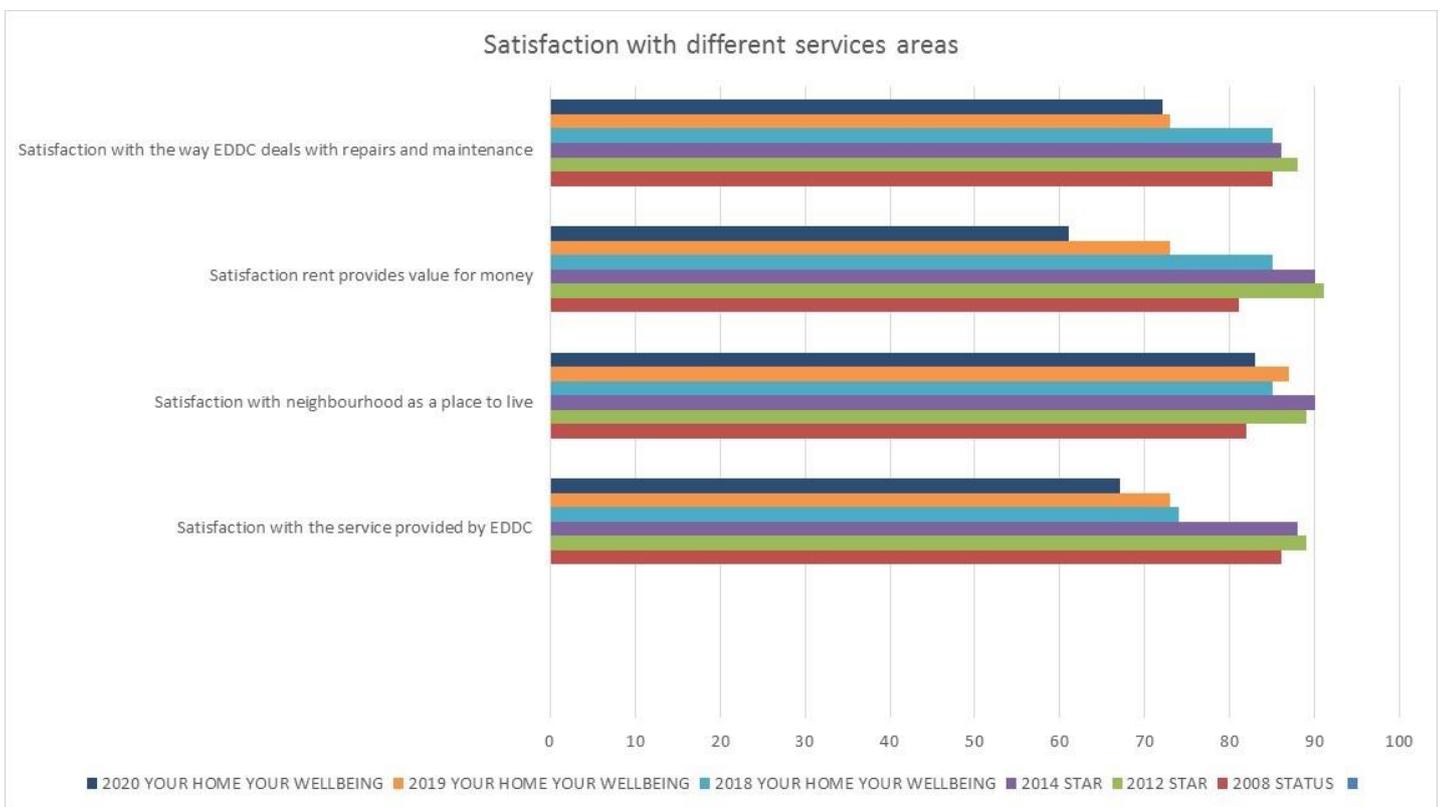
Description	2019/20	2020/21				2020/21	Performance against 2019/2020 quarter 2
	Cumulative Total	April- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - Mar	Cumulative Total	
No. of new stage 1 complaints	35	11	12				
Allocations complaints	8	2	3				
ASB complaints	0	1					
Estate services complaints	0	2	1				
Tenancy management complaints	4						
Rents and service charges complaints	1	2					
Repairs and maintenance complaints	16	3	7				
Staff & customer service complaints	6	1	1				
Other complaints	1						
Average time in calendar days to issue full response to all Stage 1 complaints	23.9	24.1	26.75				

Source: Complaints Team

4.0 Customer Satisfaction

Description	2008 STATUS	2012 STAR	2014 STAR	2018 YOUR HOME YOUR WELLBEING	2019 YOUR HOME YOUR WELLBEING	2020 YOUR HOME YOUR WELLBEING
Satisfaction with the service provided by EDDC	86	89	88	74	73	67
Satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live	82	89	90	85	87	83
Satisfaction rent provides value for money	81	91	90	85	73	61
Satisfaction with the way EDDC deals with repairs and maintenance	85	88	86	85	73	72

Source: STATUS and STAR surveys and Your Home, Your Wellbeing Survey (2018). 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

Stock Housing Type	2019/20	2019/20								
	Cumulative Total	April- Jun		Jul-Sep		Oct - Dec		Jan - March		Cumulative Total
		GN	SH	GN	SH	GN	SH	GN	SH	
Bedsit	40	25	17	25	17					42
Bungalow	984	198	782	198	782					980
Flat**	1169	637	534	635	534					1169
House	1998	1962	15	1961	15					1976
Maisonette	5	6	0	6	0					6
Room*	6	14	0	14	0					14
Total	4202	2842	1348	2839	1348					4187

* Morton Road and 102 St Andrews Road

** Includes St Andrews Road flats

Source: Open Housing

6.0 Homelessness

Performance Indicator	2019/20	2020/21				
Description	Cumulative Total	April- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - March	Cumulative Total
Approaches: Number of people who indicate that they are homeless or about to become homeless	1126	200	232			432
Acceptances: Number of people who EDDC have accepted as homeless	7	0	6			6
Successful Prevention Outcomes	335	54	77			131
Successful Relief Outcomes	155	27	42			69
Verified rough sleeper count*	4	5	7			#
No of households living in temp acc at the end of the quarter*	44	50	40			#
No of households placed into temp acc in the quarter*	54	57	54			#

Source: Jigsaw

7.0 HomeSafeguard

Description	2019/20		2020/21				Progress against last quarter 2 2019/20
	Cumulative total	Apr-June	July-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-March	Cumulative total	
Call Handling							
Answered in under 1 Minute	97.04	98.64	98.58				
Answered in under 3 Minutes	99.56	99.88	99.08				
Answered in over 3 Minutes	0.43	0.12	0.91				
Installations							
Under 2 working Days (urgent) - Number	56	17	8				
Under 2 working Days (urgent) - % installed within target time	100%	100%	100%				
Under 5 working Days - Number	0	0	0				
Under 5 working Days - % installed within target time	100%	100%	100%				
Under 15 working Days (non urgent) - Number	442	70	136				
Under 15 working Days (non urgent) - % installed within target time	100%	0%	0%				
Under 20 working Days (non urgent) - Number	0	0	0				
Under 20 working Days (non urgent) - % installed	100%	100%	100%				
Repairs*							
Critical Repairs							
Total Number Critical Repairs	138	62	39				
Total Number Critical Repairs within 48 hours	122	51	38				
Total Number Critical Repairs over 48 hours	8	11	1				
% Critical within target time	88.4%	82.3%	97.4%				
Non Critical Repairs							
Total Number Non Critical Repairs	154	71	82				
Total Number Non Critical Repairs within 96 hours	116	53	69				
Total Number Non Critical Repairs over 96 hours	14	18	12				
% Non Critical within target time	90%	75%	84%				
Complaints							
Total complaints	0	0	0				
Response sent in under 5 days	#	#	#				
Response sent in under 20 days	#	#	#				

Source: HomeSafeguard

8.0 Lettings

Performance Indicator	2020/21			
	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar
Total number of units vacant at the end of the period	84	89		
Number of voids started in period	95	84		
Number of voids completed in period	60	79		
The average re-let time in days General Needs*	39.0	31.8		
*The average re-let time in days Sheltered Housing	40.0	58.0		
Total number of re-lets during the period benchmarked (incl mutual exchanges)	48	83		
*Please note this includes the 12 rooms which have become available in this quarter and are to be used as temporary accommodation & LT voids				
** Void time is time from void start to void end (incl allocation process and any repairs etc)				

Source: OH

9.0 Number of Households on the East Devon Housing Waiting List

Performance Indicator	2019/20	2020/21			
	End of Year Total	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Apr-Mar
Band A - Emergency Housing Need	1	1	4		
Band B - High Housing Need	243	268	299		
Band C - Medium Housing Need	725	747	804		
Band D - Low Housing Need	1245	1285	1384		
Band E - No Housing Need	2494	1922	2073		
Total	4708	4223	4564		

Source: Devon Home Choice

10 Private Sector Housing

Description	Cumulative Total 2019/20	2020/21				Cumulative Total 2020/21
		April- Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct - Dec	Jan - March	
Empty homes investigated	108	270	162			
Empty homes genuinely brought back into use	22	0	25			
Disabled Facilities Grant Approvals	108	15	10 DFG and 10 Stairlift (20 Total)			
Disabled Facilities Grant Completions	76	16	13 DFG and 8 Stairlift (21 Total)			
Long term empty homes (6mth - 2 years)	1449	551	339			
Long term empty homes (> 2 years)	626	90	82			

Source: Council Tax Return & Private Sector Team records

11 Rental

Performance Indicators	2019/20	2020/21			
	Apr-Mar	Apr-Jul	Apr-Sep	Apr-Dec	Apr-Mar
Debit less voids	£18,538,903.30	£4,647,382.74	£8,937,668.00		
Voids	£497,019.05	£139,563.70	£267,830.00		
Adjustments	£118,578.97	£15,638.61	£23,435.79		
Court Fees	£6,013.00	£0.00	£394.50		
Less write offs	£17,232.00	£4,148.52	£4,148.52		
Total to collect	£18,538,903.30	£4,647,382.74	£8,937,668.00		
Arrears Cfwd	£316,131.00	£375,120	£362,995.00		
Housing Benefit	£8,019,669.30	£1,932,250.14	£3,710,198.00		
Income	£10,658,371.51	£2,679,014.03	£4,951,270.24		
Prepaid B/Fwd	£280,957.00	£374,128.70	£402,720.00		
Prepaid C/Fwd	£557,437.00	£304,340.81	£308,491.00		
Total credit	£18,559,461.84	£4,595,625.56	£8,638,032.45		
Total credit*	£18,582,706.84	£4,595,625.56	£8,638,032.45		
% Rent Collected (without arrears)	100.11	98.89	96.65		
% Rent Collected (with arrears)	98.6	91.5	92.9		
Total number of evictions due to rent arrears year to date	6	0	0		
Number of tenancies at the start of the period	4128	4139	4116		
Number of tenancies at the end of the period	4139	4116	4134		

	Apr-Jun 2019	Apr-Jun 2020	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar
Number of UC Claimants	1298	555			
Total UC debt	£52,621.37	£167,028.35			
Number of UC tenants in credit or no arrears	85	150			
Number of UC tenants owing less than 2 weeks rent	75	103			
Number of UC tenants with rent arrears between 2-4 weeks	50	115			
Number of UC tenants with rent arrears between 4-8 weeks	56	97			
Number of UC tenants with rent arrears between 8 weeks or more	32	90			

Source: OH, Rental Team

*Payments arrangements are in place where appropriate to help reduce the debt.

	Apr-Jun 2019	Apr-Jun 2020	Jul-Sept	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar
Number of UC Claimants	1298	555	£513.00		
Total UC debt	£52,621.37	£167,028.35	£154,374.69		
Number of UC tenants in credit or no arrears	85	150	131		
Number of UC tenants owing less than 2 weeks rent	75	103	125		
Number of UC tenants with rent arrears between 2-4 weeks	50	115	79		
Number of UC tenants with rent arrears between 4-8 weeks	56	97	94		
Number of UC tenants with rent arrears between 8 weeks or more	32	90	84		

12 Repairs

Performance Indicator	Cumulative Total 2019/20	2019/2020					Progress against 2019/20 quarter 2
		Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	Cumulative	
		PPP	PPP	PPP	PPP	PPP	
The total number of emergency repairs completed year-to-date	1157	367	462				#
The total number of emergency repairs completed year-to-date that were completed within target	1102	367	462				#
Percentage of emergency repairs completed within target time - Year to date	93.5%	100%	100%				
The total number of routine repairs completed year-to-date	6992	1720	2955				#
The total number of routine repairs completed year-to-date that were completed within target	6178	1629	2617				#
Percentage of routine repairs completed within target time	88.4%	94.7%	88.6%				
The percentage of properties, requiring a landlord gas safety record, that have a valid landlord gas safety record	100.0%	99.5%	100.00%				

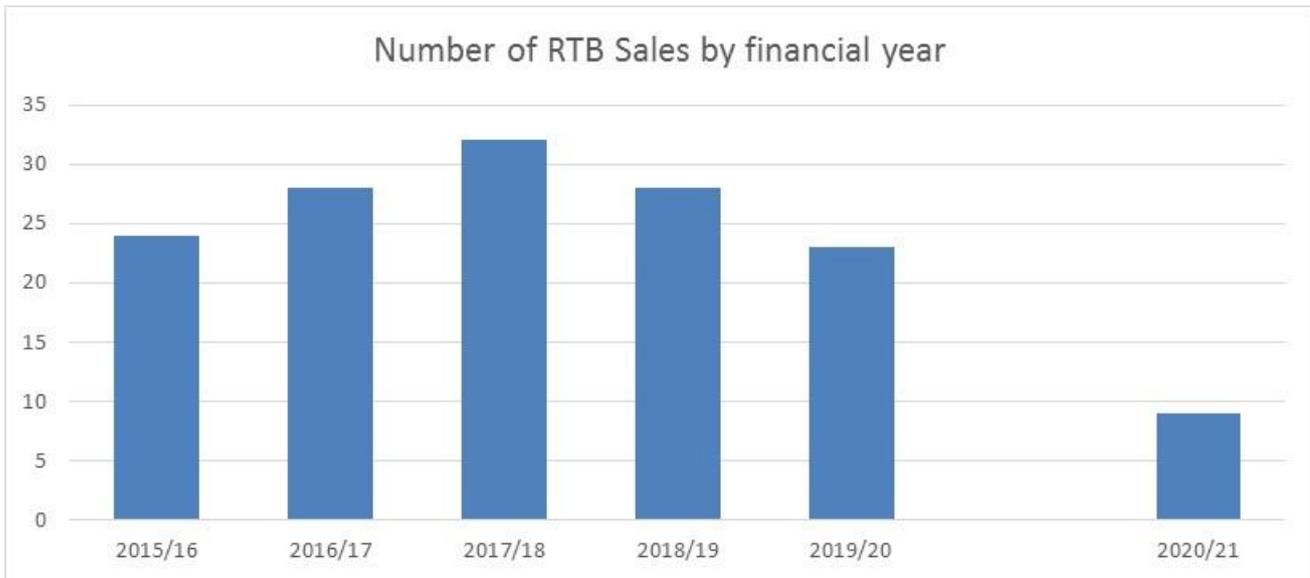
*Jobs include OOHOURS, PPEXCL, HANDPERS, PPP & NONPPP

Source: OpenHousing

13 Right To Buy

Performance Indicators	2019/20	2020/21				2020/21
	Cumulative	Apr-Jun	Jul-Sep	Oct-Dec	Jan-Mar	
Number of completed RTB sales	23	6	3			9

Source: Open Housing



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