

**Report to:** **Housing Review Board**

**Date of Meeting:** 19 September 2019

**Public Document:** Yes

**Exemption:** None

**Review date for release** None



**Subject:** **Update on Your Home Your Wellbeing Research Project**

**Purpose of report:** To provide the board with an update on the progress of the three year research project being undertaken in partnership with LiveWest and the University of Birmingham.

**Recommendation:** **To note the ongoing progress of year 2 of the project including the wider contribution of the study to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Committee Inquiry into the long term delivery of social and affordable rented housing.**

**Reason for recommendation:** The results of the study provide information on the relationship between housing and wellbeing and landlord satisfaction.  
To raise the profile of the project and to recognise the contribution the project is now making to national debates.  
The results will support service improvement and raise awareness of the intrinsic link between better housing, better health.

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**Financial implications:** No specific finance implications.

**Legal implications:** There are no legal implications

**Equalities impact:** Low Impact

If choosing High or Medium level outline the equality considerations here, which should include any particular adverse impact on people with protected characteristics and actions to mitigate these. Link to an equalities impact assessment form using the [equalities form template](#).

**Climate change:** Choose an impact level

**Risk:** Comments  
Low Risk

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

**Links to background information:** ) [HRB Report November 2018](#)

**Link to Council Plan:** Encouraging communities to be outstanding

## Report in full

### 1. Background

- 1.1 In November 2018 the Information and Analysis Officer presented to the Board the first years results of the Your Home, Your Wellbeing project. This was the first stage of a 3 year project that is centred around exploring the relationship between housing and wellbeing.
- 1.2 The project is the brainchild of our own Information and Analysis Officer who has recognised for some time the need to go so much deeper than the traditional landlord surveys the housing sector has become used to. In order to develop the project, Birmingham University, Centre on Household Assets and Savings Management (CHASM) were approached to become involved and this also resulted in the involvement of a Local Housing Association, LiveWest.
- 1.3 The study is based around in-depth surveys of a proportion of our tenants and a proportion of applicants on the housing register as well as face to face interviews that have been carried out by our Information and Analysis Officer. The study focuses on a number of areas including financial status, health and wellbeing and general satisfaction with landlords. Quite powerfully, the study compares the tenure differences of a social housing tenant compared to someone living in the private rented sector and the impact that this has on overall health and wellbeing.
- 1.4 We are undertaking this research in order to explore deeper the intrinsic links between housing and wellbeing with the aim of using the results to directly influence how we operate our services going forward.

**Appendix 1** is the infographic that was presented at the November 2018 Board meeting, this displays the results of year 1 of the study.

### 2. Current Progress

- 2.1 Year two of the research is on track with 20 interviews and initial analysis of over 1,000 survey responses (including a comparison with year 1) completed. In the Autumn we aim to release an infographic (similar to year 1- included as **appendix 1**) presenting a summary of the findings.
- 2.2 One of the more strategic aims of the study for the partnership was to ensure the research was used and communicated widely to make the most of this innovative and exciting piece of research. Opportunities were taken to present the findings of year one to various audiences across the country, from homelessness to financial experts.
- 2.3 In July, the University of Birmingham submitted a response to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Select Committee Inquiry into long term delivery of social and affordable rented housing using the research to support their comment. A copy of the paper is attached as **appendix 2**.
- 2.4 The wellbeing agenda, within in all aspects of the housing sector has recently been gaining increasing traction nationally and locally. High profile 2019 reports from Shelter, NHS and CIH have all discussed the importance of home on wellbeing and quality of life. It has even cascaded down into the building sector with a recent TCPA's (Town and Country Planning Association) Healthy Homes Act campaign calling on government to introduce primary legislation that will ensure all new housing is of a decent standard and will enhance rather than undermine people's safety, health, wellbeing and life chances.

2.5 On June 27<sup>th</sup>, we were delighted to be invited as a Guest Speaker at the University of Birmingham, CHASM Annual Conference. Our Information and Analysis Officer attended and delivered an inspiring presentation focusing on why we were undertaking the research and a flavour of year 1's results.

A digital clip has been made to summarise activity on the day, the link is here;  
<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/research/chasm/events/index.aspx>

2.6 Within our own housing service, results of year 1 have been circulated widely across teams from officer to Strategic Management/Member level. The study has been used to support service planning across the housing teams and more specifically, in an NHS bid to provide mental health expertise, linking in with the new homelessness strategy and public health strategy and more recently to provide a locally meaningful analysis of poverty and social welfare issues for the Council's Overview Committee.

### **3. Conclusion**

3.1 One of the biggest points of difference about this study is its three year duration which gives us the ability to measure the impact change has for individuals and households. In light of this, following completion of year 3 and with our research partners we are planning to deliver a far wider communication programme to ensure the research is used internally, locally and nationally to support improvements within the housing sector.

3.2 We look forward to providing the board with the next set of results during the Autumn.