

Taunton Deane Borough Council

Tenant Service Management Board – 16 December 2015

Activity Briefing - Pre-void Inspection & Tenancy Enforcement

Report of the Housing Manager – Lettings & Anti-Social Behaviour

(This matter is the responsibility of Executive Councillor Beale)

1. Background

Vanessa Flook started work on the 12th October 2015, the brief below provides initial feedback and commentary on progress being made with the project. Initially Vanessa's work was focused on Pre-void inspections, although towards the end of this initial period she has begun to engage in Tenancy Enforcement tasking.

Period covered- 14th October – 14th November 2015

Total inspections completed – 40 (37 Pre-void, 3 Tenancy Enforcement)

Breakdown of inspections

Pre-void Inspections

10 inspections were commissioned as the result of either the death of the tenant or the tenant moving into residential care. I have not found any issues with these properties as the family and friends have ensured the properties came back in a good condition and had been emptied of all belongings.

9 inspections were on properties that were either neglected or contained a large quantity of belongings. I believe that had we not inspected these properties there was a risk that the tenants may have been returned the properties to us in a poor condition. I have provided potential recharge costs that would have been incurred and therefore the potential savings to either our tenant or the HRA which are contained in the table below, the addresses have been removed for confidentiality purposes. The approximate cost or potential re-charges were £3,778.00 including admin costs of 15% and VAT.

5 properties have required re-visits to monitor progress and ensure work was completed as agreed.

To date no tenants that have been contacted, have refused to carry out the work requested.

To date one next of kin refused to agree to an inspection.

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|-----------------|---|---|--|
| Holway Area | Very dirty, dog urine on floors would possibly require pre clean, broken sockets, | Clean £138 per room including Flea treatment Pre clean £80 | |
| Priorswood Area | Kitchen very dirty, windows excessively | Kitchen clean £138 | |

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|-----------------|--|--|-------------------------|
| | dirty and mouldy, removal of rubbish from property | Removal of belongings £386.40 | |
| Priorswood Area | Re paint, bath needs replacing, casing in bathroom damaged, door handles missing, very dirty, removal of rubbish, clear loft | Bath replacement £303.60 Clean £138 Removal of loft items and rubbish £200 | Work has been completed |
| Halcon Area | Removal of rubbish from house and garden | £200 | |
| Halcon Area | Removal of rubbish from house and garden, replacement hall door, replacement handles to doors | Rubbish removal £386.40 Door replacement £193 | Work has been completed |
| Halcon Area | Removal of excess rubbish and belongings from outhouse and garden. | £386.40 | Work has been completed |
| Priory | Repaint of bedroom 1, clean, removal of possessions from garden and property. | Removal of items £386.40 Clean £69.00 | Painting completed |
| Halcon Area | Removal of excess rubbish and possessions, possible clean | Removal of items £386.40 | Work has been completed |
| Halcon Area | Hoarding/excess clutter. Removal of large amounts of rubbish from property, outhouse and garden. | Removal of rubbish and possession £386.40 + | |

Approx. £3,778.00 including admin costs of 15% and VAT.

2. Tenancy Enforcement Inspections

In addition to the pre-void inspections conducted I have also been working with 3 households where the properties are being neglected largely due to hoarding. These households will require longer term support which is aimed at bringing the property back to a more manageable condition in line with the tenancy agreement, and also ensuring that the tenant can sustain their tenancy in a more tenant like manner over the longer term.

These are:

Wellington - Hoarding and poor hygiene.

I currently re-visit this property fortnightly and am engaging with the tenants. During each visit tasks are discussed and agreed. Due to the amount of possessions in the bedrooms

of this property there is not enough space to enter further than the door swing. So far the tenants have complied with agreed tasks and removed enough belongings to enable me to walk across the room to the window. The success of bringing this property back into a reasonable condition will require long term and ongoing support.

Expenditure from budget to date £0.00. Potential cost of recharges to date: £386.40

Taunton - Clearance from garden of cars, garden waste and rubbish, replacement of doors, clear loft, replace tenant's own electrics

Whilst there will still be an element of potential recharges the tenants have worked hard to remove all rubbish from the gardens, have removed an outhouse that did not have permission, removed numerous items from the property. Through supporting the family and advising them they have carried out all works that are reasonable for them to do so.

Expenditure from budget to date £0.00. Potential cost of recharges for the above: £1,590.00

Bishops Lydeard - Hoarding and hygiene issues

This property was in a very poor condition, with large quantity of belongings, thread bare carpets that give off overriding smell of dog and dog urine. This is a 3 bed property and the tenant wishes to downsize. We have previously refused this due to the condition of the property. To date I have organised a removal van to remove unwanted items – a full sprinter so far. One carpet has been removed. I aim to further support the tenant by offering further opportunities to dispose of rubbish and belongings. The property has had the most neglected rooms have been cleaned and painted by the tenant's family.

Expenditure from my budget to date £150.00. Potential cost of recharges for the above: £800.00

3. Financial Summary

The finance comments below are made in the context of potential budget savings/expenditure. Please note that they do not represent actual savings as these do not take into account additional costs incurred for recruitment and salary for staff to complete the project.

- Potential pre-void inspections savings on void budget to date £3,778.00
- Potential tenancy enforcement re-charges avoided to date £2,626.40
- Expenditure on Lettings contingency budget to date £150.00

The first month has proven to be very busy for Vanessa, the initial focus of work was to conduct pre-void inspections, this has now expanded to include some limited tenancy enforcement activity. This will increase once additional officer is in post. Area Community Managers (ACMs) have been asked to provide a list of potential tenancy enforcement properties, these will be prioritised with ACMs and work will begin to target these households in January.

5. Recommendations

Tenant Service Management Board to note and comment on the report.