

Housing Services Update  
Planning, Housing and Economic Development PDS  
September 2016

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## General Update

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### **Low-cost Homeownership Event**

Housing Services have organised a drop-in event for the public to promote low-cost home ownership options in Bath and North East Somerset. The event will be held between 2-7pm on 26<sup>th</sup> October in the Community Space in Keynsham. All of our housing association partners who are developing shared ownership homes in the area will be in attendance, as well as private developers promoting the use of Help-to-Buy to discount the purchase of a brand new home and Help to Buy South, the Government's appointed Help-to-Buy agent who administers the register of households seeking low cost home ownership. Two independent financial / mortgage advisors will also be in attendance to answer questions and carry out initial affordability assessments for visitors wishing to understand if they can afford low cost home ownership. Between 12-13.30 B&NES staff will be invited to attend a preview of the public event as part of a week of promotion of housing options.

### **Health and Housing Event**

Housing Services and the Public Health team are working together to deliver a housing-focussed event as a follow-up to the recent Health Inequalities Enquiry day. This is being held on 28 September at the Somerdale Pavilion, Keynsham and will bring together officers from different service areas within the housing associations working in B&NES, providers of community-based and voluntary sector providers and Council teams to share best practice and forge new working relationships to improve the health and well-being of people living in affordable homes in Bath and North East Somerset.

### **Homesearch Website**

The Councils Homesearch website has been fully upgraded. The site enables people to register and "bid" for Social Housing as well as obtain advice on other Housing Options. The new site can now be accessed easily on a smartphone for people who do not have access to computers. It is accessible in large print, as well as other languages and is able to provide more information on housing and partner organisations.

### **Housing Fraud Prosecution**

Partnership working between The Royal Borough of Greenwich, Curo and the Housing Options Team has exposed a customer who fraudulently secured social housing within Bath and North East Somerset. Investigations, aided by the Housing Options Team revealed an existing tenancy with Greenwich. The tenant has pleaded guilty to all 5 charges.

### **Housing Advice Drop-In**

To meet an increasing demand for Housing Options advice in the Midsomer Norton/Radstock area, an additional weekly advice service has been arranged. Housing Advisers are now available for people dropping in on Thursday mornings between 9-12, as well as the existing all day Tuesday service.

## Rough Sleeping

Discussions have been held with staff at Julian House regarding the number of people sleeping in tents at various public sites in Bath. Their outreach team has noticed an increase and is concerned that these are being issued free of charge, which often means rough sleepers are not likely to use the available accommodation and support services that prevent homelessness. This will be discussed at the next Homelessness Partnership meeting in September and monitoring of the situation will continue.

## Key Projects Update

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### Foxhill Housing Zone, Combe Down

The Foxhill Housing Zone is the combined development areas of the former Foxhill MoD site, now known as Mulberry Park, and the Foxhill estate which is proposed for regeneration alongside the development of 700 homes at Mulberry Park.

- The new Foxhill Housing Zone project Co-ordinator will be in post by the end of September. Susan Hayter joins us from consultants Balfour Beattie where she is currently working on major estate regeneration projects in Woking with a focus on leading engagement with stakeholders and the Local Authority.
- Curo have commenced pre-app discussions with the Council over masterplanning for the redevelopment of an area comprising approximately 500 homes on the Foxhill estate. Key issues for consideration include densities, heights, provision of affordable housing and the relationship of new homes with retained homes on the estate.
- Curo are holding a public exhibition around the proposed outline planning application on 12/09/16 and will have invited all residents potentially affected by the proposals to a 1-2-1 interview prior to the exhibition.
- The planning application for the Community Hub is due to be determined in October. Start on site is planned for Spring 2017 and completion in time for the new school term in September 2017.
- The first occupations of the open market units will be end January 2017, the bus route will be operational into the site by June 2017 and we will see completion of the first affordable housing plots next summer.
- Cushman Wakefield have been commissioned to carry out an independent viability assessment of the various regeneration options for Foxhill. They have now collected enough data from Curo to begin to develop a base line of financial data, against which the options modelling will be carried out. Work is focussing on the delivery of affordable housing, in particular exploring how much rented provision can be secured.
- Members might like to explore some of the YouTube clips Curo have created to promote Mulberry Park. These can be accessed from the [Mulberry Park](#) website and will show you time lapse photography of construction work as well as virtual footage of the new homes being delivered in phase 1.

### Energy at Home

- The Energy at Home scheme is open to all residents and offers free energy efficiency advice and information and a home energy assessment and installations service.

- Since its launch in September 2014 to June 2016 calls to the advice service have steadily increased to a total of around 2,200 households alongside 21,000 website views and around 1,050 referrals for energy assessments and installations.
- The delivery provider has carried out 236 installations of energy efficiency and heating measures and has further orders to complete this year.
- The Energy at Home scheme still offers a range of grants to support energy efficiency improvements and free or low cost Energy Performance Assessments. Households at risk of fuel poverty can apply for a Warm Homes Grant delivered by Energy at Home and Housing Services in partnership with National Energy Action and Sirona Care and Health.
- Details of all schemes are available from Energy at Home on 0800 038 5680 or [www.energyathome.org.uk](http://www.energyathome.org.uk).

### **Affordable Housing Programme**

- 26 affordable homes were delivered in Q1:
  - The Meadows, Keynsham = 12
  - Bilbie Green, Keynsham = 4
  - Old Print Works, Paulton = 6
  - Knobsbury Lane, Writhlington = 4
- The following 57 affordable homes are forecast for delivery in Q2:
  - Old Print Works, Paulton = 8
  - Bilbie Green, Keynsham = 16
  - The Meadows, Keynsham = 9
  - Somerdale Keynsham = 7
  - Pipehouse Lane, Freshford = 4
  - Brookside Drive, Farmborough = 13
- Current forecasts suggest the overall completion of more than 160 homes by the end of the financial year.
- Commuted Sums in lieu of on-site housing provision have been accepted on the MoD site at Ensleigh South and on a small rural development in Farmborough. In both instances, the units secured through initial planning permissions were not attractive to our Registered Provider partners and in both instances, other rented and shared ownership provision has been secured in the immediate neighbourhood. These sums were agreed following independent scrutiny of development finance and will be ring-fenced to enable the delivery of affordable housing elsewhere in Bath and North East Somerset.

## Q1 Performance

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### What we have done well...

- 100%** Homelessness decisions were made within 33 days.
- 100%** Equalities Impact Assessments are in place.
- 96%** Customers are satisfied with our services. We have exceeded the 90% customer satisfaction target. Putting the customer first and having high standards for the quality and timeliness of services is very important to us.
- 36%** Advice and prevention approaches were successful in preventing or relieving homelessness compared to the target of 33%.
- 32** Weeks average time from receipt of referral in Housing Services to completion of disabled facilities adaptations compared to a target of 36 weeks.
- 20** Households in temporary accommodation. This is fewer than the expected figure of 27. The Housing Options Team remain focused on early intervention to prevent homelessness.

### How we will improve...

- 168** New affordable homes delivered since April 2015. There was slippage of 29 completions into quarter 2 and beyond. We still expect to meet the annual target. It should be noted that delivery is dependent upon the delivery programme of private sector housing construction companies.
- 84%** Homesearch applications made active within 10 working days. The computer system is being upgraded and staff have spent a lot of time training and testing it. This is now complete so performance should improve in quarter 2.
- 80%** Housing complaints tend to be complex and not easily satisfied. For example 3 housing complaints were taken to stage 2 (fully exhausted/ no further action) this quarter. One complaint took longer than the target 15 working days but was resolved without escalation to stage 2.



HOUSING SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 16/17		2015/16				2016/17		Year to date cumulative	Direction of travel (Q1 vs Q4)
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1			
<b>Customer</b>									
Customer complaints (responded to within corporate timescales)	Target	87%	87%	87%	87%	87%	87%		
	Actual	100%	50%	100%	50%	80%	80%	↑	
Customer satisfaction	Target	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%		
	Actual	97.9%	97.7%	100%	96.1%	96.2%	96.2%	↑	
Staff Sickness	Target	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%		
	Actual	2.8%	3.2%	1.7%	0.7%	1.6%	1.6%	↓	
Telephone response (responded within corporate timescales)	Target	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%		
	Actual	88.4%	86.5%	86.6%	87.5%	87.8%	87.8%	↑	
Equality Impact Assessment	Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		
	Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	→	
Invoices paid within 30 days	Target	93%	93%	93%	93%	93%	93%		
	Actual	97.6%	86.7%	81.7%	90.8%	Data not available	Data not available		
<b>Customer Service Standards</b>									
Customer satisfaction	Target	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%		
	Actual	97.9%	97.7%	100%	96.1%	96.2%	96.2%	↑	
Customers treated fairly	Target	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%		
	Actual	97.9%	97.7%	100%	100%	100%	100.0%	→	
Homelessness decisions	Target	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%		
	Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	→	
Performance information published	Target	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed		
	Actual	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed	Completed		

HOUSING SERVICE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS16/17		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Year to date cumulative	Direction of travel (Q1 vs Q4)
<b>Finding and Keeping Housing</b>								
Homelessness cases prevented	Target	33%	33%	33%	33%	33%	33%	
	Actual	38.1%	41.7%	37.2%	35.8%	35.8%	35.8%	↑
Homelessness decisions	Target	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	90%	
	Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	→
Temporary accommodation	Target	24	24	24	24	27	27	
	Actual	18	26	15	21	20	20	↑
Homesearch applications registered within 10 days (New indicator for 2016/17)	Target	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	90%	90%	
	Actual	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	83.6%	83.6%	
Percentage of permanent Gypsy and Traveller pitches occupied	Target	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	70%	
	Actual	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	→
<b>Improved Homes</b>								
Time to complete adaptations - Average time from receipt in Housing Services to practical completion of the work in weeks	Target	31	31	31	31	36	36	
	Actual	21	27	27	28	32	32	↓
Number of homes improved (cumulative) (New indicator for 2016/17)	Target	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100	100	
	Actual	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	125	125	
Percentage of validated HMO License renewals determined within 12 working weeks (New indicator for 2016/17)	Target	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	85%	85%	
	Actual	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	100.0%	100.0%	↓
Long term (2+ years) empty properties brought back into use (cumulative)	Target	12	25	37	50	6	6	
	Actual	8	22	31	62	20	20	
<b>More Homes</b>								
Deliver 465 new affordable homes over a 3 year period 2015-2018 comprising both intermediate & social homes for rent cumulative	Target	8%	16%	24%	33%	41%	41%	
	Actual	2.3%	17.9%	24%	30%	36%	36%	↑