

You are requested to attend a meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board to be held in Newton Road Community Hall, Newton Road, Taunton on 19 August 2013 at 18:00.

Agenda

- 1 Apologies.
- 2 Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on 15 July 2013 (attached).
- 3 Public Question Time.
- 4 Declaration of Interests
To receive declarations of personal or prejudicial interests, in accordance with the Code of Conduct.
- 5 Feedback from Tenant Services Management Board on STSR Survey 2013. Report of the Housing Services Lead (attached).
Reporting Officer: Stephen Boland
- 6 Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) Tenant Central Training. Report from Attendee of Tenant Services Management Board (verbal).
- 7 Annual Report to Tenants and Leaseholders 2013. Report of the Tenant Empowerment Manager (verbal).
Reporting Officer: Martin Price

Tonya Meers
Legal and Democratic Services Manager

16 September 2013

Members of the public are welcome to attend the meeting and listen to the discussions.

There is time set aside at the beginning of most meetings to allow the public to ask questions.

Speaking under "Public Question Time" is limited to 4 minutes per person in an overall period of 15 minutes. The Committee Administrator will keep a close watch on the time and the Chairman will be responsible for ensuring the time permitted does not overrun. The speaker will be allowed to address the Committee once only and will not be allowed to participate further in any debate.

Except at meetings of Full Council, where public participation will be restricted to Public Question Time only, if a member of the public wishes to address the Committee on any matter appearing on the agenda, the Chairman will normally permit this to occur when that item is reached and before the Councillors or Tenant Services Management Board Members begin to debate the item.

This is more usual at meetings of the Council's Planning Committee and details of the "rules" which apply at these meetings can be found in the leaflet "Having Your Say on Planning Applications". A copy can be obtained free of charge from the Planning Reception Desk at The Deane House or by contacting the telephone number or e-mail address below.

If an item on the agenda is contentious, with a large number of people attending the meeting, a representative should be nominated to present the views of a group.

These arrangements do not apply to exempt (confidential) items on the agenda where any members of the press or public present will be asked to leave the Committee Room.

Full Council, Executive, Committees and Task and Finish Review agendas, reports and minutes are available on our website: www.tauntondeane.gov.uk



Lift access to the John Meikle Room and the other Committee Rooms on the first floor of The Deane House, is available from the main ground floor entrance. Toilet facilities, with wheelchair access, are also available off the landing directly outside the Committee Rooms.



An induction loop operates to enhance sound for anyone wearing a hearing aid or using a transmitter.

For further information about the meeting, please contact the Corporate Support Unit on 01823 356414 or email r.bryant@tauntondeane.gov.uk

If you would like an agenda, a report or the minutes of a meeting translated into another language or into Braille, large print, audio tape or CD, please telephone us on 01823 356356 or e-mail us at: enquiries@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Tenant Services Management Board Members:-

- Mr D Etherington (Chairman)
- Mrs J Hegarty (Vice-Chairman)
- Councillor R Bowrah, BEM
- Mrs J Bunn
- Mrs E Drage
- Mr M Edwards
- Mr D Galpin
- Mr I Gould
- Mr K Hellier
- Mr R Middleton
- Mrs T Urquhart

Minutes of the meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board held on Monday 15 July 2013 at 6pm in The John Meikle Room, The Deane House, Belvedere Road, Taunton.

Present: Mr Dustyn Etherington (Chairman), Mrs J Bunn, Mr M Edwards, Mr D Gaplin, Mr K Hellier, Mrs T Urquhart and Councillor Bowrah.

Officers: Lucy Clothier (Housing Accountant), Stephen Boland (Housing Service Lead), James Barrahan (Health and Housing Manager), Phil Webb (Housing Manager; Property Services), Martin Price (Tenant Empowerment Manager), Jayne Hares (Community Development Officer) and Emma Hill (Corporate Support Officer).

Others: Councillor Jean Adkins
Malcolm Andrews; Chairman of Tenants' Forum.
Mr Cook; resident of Bovet Street Sheltered Housing
Mrs Bowman; resident of Bovet Street Sheltered Housing
Mr P Royston; resident of Bovet Street Sheltered Housing

(The meeting commenced at 6.00pm)

1. Apologies

Cllr S Brooks, Mrs E Drage, Mrs J Hegarty, Mr I Gould and Mr R Middleton.

2. Public Question Time

A Tenant of Bovet Street Sheltered Housing expressed their confusion and anger relating to not receiving new front doors at the same as George Street who had new doors fitted. The tenants of Bovet Street felt that the doors were not secure and the glass in the doors was a health and safety issue as it was not safety glass. Due to anti-social behaviour taking place in the area of Bovet Street during the evening, tenants expressed their fears that the doors they currently had were not adequate or secure, which meant residents didn't feel safe in their own homes. The Tenants of Bovet Street had asked the Board for their opinion on this and asked Officers present what they were going to do about this? The tenants felt that Sheltered Housing properties should be a priority for replacement of doors.

Another issue was that the thermostat for the heating system was in the hallway of all the flats as the hallway was considerably colder the heating is constantly on and this is not helping the tenants keeping their heating bills down.

The Housing Manager for Property Services said that replacement of external doors (this included both back and front doors) was a five year programme and currently the programme was in year one. There would be 7,000 doors replaced during the programme and Bovet Street was due to be done in year three. The programme numbers had been split equally including Sheltered Housing and Extra Care facilities. Creating a programme of works for the replacement of doors was the most cost effective method to complete the work. In some cases the replacement of doors had been completed in tandem with the installation of new heating system.

3. HRA Financial Summary for 2012/13

Considering the financial figures table previously circulated, concerning the Housing Revenue Account Financial Summary 2012/13 accompanied by a verbal update given by Housing Accountant and Health & Housing Manager. The spreadsheets detailed the breakdown of overall performance outturn of 2012/13 split between capital and revenue.

The Revenue Account Performance included such headings as Right to Buy, Income, Expenditure and HRA Revenue.

The following points were covered during the update on Housing Revenue Account Income, Expenditure and Revenue;

- Voids had an overspend of £568,101. This was due to additional voids from change in Benefits system and Halcon Estate re-development.
- There was a pressure of £53,000 on Non-Dwellings properties due to low take up of garages.
- HRA Income had an overall pressure of £22,376.
- HRA Expenditure had an overall underspend of £83,625.
- Total HRA Revenue had an overall under spend of £167,303.

The following points were covered during the update on Housing Revenue Account Capital Programmes;

- Overall HRA Capital Programmes had underspend of £850,321.
- Budget slippage to 2013/14 was £653,100. This would allow work programmes to continue into 2013/14.
- Overspend in Doors programme of £58,454. This was due to a high number of requests for replacement doors via repairs system.
- Underspend in Fascias and Soffits programme of £212,208. This was due to delay in the start of the contract.
- There had been 37 Right to Buy sales in 2012/13.
- Capital Budget was £5.5 million.
- Budget slippage to 2013/14 was £653,100.
- 2012/13 Budget spend was £4.6 million.

During the discussion of this item, board members and the public made the following comments and asked questions: - (*Responses shown in italics*)

- Currently, how many empty garages within the Council's stock? Why were the garages not being rented out? Was the rent too high?
The Council was aware of where the empty garages were and they were advertised on Homefinder Somerset. The precise figures around garages stock can be brought to the board.
- Could the figures of empty garages stock be broken down in demographic area?
The Council had just completed a survey of the garage stock. The council stock currently stands at 1500 garages all together and the majority of them were let.
- Some of the Council's garage stock maybe standing empty pending the re-development of Creechbarrow Road.

- Concerns over the overspend in Voids; could the Council increase the budget to compensate?
The Council was currently looking into increasing the budget for Voids.
- Could the figure table be either printed in colour or paler colours used against the black figures? The grey makes them hard to read.
- Concerns were raised by Board Members over the amount of Capital Programmes slipping to 2013/14.
- The bad weather of last year must have been a factor in the lack of programmes completed.
Last year's bad weather had some effect on the work programmes as well as problems getting work contracts in place. The additional slipped programme would be integrated into the existing programme of works for 2013/14 and not all the Capital Programme would be completed by Deane DLO, some were to be contracted out. The work would spread over a variety of contractors.
- Kilkenny Door Entry system needs to be replaced as not everyone had fobs for it.
- Could the underspend on Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) money be re-allocated?
DFG money cannot be re-allocated. This money had been allocated already to work in the pipeline. There was a lengthy process to DGF before the work can take place. There was currently work in progress to streamline the process.

Resolved that the Board noted the Officer's report.

4. Inspection of Void Properties by Tenants Inspectors.

Considering the joint report previously circulated, which sets out a number of recommendations, proposals and discussion points raised by members of the Tenants' Forum whose members (Tenant Inspectors) had been inspecting the quality of void properties since March 2012. Housing Services officers had considered all that had been put forward and the comments of officers were included with this report.

The views of Tenant Services Management Board members were sought.

Tenant inspectors were Tenants' Forum volunteers who help with monitoring the quality of Housing Services' void properties. The inspectors collect data when visiting void properties and provide a written report to Housing Services, report on how well the service was doing and make recommendations on how to improve the service.

Tenants' Forum volunteers began their work in March 2012.

There were currently five teams of inspectors and approximately four properties were selected for inspection each month.

To date many properties had been inspected. It was the reports from these inspections that had been considered together to form the basis on which all recommendations, proposals, and discussion points in this report were proposed.

Key Recommendations

The following recommendations were based on reoccurring issues arising from inspections undertaken by Tenants' Forum Tenant Inspectors.

A. Tenant inspector recommendation:

All void properties should be completed to 'official lettable standard' – This does not appear to be the case at present.

Officer comment: Officers affirm that all TDBC housing properties were let to, at least, maintain our lettable standard.

Further work would be undertaken by officers, by reviewing tenant inspector reports, to look into this matter.

The following was Board Members comments:

- Would it take longer to re-let the properties with the additional inspections?
- Make sure it was cost effective if the Council make sure the properties up to standard.
- Board supports officer's views.

B. Tenant inspector recommendation:

All gas and electrical meters to be fitted at 'correct specified heights'.

Officer comment: The housing service acknowledges the problem of some tenants not being able to easily access their gas or electric meters. The gas and electrical meters were not the property of Housing Services and it would be costly to move meters when it was not currently a priority for investment.

Easy access to meters would be a feature in any new build or major refurbishment works to a property. Property services officers would also investigate new technology that may be available to enable readings to be made remotely.

The following was Board Members comments:

- Agree with the officer's views, this would be expensive to do in every void property.
- This was not a voids issue. Although, all stock could be reviewed as possibly a Health and Safety issue.
- Make new tenant aware of the locations of the meters before moving in.
- Could the Council take a different route by approaching the utilities suppliers?
- What about looking into the use of smart meters?
- Board supports officer's views.

C. Tenant inspector recommendation:

All electric sockets to be supplied and fitted at a height approximately three feet up from the floor.

Officer comment: Achieving this would be more practical on any new build or major refurbishment works to a property but not in relation to void properties because of the extent and cost of the works involved. In doing so an assessment would need to be undertaken to ensure investment was targeted to where the greatest need was.

Furthermore, Housing Services is going to undertake a physical refresh of its sheltered housing stock and would consider this recommendation as part of that work.

The following was Board Members comments:

- Too many sockets at 3 feet would make placing furniture up against the wall very difficult. Consider only putting one at a higher level.
- Board supports officer's views.

D. Tenant inspector recommendation:

Minimum of 3 double electric sockets fitted per room; Minimum of 8 electric sockets per kitchen.

Officer comment: The costs of such works would need to be further considered and could be supplied and fitted as a matter of routine on any void property schedule or as part of any future electrical refurbishment contract or new build.

Consideration needs to be given to the size of any bedroom, for example, a bedroom would need to be large enough to accommodate 3 accessible double sockets.

Single sockets could be enhanced to doubles as a matter of routine, subject to available budget.

Note: The whole issue of a TDBC Housing Services home standard needs to be given more thought.

The following was Board Members comments:

- Board supports officer's views.

E. Tenant inspector recommendation:

A full set of window security locks and keys to be provided.

Officer comment: Officers are in agreement with above.

The following was Board Members comments:

- Board supports officer's views.

F. Tenant inspector recommendation:

None of the main entrance door keys to the property should be left lying around in property/in kitchen drawers. All such keys need to be kept securely by officers until they were all handed over to new a tenant.

Officer comment: Officers are in agreement with above.

The following was Board Members comments:

- Board supports officer's views.

G. Tenant inspector recommendation:

If a future tenant moves into a property prior to all remedial works being completed they shall be provided with a written statement from the Estates Officer detailing the works still to be completed along with timescale.

Officer comment: Officers are in agreement with above.

The following was Board Members comments:

- Board supports officer's views.

H. Tenant inspector recommendation:

The boiler and central heating instruction booklets must be available and accessible at the property.

Officer comment: Instructions and information in respect of boilers and central heating was currently made available to all new tenants and contained within the 'Welcome Pack for New Tenants' documentation.

The following was Board Members comments:

- Some elderly residents were unable to set their heating systems properly. Could the Council send someone out to show them how to work the heating system?
The Estates Officer makes a follow up call after four weeks of a tenant moving in but the tenant can request them make a visit.
- Officers would review the boiler/central heating instructions within the Welcome Pack.
- Board supports officer's views.

Key Proposals

The following proposals were suggested by the Tenants' Forum as financial considerations.

A. Tenant Inspector proposal:

Throughout a property all floor coverings left by previous tenant/s to be removed and floors made good. However, if a TDBC Surveyor states that carpets were to be left, then no decorating was to be carried out and decorating pack(s) to be supplied.

Note: Tenants' Forum state that Housing Services should be making more frequent use of decorating packs. The issuing of decoration packs should be the norm, except in circumstances where property was to be let to, for example to elderly person/s or disabled person/s.

Officer comment: Officers recognise the budget savings that could be achieved by issuing more decorating packs.

The following was Board Members comments:

- Good financial savings could be made if unnecessary decorating wasn't completed in inspected Void properties.
- New incoming tenants could make the effect to decorate the property if materials were supplied.
- Board supports officer's views.

B. Tenant Inspector proposal:

Ensure all flats had a storage area to provide for the recycling of household waste. Too many stairwells and walkways are obstructed.

Officer comment: Taunton Deane Borough Council's secure tenancy agreement states the following:

"Your use of council property and communal areas."

5.2 You would undertake to keep the communal hall, staircases, landings, lifts, passageways and surrounding areas serving your dwelling in a clean and tidy condition and free from obstruction. These areas must not be used in such a manner as to cause nuisance or annoyance to other residents".

Housing Estates Officers would continue to work with tenants to ensure they follow the tenancy conditions they agreed to by signing a tenancy agreement to become a Taunton Deane Borough Council tenant.

Our Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2012 – 2042 makes provision for £4.5m over 30 years for environmental improvements to fund works outside the home including improved recycling provision for our blocks of flats where possible.

The following was Board Members comments:

- Board Members agreed with this where practical.
- Tenants not taking notice of the warning or enforcement as well as ignoring the fire risk.
- Look into providing mini recycling area for tenants.
- Board supports officer's views.

C. Tenant inspector proposal:

Where required, gardens to be given one grass cut and tidy up and the 'incoming tenant' to be made aware of their responsibility for future upkeep. Ideally any works to gardens need to be undertaken a maximum of a 1 week before occupancy occurs.

Officer comment: Taunton Deane Borough Council's secure tenancy agreement states the following:

"Your use of council property and communal area

5.1 You must ensure that your garden is kept tidy, by regularly cutting the grass, hedges and shrubs. You would not allow litter or rubbish to accumulate, or domestic animals to create a nuisance through noise or fouling".

Officers understand that what was being proposed was for an initial cut and tidy up where an out going tenant/s had not maintained their garden. Officers also recognise that undertaking such works as part of a void works schedule would ensure any 'incoming tenant' would see what the basic standard of garden maintenance looked like.

The following was Board Members comments:

- New incoming Tenants should be informed of their responsibilities to maintain the garden as well as the property.
- There should be some enforcement around this.
More enforcement of maintaining garden can be completed by Estates Officers.
- Board supports officer's views for over grown gardens.

Key discussion points for an improved tenant inspection process

The following discussion points were representative of the views of all the tenant inspectors and highlight what has been observed to be re-occurring issues and matters.

A. Tenant inspector discussion point:

Tenant inspectors need a minimum of one hour for each inspection.

Officer comment: Officers were in agreement with above.

The following was Board Members comments:

- Board supports officer's views.

B. Tenant inspector discussion point:

Tenant inspectors require a copy of the surveyors report for each void property that is to be inspected.

Officer comment: Officers were in agreement with the above.

The following was Board Members comments:

- Board supports officer's views.

C. Tenant inspector discussion point:

Tenant inspectors to have control in carrying out their individual void property inspection.

Officer comment: Officers are in agreement with the above.

The following was Board Members comments:

- Board supports officer's views.

D. Tenant inspector discussion point:

All sheltered housing properties that become void were to be decorated throughout where, following a surveyor's inspection, it was deemed necessary.

Officer comment: Officers were in agreement with the above.

The following was Board Members comments:

- Board supports officer's views.

During the discussion of this item, board members made the following comments and asked questions. Responses shown in italics:

- Thanks was given to Malcolm Andrews and Tenants' Forum members for all their help and work in their own time.

Resolved that the Board noted the Officer's report.

5. Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) Annual Conference 2013

Considering the report previously circulated, concerning the details of next TPAS Annual Conference.

Members of the Tenant Services Management Board (TSMB) had previously attended the TPAS Annual Conferences which had traditionally been held in Birmingham during July.

This year TPAS had changed the way the conference was delivered. There would be two conferences, one in the north and one in the south, both being held in September.

The TSMB was asked to decide whether to send delegates to a conference, and if so how many and which conference.

TPAS was a leading national tenant participation organisation working to promote tenant empowerment as well as providing training events it holds an annual conference which allows tenants from all over the country to attend workshops, hear guest speakers and meet with other tenants.

TPAS had decided to split the conference this year, holding two conferences:

- TPAS Conference South – Radisson Blu Hotel, London Stansted Airport, 11th and 12th September
- TPAS Conference North – Mercure Hotel Piccadilly, Manchester, 24th and 25th September

Traditionally there had been a dinner held on the evening of the conference. This year TPAS was not holding a dinner, delegates would have to make their own arrangements. With Taunton Deane being in the south west there was usually an

assumption that if conferences were held on a geographical basis the south event was closer.

TPAS were currently finalising the full programme including workshops and speakers

After discussion of this report, the Tenant Services Management Board made the recommendations below in relation to the TPAS Annual Conference.

Resolved that the:-

1. Officer's report to be noted.
2. Representatives of Tenant Services Management Board should attend North TPAS Conference at Manchester.
3. Board representatives to attend this year's conference would be Mr M Edwards, Cllr B Bowrah, Mr K Hellier and Mr D Gaplin.
4. Tenant Empowerment Manager would research other cheaper accommodation for the representatives to use rather than TPAS suggested accommodation.

6. Halcon North Regeneration – Creechbarrow Road Project Update

Considered report previously circulated, concerning the outline detailed proposals of the Creechbarrow Road Project, primarily in relation to the Council's portion of the site.

The revised development project sought to maximise the opportunities afforded by Homes and Communities Agency funding allocated to Knightstone Housing Association (KHA) and changes to housing finance resulting in more resources available for the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to invest in new affordable housing, along with land available in the development site. The aim of the project was to assist in tackling the high levels of deprivation in the Halcon Ward and to provide more affordable housing.

Since this time much work had been undertaken to progress the scheme, to the point where final approval for the TDBC element was now requested in this report.

The site was currently being assembled by decanting the current tenants and buy back of the leasehold properties along with giving notice to quit on the garages.

Highlighted current flats/houses on the Creechbarrow Road site would be demolished. One end of the site would be transferred to KHA and they would construct 32 affordable rented houses on this area. The remainder of this site would remain in Taunton Deane ownership, on which 60 new homes for Social rent would be built.

Whilst the project was housing driven, it was also designed to help tackle the deprivation in the area. In total, the proposal was for 92 new homes on the site, a significant increase over the number of properties currently on the site. This represented a significant increase in better quality affordable homes that were cheaper to run and potential investment of over £12 million in this area.

The proposed play/green area would provide a new central focus and help integration of the new and the existing properties and provide a quality open space and the

Community Hub building would potentially provide a valuable facility for the provision of services to the Halcon Ward.

The KHA outline development was comprised of 32 dwellings in total, consisting of the following.

- 1 x 1 bed two-person Flat Over Garage (FOG);
- 3 x 2 bed four-person FOG;
- 9 x 1 bed two-person elderly persons flats (including 3 wheelchair compliant);
- 6 x 2 bed three-person elderly persons flats (including 2 wheelchair compliant);
- 3 x 2 bed four-person houses;
- 9 x 3 bed five-person houses; and
- 1 x 4 bed seven-person house.

KHA funding was supported by Homes and Community Agency (HCA) grant for 30 of the 32 new dwellings. The grant conditions required completion of these properties by 31 March 2015.

Heads of Terms for the disposal of the KHA portion of the site were currently being prepared. Previously the Council had commissioned Savills to undertake an assessment of the residual value of the KHA portion of the site for affordable housing. This had confirmed a negative residual value, and consequently the site would be disposed of for £1. The Council was operating in an “open book” fashion with KHA and the total scheme cost for the KHA part was likely to be £3,972,000 and showed a substantial loss.

Reported that if during contractor procurement the KHA scheme revealed a changed position to generating a surplus, an overage agreement had already been negotiated where KHA and the Council would benefit equally in any surpluses derived. In addition a buy back for £1 clause had been included in the draft Heads of Terms so the Council would be able to re-purchase the site if the scheme faltered.

The outline of Taunton Deane’s development was comprised of 60 new properties in accordance with the mix below:-

- 9 x 1 bed two-person elderly persons flats (including 3 wheelchair compliant);
- 6 x 2 bed three-person elderly persons flats (including 2 wheelchair compliant);
- 1 x 1 bed two-person (FOG);
- 3 x 2 bed three-person (FOG);
- 6 x 1 bed two-person wheelchair compliant flats;
- 8 x 1 bed two-person flats;
- 6 x 2 bed three-person flats;
- 4 x 2 bed four-person houses;
- 13 x 3 bed five-person houses;
- 2 x 4 bed seven-person houses;
- 1 x 5 bed eight-person house; and
- 1 x 6 bed nine-person house.

An Elderly Persons Court would be provided comprising six two-bed and nine one-bed properties all designed to cater for non close-care elderly persons, with the inclusion of wheelchair transfer areas and level access showers in all flats with the

option of reverting to baths should they be required. In addition, six ground floor wheelchair compliant ground floor flats had been included in the scheme proposal.

The development would include the following Design Standards:-

- Code for Sustainable Development – Level 4 - The new homes would be much cheaper to run for the occupants in that they would be 25% more energy efficient than current Building Regulations. In addition, Level 4 aimed to:-
 - (a) reduce potable water consumption per person;
 - (b) encourage good waste management and recycling, both during construction and the occupation of the building;
 - (c) encourage the use of sustainable and/or recycled building materials;
 - (d) encourage the use of low or zero carbon technologies;
 - (e) increase the health and wellbeing of the occupants; and
 - (f) protect and enhance the ecology.
- Lifetime Homes - The Creechbarrow Road scheme layout and house layouts would fully conform to the latest Lifetime Homes design criteria, which ensured that a home built to the standards would be adaptable to allow future changes in occupant's circumstances to be accommodated through pre-planned alterations rather than requiring them to move house.
- Secured by Design - An integral part of the overall sustainable development strategy was to adopt the Secured by Design Police initiative providing guidance and encouragement to those engaged within the specification, design and build of new homes to adopt crime prevention measures in new development. Compliance with the guidance had been proven to reduce the opportunity for crime and the fear of crime, creating safer, more secure and sustainable environments.
- Taunton Protocol – This had been adopted by the Council in November 2011 and set out the Council's aspirations for development in the fields of carbon reduction, building design and valuation, producing significant reductions of Co2 to help meet the Government's challenging targets for reducing the impact of climate change.

Further reported that the scheme would remove a current Housing Revenue Account owned play area at the northern end of the site which was of poor quality. In its place a new, more central play area/open space would be provided in the scheme. An equipped area for younger children known as a Local Equipped Area for Play was to be provided within the development, without the necessity of crossing Creechbarrow Road.

A three storey building was proposed at the end of Moorland Road. This would provide dwellings (8 x 1 bed, 2 person flats) on the first and second floors and a community facility on the ground floor which potentially could include the following features:-

- Walk in community facilities such as youth meeting place, internet provision and community café;
- Access to advice and services via volunteers and agencies;
- Meeting/activity rooms;
- Smaller interview rooms; and
- Landing pad workstations (hot desks) for partner agencies working in the area.

It was the intention through the construction phase to maximise opportunities for local community involvement and benefit through such things as requiring contractor(s) to provide training/apprenticeship opportunities that may lead to longer term employment. Such opportunities would initially be ring-fenced to persons within the ward and the involvement of local and feeder schools in design and public art throughout the site.

In order to maximise the benefits of the scheme, it was important to let the new properties in a way that would facilitate and enable the greatest positive impact. Consequently a draft Local Lettings Plan had been created in consultation with partners and KHA which would apply to the whole development area.

Reported that the new Council properties would be subject to Right to Buy (RtB), therefore if they were let to a tenant with existing, or, in time, earned RtB eligibility (Council or HA tenant for 5 years), they could make an application to RtB the property.

However, the Council was afforded some protection by the "Cost floor" provision. This meant that for new build property for a period of 15 years, the RtB discounts would be limited to ensure that the purchase price of the property did not fall below what had been spent on building, buying, repairing or maintaining it over a certain period of time, up to the market value of the property. Therefore, in order to RtB a property, applicants would be required to pay the full build costs of the property (up to its market value).

The report detailed the results of the extensive public consultation/engagement which had been undertaken, in terms of preferences and concerns. All of the points had been assimilated into a composite design development process, which had informed the planning submission.

Reported that the following was the current position as far as site assembly was concerned:-

- (i) Notice to quit had been issued to all tenants of garages. Many were now vacant with keys returned;
- (ii) 15 properties had been decanted to alternate accommodation;
- (iii) 15 accepted offers on alternate property and were somewhere down the path of moving home; and
- (iv) Negotiations were continuing with leaseholders for the buy back of properties.

The area of the scheme included four properties at the end of Moorland Road. Of these, one (No 1) was owned by the General Fund (GF) as it was "bought back" by Housing Enabling during the course of the original larger project. The remaining three properties were owned by the HRA. It was proposed that the property was transferred to the HRA from the GF at a price agreed following formal valuation.

Following updates to the proposals reported to the Executive in February 2013, a detailed financial appraisal of the current proposed scheme had been undertaken and provided the following conclusions. However it should be noted that the construction

work had not yet been subject to tendering and it was likely that reductions in the projected costs could be achieved through a competitive tendering process:-

- The Total Scheme Costs for the project was £8,143,000;
- Based on income from rents over a 30 year period the scheme could afford to repay £5,764,000 over 30 years.
- Therefore the scheme required a subsidy of £2,379,000
- The payback period (the time at which the full cost – including the £2,379,000 above - was paid back) = 46 years.

The current 2013/2014 Capital Programme included an approved budget for the scheme totalling £7,667,000. In addition, there was an approved budget allocation of £200,000 included in the 2012/2013 Capital Programme for this scheme, giving approval for Total Capital Expenditure of £7,867,000.

The updated estimate of Total Scheme Costs exceeded the current approval, therefore it was necessary to request a budget increase of £276,000 in order to proceed to tender, as shown in the following table:-

	£
Current Capital Expenditure Budget for the scheme:	
2012/13 Capital Programme	200,000
2013/14 Capital Programme	7,667,000
Current Budget	7,867,000
Updated estimate of Total Scheme Costs	8,143,000
Additional Budget Approval Required	276,000

In terms of funding arrangements for the scheme, when the initial proposals were approved £200,000 was allocated from HRA Reserves and Members agreed in principle to approve funding for the balance via borrowing. The Council had experienced significant growth in RtB sales – and therefore capital receipts – in the last year. It was therefore proposed to use RtB capital receipts to fund 10% of the scheme, taking into account the requirement to meet the conditions of the One for One Replacement Agreement with the Government. The following table summarised the proposed funding at this stage:-

	£
Estimated Total Funding Required	8,143,000
Proposed Funding:	
HRA Reserves	200,000
RtB Capital Receipts	814,000
Social Housing Development Fund (indicative only)	1,686,000
Borrowing (indicative only)	5,443,000
Total Funding	8,143,000

Giving approval to support expenditure through borrowing would enable the scheme to proceed.

Although the Business Case indicated that the HRA would effectively provide a subsidy for the scheme within the current 30-year plan, the investment in the

increased housing that the scheme provided did pay back over 46 years. It was therefore reasonable to conclude that the investment was affordable over the long term and that the properties should have a useful life of at least 46 years if properly maintained as planned.

The Community Development Officer covering the Halcon area gave a brief update on a forthcoming public consultation survey going to the residents and tenants on the Halcon Estate relating what they wish for in a Community Hub.

During the discussion of this item, Members made comments and statements and asked questions which included: - (Responses are shown in italics)

- *All garages on the Creechbarrow Road Development Site had been purchased and ownership had returned to the Council. Four of the leasehold had reached agreement.*
- Concerning the leasehold residents was the Council helping them to find new accommodation?
Each leasehold case was different and the Council was approaching them individually. The Council was providing support and advice where possible.
- Board Member expressed the pleasure that the re-development project was progressing well.
- Board Members thanked officers for the work so far on this re-development project.
This re-development project had been hugely time consuming due to the tight deadlines. Other Council Housing Projects had been put on the back burner.
- Where were the Council in the naming of the main street within the development site? The Board Members had suggested and put forward 'Pauline Kershaw'

Resolved that the:-

1. Board noted the Officer's report.
2. Supported the approval of the progression of the redevelopment scheme as outlined.
3. Support the approval subject to valuation, the transfer of 1 Moorland Road from the General fund to the Housing Revenue Account; and
4. Support the approval of a Supplementary Estimate of £276,000 thus increasing the total Capital Expenditure Budget for the scheme to £8,143,000, and to note the proposed funding plan for the scheme, including borrowing.

7. Feedback from TSMB on STAR Survey 2013

It was noted that this item be deferred to the next meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board.

8. Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) Tenant Central Training

It was noted that this item be deferred to the next meeting of the Tenant Services Management Board.

(The meeting ended at 8.55pm)

Declaration of Interests

Tenant Services Management Board

- Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Tenants;
 - Mrs J Bunn
 - Mrs E Drage
 - Mr M Edwards
 - Mr D Etherington
 - Mr D Galpin
 - Mr I Gould
 - Mrs J Hegarty
 - Mr K Hellier
 - Mr R Middleton
 - Mrs T Urquhart

- Family member a Taunton Deane Borough Council Housing Tenant;
 - Councillor Bowrah

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Tenant Services Management Board – 19th August 2013

Taunton Deane Borough Council 2013 Tenant and Leaseholder Satisfaction Survey – STAR Survey

Report of – Housing Services Lead

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Jean Adkins)

1. Executive Summary

A request was made to the Tenant Services Management Board (TSMB) at its meetings in June and July 2013 to consider a summary version of STAR Survey and provide feedback at these meetings, including commenting on the survey findings and to consider using the findings to trigger reviews of certain service areas with a view to implementing improvements.

The summary version of the survey is attached as Appendix 1

1.0 Background

STAR (Survey of Tenants and Residents) was launched in July 2011. It provides social housing landlords with the essential means of discovering how satisfied tenants and leaseholders are with the services provided to them and also allows landlords to benchmark satisfaction results with each other. In January 2013 Taunton Deane Borough Council (TDBC) Housing Services commissioned Feedback Services to carry out such a satisfaction survey.

2.0 Responding to the survey findings

The aim of this report and survey is to allow the TSMB to analyse the results and highlight areas of the service that they feel should be reviewed in order for improvements to be made.

3.0 Recommendation

It is recommended the Tenant Services Management Board:

- Note this report
- Review the Summary of the STAR Survey attached in Appendix 1
- At the August 2013 board meeting comment on the findings, with a view to considering which service areas they would recommend to be reviewed.

Contact officer:

Stephen Boland, Housing Services Lead
Direct Dial No 01823 356446
Email address s.boland@tauntondeane.gov.uk

Your views

Taunton Deane Borough Council Tenant and Leaseholders Satisfaction Survey Report 2013

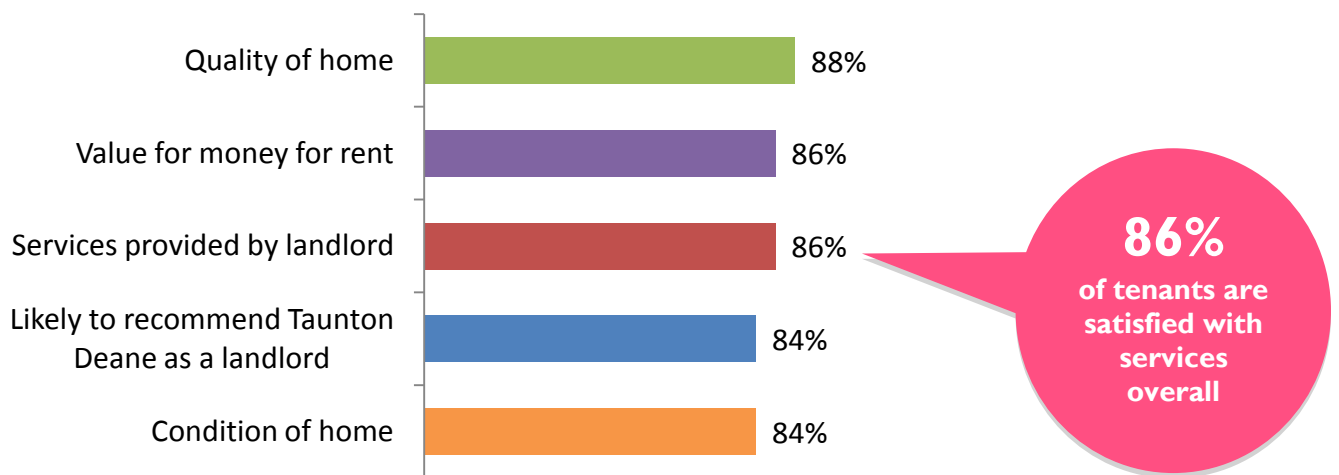
About the survey

Over the winter some of you took part in a survey of tenants. The survey focused on how happy you are with the way Taunton Deane Borough Council (Taunton Deane) delivers services and maintains your homes.

- The survey was sent to a sample of tenants (around 1,500).
- The survey was anonymous and carried out by an independent market research company - Feedback Services (a research agency supported by the National Housing Federation).

Feedback Services and Taunton Deane would like to thank all those tenants who took part. This report contains the key results from the survey.

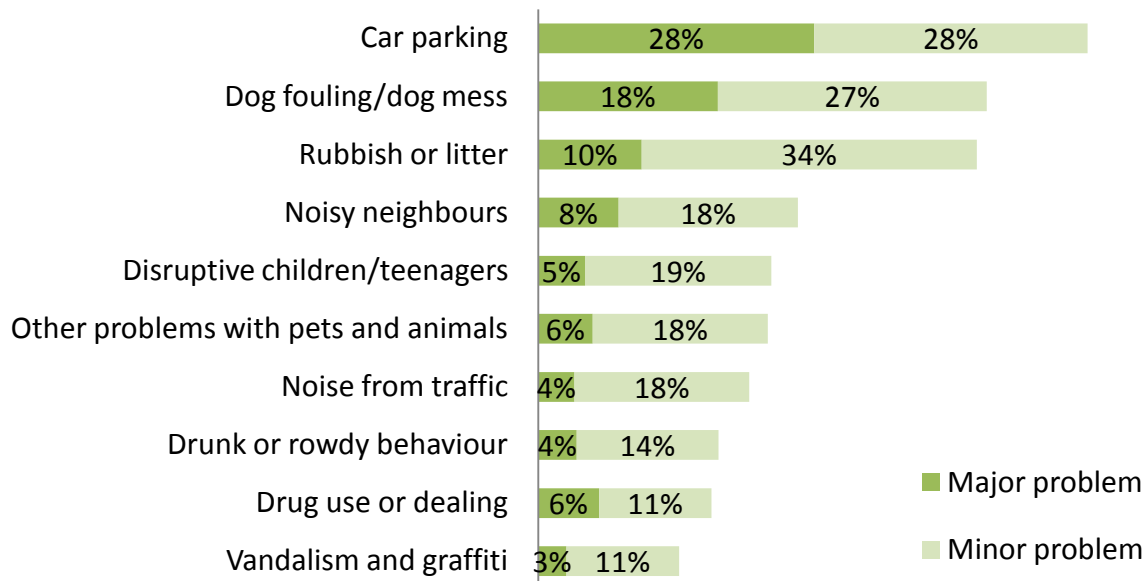
Satisfaction with home and landlord



- The vast majority of tenants would recommend Taunton Deane to family or friends (84%) and even more are happy with the overall service they receive from Taunton Deane (86%) and with the value for money for rent (86%).
- A high number of tenants are also satisfied with the quality of their home (88%) – with satisfied with the condition of their property (84%).

Neighbourhood

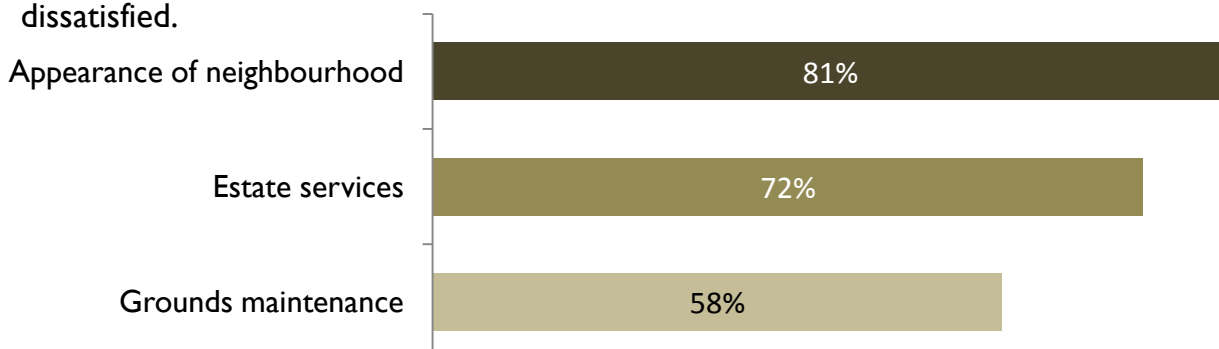
- Almost nine out of ten tenants are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live (88%). This is an increase of 3% since 2011.
- More tenants in sheltered accommodation (94%) are satisfied with their neighbourhood than general needs tenants (87%).
- Key issues within neighbourhoods are car parking, dog fouling and rubbish/litter.



- A quarter of tenants felt that their neighbourhood had improved over the last three years (25%), while more than half (54%) felt it had stayed the same.

Estate services

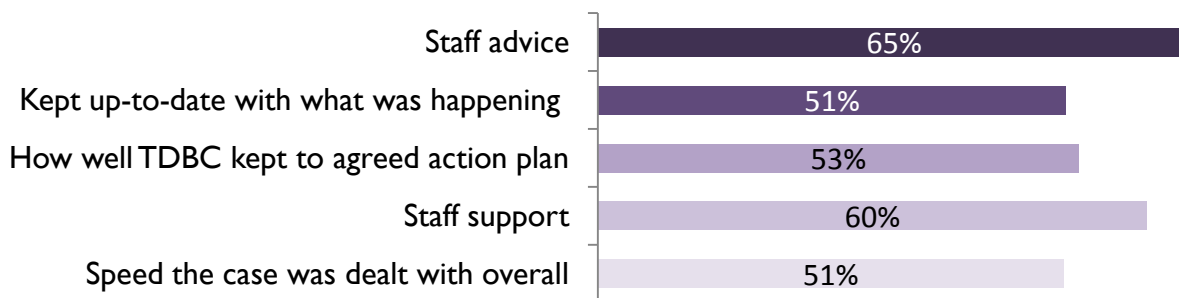
- 81% of tenants are satisfied with the appearance of their neighbourhood and 72% with the overall estate services provided by Taunton Deane.
- Far fewer tenants are satisfied with the grounds maintenance provided (58%), with 32% dissatisfied.



Anti-social behaviour

- Only 9% of all Taunton Deane tenants needed to make an anti-social behaviour complaint in the last 12 months.
- Two thirds of tenants are satisfied with the advice provided by staff (65%) and almost as many with the support given by staff (60%).
- Around half of tenants were also satisfied with being kept up-to-date throughout the case (51%), the speed with which the case was dealt with (51%) and how well Taunton Deane kept to the agreed action plan (53%).

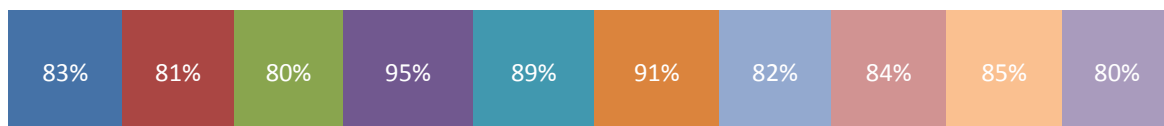
Satisfaction with handling of ASB complaint



Repairs & maintenance

- Four out of five tenants are satisfied with Taunton Deane's repairs and maintenance service (81%) and with the gas servicing arrangements (80%).
- Two thirds of all tenants had reported a repair in the 12 months prior to the survey and a very high percentage of those were satisfied with the repair they received on that occasion (85%).
- Nine out of ten tenants (91%) said that their repairs appointment had been kept.
- 82% of tenants were satisfied with their repair being "right first time" and 89% were satisfied with the quality of the repair work.

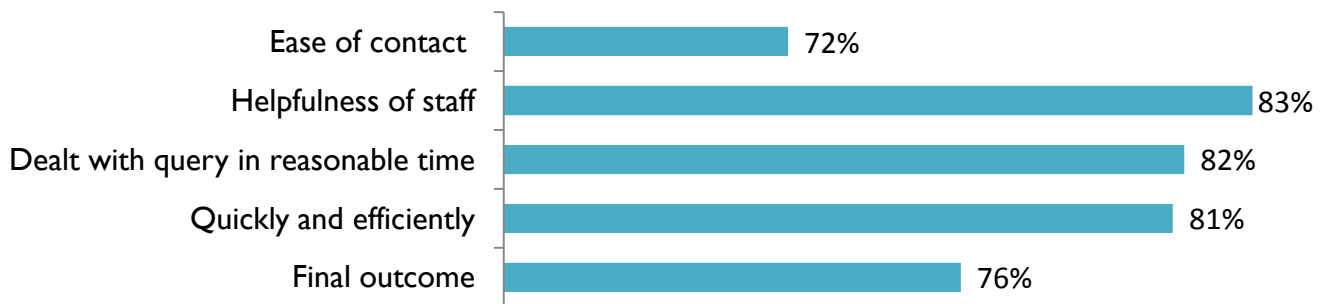
Satisfaction with last repair



- Being told when workers would call
- Being able to make an appointment
- Time taken before work started
- Attitude of workers
- Overall quality of work
- Minimising dirt and mess
- Right first time
- Contractors doing job expected
- Repairs received on this occasion
- Gas servicing arrangements

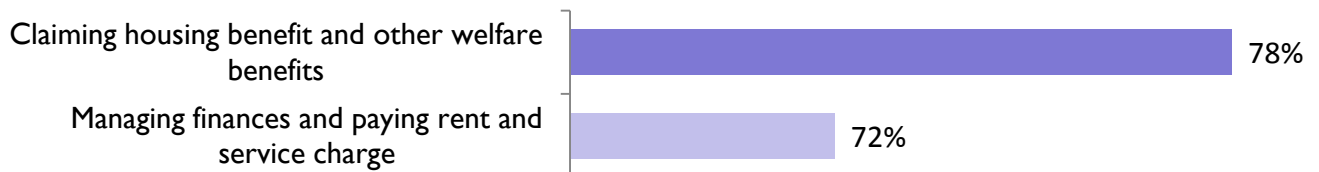
Customer services

- Three out of five tenants had contacted Taunton Deane with a query in the twelve months prior to the survey (61%).
- Helpfulness of staff was highly praised (83%) by many tenants – although this is a lower rating than in 2011 (89%).
- Similar satisfaction ratings were given for query being answered in a reasonable time (82%); dealing with the query quickly and efficiently (91%).
- Lower ratings were given for ease of contacting the right member of staff (72%) and the final outcome of query (76%).

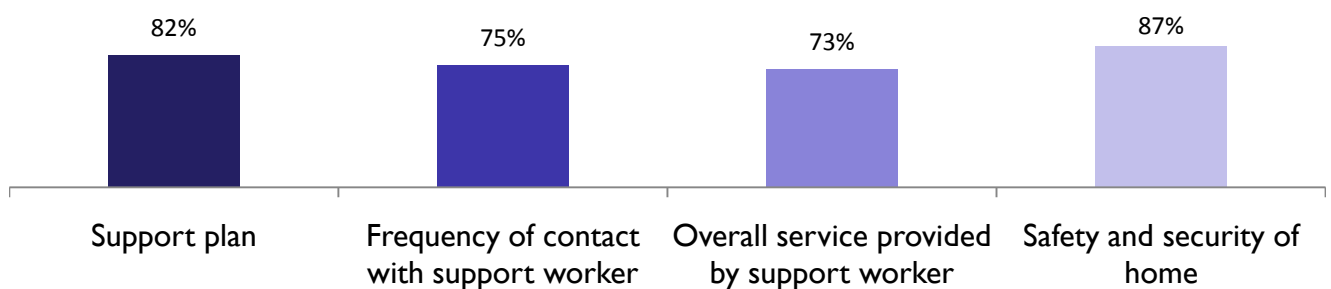


Advice and support

- The majority of tenants are satisfied with the advice and support given by Taunton Deane with regards to claiming the benefits to which they are entitled (78%) and managing finances generally (72%).



- Sheltered housing tenants are highly satisfied with the safety and security of their home (87%) and their support plan (82%).
- Lower ratings were awarded by sheltered housing tenants in respect of frequency of contact with their support worker (75%) and overall service provided by their support worker (73%).



Communication and information

- 87% of tenants felt that the Council is good at keeping them informed about things that might affect them as a tenant – this is 3% higher than the level recorded in the 2011 survey.
- Less than half of Taunton Deane's tenants have access to the internet (47%)

You say – We do

Carrying out this survey is just part of the part of the work Taunton Deane Borough Council does to involve you in developing services. As well as publishing the results of the survey Taunton Deane plans to put the findings to good use by working with tenants to further improve the services they provide.

