

**SERVICE VISION**

Together we will make the changes to provide better homes and communities

**DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE**

- Prevention and management of homelessness working in partnership with other agencies, as required
- Allocations and lettings of social housing; the management of the authority’s retained stock – income collection, tenancy enforcement, the management of nuisance & anti-social behaviour, Right to Buy sales
- The Council has a contractual relationship with tenants, which derives from the tenancy agreement. There are specific explicit rights, powers and obligations which arise from parliamentary legislation and these are above those conveyed by the contract. Various Acts of parliament have created different types of tenancy and specifying the rights and obligations relating to each type of tenancy.
- The Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) is the regulator of social housing and Registered Providers of Social Housing such as the Council are expected to comply with the provisions of the Regulatory Framework which is comprised of a number of National Standards. The Standards which apply to the Council relate to Home; Tenancy; Tenant Involvement & Empowerment; and Neighbourhood & Community

**OBJECTIVES**

**Short Term**

***Digital transformation***

- Further development of Orchard Housing (OH) integrated housing management system:
  - Commence implementation of:
    - Customer self-serve portal to support customer communication channel shift
    - Mobile working solutions to reduce admin costs (in particular, estate management solution)
    - Planned maintenance module
- Review case management of ASB and undertake cost/benefit analysis in relation to the ICT solution used for this
- Review storage of information relating to lettings and the use of (OH) in

**Medium and Long Term**

***Digital transformation***

- Further development of Orchard Housing (OH) integrated housing management system:
  - Commence implementation of:
    - Campaign manager module
    - Right to Buy module
    - Dashboard, if approved
- Upgrade existing system or implement new system (depending upon outcome of review) for case management of ASB

Managing the impact of an aging population; this will include implementation of the exit strategy relating to the end of the supported housing service; and setting up a new team of Housing Support Workers based in Tenancy Services

<p>connection with this</p> <p>Develop an electronic version of the tenant handbook for use at group sign up meetings and to be available for the future reference of tenants</p> <p>Implement reorganisation of housing allocations and homelessness teams</p> <p>Review lettings procedures</p> <p>Develop closer working relationships with landlords in the private sector</p> <p>Further development of homelessness prevention advice</p> <p>Develop strategies to encourage greater tenancy sustainment in both the public and the private sectors to include setting up a landlord helpline</p> <p>Implementation of the new Devon Home Choice information technology system</p> <p>Further analysis of those applicants registered in Band E on the Devon Home Choice scheme</p> <p>Review downsizing scheme taking into account the level of incentives</p> <p>Implement electronic storage of documents used by the Finance &amp; Performance team</p> <p>Working in partnership with other organisations, undertake community development activities</p> <p>Delivery of a number of new homes at various schemes throughout the District; in particular, 6 new homes at Fir Close in Willand</p> <p>Meeting targets including those relating to income collection (less than 1% rent arrears of annual rent debit), management of anti-social behaviour (ASB) (92% closed ASB cases resolved), the management of void properties (17 day void turnaround) and customer contact</p> <p>Making best use of stock by issuing flexible tenancies, as appropriate; by ensuring that approximately 600 properties are visited and Tenancy Home Checks are completed; by ensuring that adapted homes are allocated to those who need them; and by taking action to minimise tenancy fraud.</p> <p>The Housing Services Manager is currently reviewing the Housing Strategy</p>	<p>Continuing to manage the impact of welfare reform</p>
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**LEGISLATION CHANGES**

The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing bill 2013/2014 will change the tools available to the Council to tackle nuisance and ASB

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) issued new guidance relating to social housing allocations in December 2013 which states that local authorities should ensure that they prioritise applicants who can demonstrate a close association with their local area. The aim was to ensure that there was housing available for those local people on low incomes who would be unable to find accommodation on the open market. The guidance makes provision to enable members of the armed forces and their families to access social housing if a local connection requirement is introduced

**POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The Housing Service has a body of policy and procedure which has been adopted but more policies are needed and some of the existing policies require review

Review of tenancy agreement; this is an urgent piece of work to take account of legislative and other changes

Tenancy policy: this needs to be reviewed urgently

Review cash incentive scheme – July 2014

Pets policy – amendment needed to take account of RSPCA guidance and to manage dangerous dogs

Hoarding policy – new policy needed

Compensation policy – new policy needed

Tenant Involvement Strategy & Tenant Involvement Policy – to be updated. This work will be informed by the survey of our tenant which took place during April and May 2014

Policies and procedures relating to the death of a tenant and succession - review needed

ASB policy and procedure: needs updating to take account of changes in legislation

The Housing Service has been involved in the revision of the Corporate Debt Policy and is exploring ways to develop closer working arrangements with other Services in order to improve the service offered to people experiencing financial difficulties.

**CONSULTATION**

The Housing Allocations team administers Devon Home Choice and there are approximately 1700 housing applicants registered for rehousing in Mid Devon. The Housing Service has over 3000 homes in management and needs to be responsive to the needs of tenants.

The Housing Service offers a wide range of opportunities for tenants to get involved:

- The Scrutiny and Improvement Group (the SIG)
- Housing News 4U : editorial panel
- Tenant Inspectors who inspect void properties and assist with reviewing work undertaken as part of the planned maintenance contract
- Estate Representatives
- Complaints Panel
- Local Voice Events
- Devon Housing Options Events
- Focus Groups (such as the one which reviewed the ASB policy and procedures in 2012)
- Tenant training

The HCA expects Registered Providers to have on-going discussions with tenants about their offer and this is why the SIG routinely analyses performance data and reviews policies and procedures. The SIG completed a service review during 2013/14 (on rechargeable repairs) and has agreed to review the management of voids.

**SERVICE VISION**

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**DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE**

- Planned and Cyclical Maintenance – Maintaining our properties in a good state of repairs via a planned or cyclical cycle whilst at the same time ensuring they meet legislative requirements
- Gas Servicing – Ensuring that all our gas services are regularly serviced in accordance with legislation
- Responsive Repairs – Responding to day to day repairs matters
- Void Repairs – Ensuring that our empty homes meet our void standard before being re-let
- Green Energy Investment and Delivery
- Disabled Facilities – Adapting homes to improve the quality of life of those in need
- Caretaking – Maintaining the communal areas of our flats and garage blocks to ensure they are clean and presentable to the public
- Stores – Providing a cost effective supply solution to the Authority

**OBJECTIVES**

**Short Term (12 Months)**

Complete the review the administrative support within the unit to ensure due diligence throughout all tasks carried out

Carry out a review the tier of middle management, analysis of key duties, tasks, and priorities, ensuring core competencies are met and where necessary up-skill to achieve the required level

Review the void Standard and associated policies

Review responsive property inspection regime

Revise condensation leaflet

Complete and implement the Rechargeable Repair review

Carry out a review of the Caretaker service

**Medium and Long Term (2-5 Years)**

Implementation of the 5 and 30 year Asset Management Strategy to ensure sustainability of the repairing process across the term of the Strategy with due regard to legislative requirements and budgetary provisions

Explore the potential of offering a repairs/handyman service to the private sector in order to increase income

Review capacity and explore the possibility of tendering for the private sector Disabled Facilities Grants works

Carryout a review of the voids team to ensure they are 'fit for purpose'

Review the monies spent on external contractors and explore the possibilities of doing an element of these works in house

Progress the implementation of the Planned Maintenance module on Orchard Housing

Expand the use of the mobile solution to the remainder of the workforce

Expand the use of the mobile solution to the Works Supervisors

Review the use of a mobile solutions for the Planned Maintenance team

Implement electronic timesheet to the workforce via the extended use of the SVS mobile solution.

Embed the use of tenant representatives within the Planned Maintenance Team

Implement the recent General Building Supplies tender

Re-tender the following areas of works to support the DLO:

1. Electrical Contractors
2. Flooring Contractors
3. Roofing Contractors
4. Fencing Contractors

Retender the following Material supplies:

1. Electrical
2. Plumbing
3. Paint

Complete the migration of adaptations works carried out on council owned stock to the Housing Department.

**LEGISLATION CHANGES**

Is expected that the key legislation concerning the repairs and maintenance of our properties will remain fairly static throughout the next year with only a few minor updates to some of the Health and Safety topics.

**POLICY FRAMEWORK**

The Housing Service has a body of policy and procedure which has been adopted but more policies are needed and some of the existing policies require review

Rechargeable Repairs – The SIG have recently completed a review of this area, their recommendations will drive a change to this policy especially regarding the way we in which we charge for the works

Voids – We are currently reviewing this area and when completed a new policy will need to be drawn up

Asbestos Management – Changes to the legislation concerning Asbestos has resulted in the need for a new policy to cover the management off and work on asbestos containing materials

Leaseholder Works – To ensure that the procedures for carrying out works to leasehold and owner occupied properties are clear a new policy is required

Compensation Claims – A new policy required

**CONSULTATION**

The Housing Service as a whole offers a wide range of opportunities for tenants to get involved:

- The Scrutiny and Improvement Group (the SIG)
- Housing News 4U : editorial panel
- Tenant Inspectors who inspect void properties and assist with reviewing work undertaken as part of the planned maintenance contract
- Estate Representatives
- Complaints Panel
- Local Voice Events
- Devon Housing Options Events

- Focus Groups (such as the one which reviewed the ASB policy and procedures in 2012)
- Tenant training

The HCA expects Registered Providers to have on-going discussions with tenants about their offer and this is why the SIG routinely analyses performance data and reviews policies and procedures. The SIG completed a service review during 2013/14 (on rechargeable repairs) and is starting to review the options with regard to other areas of activity which can be comprehensively reviewed.



**SERVICE VISION**

To provide housing support to vulnerable and elderly tenants

**DESCRIPTION OF SERVICE**

- Services Provided: Supported Housing Service; Learning Disability Service; Lifeline Alarm Service
- All services are customer facing
- The Lifeline Alarm Service is provided to private customers and generates a profit
- All services are non-statutory
- There are no special legal or insurance obligations

**OBJECTIVES**

**Short Term**

- The Supported Housing Service will end when the current DCC contract terminates on 31 March 2015.
- From April 2015 a new housing support role that specialises in responding to sheltered housing tenants' enquiries and liaises with 3<sup>rd</sup> parties that provide support services to our tenants will be introduced
- Promote the Repairs service's *Let Us Help* service to private customers
- To keep the website up-to-date and provide information on the forthcoming changes

**Medium and Long Term**

- Manage the impact of an ageing population
- Increase market of the lifeline service together with better use of the technology
- Continue to provide an effective Learning Disability Service at Thurlow Close
- In 2015/16 replace Lifeline alarms and smoke detectors installed in sheltered housing properties that have received the end of their life cycle
- Tender the Lifeline Monitoring Service provided by Taunton Deane Helpline in 2015/16
- Maximise digital technology to promote services

**LEGISLATION CHANGES**

- None

**POLICY FRAMEWORK**

- None

**CONSULTATION**

The Supported Housing and Learning Disability services are provided to MDDC housing tenants. The Lifeline Alarm service is provided to private customers that live in their own homes

In 2014/15 we plan to consult with all Supported Housing tenants to:

1. Explain that the service will end on 31 March 2015. All tenants will receive a Frequently Asked Questions information leaflet and personal visit by a Supported Housing Officer to explain the forthcoming changes.
2. Refer any high risk tenants to DCC for a Fairer Access to Care (FAC's) Assessment to determine if they qualify for a support service from a new provider from April 2015.
3. Explain that DCC will not fund Lifeline Alarms for tenants from April 2015 and that MDDC will introduce service charges for this service.