

**Report to:** Regeneration Services Scrutiny Committee  
**Date:** 6 October 2008  
**Report of:** Head of Housing  
**Subject:** Service Unit Performance Reporting – Housing Services  
**Ward:** All

## **1.0 Purpose of the Report**

1.1 The report is intended to provide members of the Regeneration Services Scrutiny Committee with performance information in respect of East Durham Homes and the Housing Service for 4th quarter of 2007/08 and the 1st quarter of the current financial year.

## **2.0 Consultation**

2.1 In preparing this report I have consulted with the Council's Service Support Manager and staff in the Business Development Unit at East Durham Homes.

## **3.0 Background**

3.1 Since the establishment of East Durham Homes (EDH) in April 2004 a detailed performance report in respect of the service areas managed by EDH has been presented to either the former Service Delivery Scrutiny Committee or more recently to the Regeneration Services Scrutiny Committee.

3.2 From April 2006 the report has also contained relevant performance information in relation to the Council's Housing Service which include:

Housing Renewal  
Housing Policy and Strategy  
Supported Housing  
Service Support

## **4.0 Performance to end of June 2008.**

4.1 All service areas managed by EDH and those in the Housing Service are subject to performance monitoring. Up until 1 April 2008 this was done by way of using either statutory Best Value Performance Indicators or locally agreed indicators. These indicators are set out in Appendices 1a & 2a to this report and are identified as BV (Best Value) EDH (East Durham Homes) or HOUS (Housing Service).

In April 2008 the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government (CLG) introduced a new set of 198 National Indicators for English local authorities and local authority partnerships that replaced the statutory Best Value Indicators. This new set of indicators is the only set of indicators that the Government now use to monitor the performance of local authorities and local partnerships.

Therefore the National Indicators along with locally agreed indicators have been used for monitoring purposes from 1 April 2008 and are set out in Appendices 2a & 2b to this report and are identified as NI (National Indicator) EDH (East Durham Homes) or HOUS (Housing Service).

4.2 From 1 April 2007 targets have been profiled on a quarterly basis with the exception of those indicators that are only collated annually. This ensures a more robust

performance monitoring system particularly in areas where there might be seasonal fluctuations or planned work at various times throughout the year.

- 4.3 In addition there is information included, where available, that shows the performance of EDH and the Housing Service in comparison to other organisations, provided by either the Audit Commission or HouseMark which is the Audit Commission's recommended benchmarking club.
- 4.4 Also included are the trends in performance from the end of the 4th quarter 2006/07 compared to those at the end of the 4th quarter 2007/08 and the trends in performance from the end of the 1st quarter 2007/08 in comparison to those at the end of 1st quarter 2008/09.

## **East Durham Homes**

### 4.5 Performance Indicators

#### (i) 4th quarter 2007/08

In the 4th quarter of the last financial year there were 18 key indicators used for monitoring purposes, which comprised 5 statutory Best Value Indicators and 13 locally agreed indicators. This included BVPIs 74(a) & 75(b) in relation to customer satisfaction and participation that were only reported every 3 years.

In summary, 10 (62.50%) of the 16 indicators were on target, 1 (6.25%) was within the 5% tolerance and 5 (31.25%) were not on target.

In comparison to performance at the end of the 4th quarter 2006/07 there was an improvement in 10 (62.50%) of the indicators and a reduction in 6 (37.50%).

Of the 7 indicators where benchmarking information was available 1 represents upper quartile performance, 3 represent median quartile performance and 3 represent lower quartile performance.

#### (ii) 1st quarter 2008/09

Following the introduction of the National Indicators, in the 1st quarter of this financial year there were 17 key indicators selected for monitoring which comprise 2 National Indicators and 15 locally agreed indicators. However, both of the National Indicators and 1 of the local indicators are only collated on an annual basis.

At the end of the 1st quarter, 7 (50.00%) of the 14 indicators were on target, 3 (21.43%) were within the 5% tolerance and 4 (28.57%) were not on target.

Compared to performance for the same period in 2007/08 there was an improvement in 12 (85.71%) of the indicators and a reduction in 2 (14.29%).

There is benchmarking information available for 4 of the indicators. 1 of these represents upper quartile performance and 3 represent lower quartile performance.

Overall, there has been further improvement in performance in relation to the Key Indicators that are monitored. With regard the targets have that were not met, appropriate explanations have been included in Appendices 1a & 2a to this report.

### 4.6 Complaints and Compliments

In the 4th quarter of 2007/08 EDH received a total of 53 complaints of which 25

# Item no.

were found to be justified – ‘where they got it wrong.’ During the same period there was a total of 15 compliments received.

In comparison, in the 1st quarter of this financial year there was a total of 51 complaints received and 15 of those were found to be justified. There were also 20 compliments received during the quarter.

An analysis of the complaints and compliments for the 1st quarter of 2008/08 are shown in the tables below as well as the trend in complaints from 2006/07:

## (i) Complaints

Service Area	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09 1 <sup>st</sup> Quarter	% Analysis
<b>Repairs and maintenance services</b>				
Repairs - East Durham Homes	127	69	14	27%
Repairs - Morrison FS	75	58	15	29%
Voids	1	3	0	0%
Gas & electrical services	19	22	6	12%
Aids and adaptations	1	1	1	2%
Capital Investment	26	21	2	4%
<b>Housing management services</b>				
Allocations	21	32	7	14%
Contact centre and outlets	2	20	1	2%
Estate Management	10	6	1	2%
Income Management	4	4	0	0%
Resident Involvement	1	0	0	0%
Tenancy Enforcement	17	10	4	8%
<b>Corporate services</b>				
Leaseholder service	0	0	0	0%
Finance	0	6	0	0%
Communications	3	0	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>307</b>	<b>252</b>	<b>51</b>	

## (ii) Compliments

Service Area	Apr	May	Jun	Total	%
Repairs EDH	2	3	1	6	30%
Repairs (Morrison FS)	0	1	2	3	15%
Aids and Adaptations	0	1	0	1	5%
Estate Management	0	1	2	3	15%
Contact Centre and Outlets	0	2	1	3	15%
Finance	1	0	0	1	5%
Floating Support	0	0	2	2	10%
Housing Management	0	1	0	1	5%
<b>Monthly Totals</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>

## Housing Service

### 4.7 Performance Indicators

#### (i) 4th quarter 2007/08

During the 4th quarter of the last financial year there were 30 Key Indicators selected for monitoring purposes. 5 of these were statutory Best Value Performance Indicators for which the Housing Service was responsible and 25 were locally agreed indicators.

In summary, of the 29 indicators where information is available 19 (65.52%) were on target, 1 (3.45%) was within the 5% tolerance and 9 (31.03%) were not on target.

In comparison to performance at the end of the 4th quarter 2006/07 there has been an improvement in 17 (65.38%) of the indicators, performance has remained the same in 5 (19.23%) of the indicators and there has been a reduction in 4 (15.38%) of the indicators. There is no information available for 2006/07 for 4 of the indicators that were only introduced in 2007/08.

Of the 3 indicators where benchmarking information is available, 2 represent upper quartile performance and 1 represents lower quartile performance.

(ii) 1st quarter 2008/09

There was a total of 35 key indicators selected for monitoring in the 1st quarter of the current financial year that comprise 6 National Indicators and 29 local indicators. However, 5 of the National Indicators and 10 of the local indicators are only collated on an annual basis. In addition, there is no information available for 1 of the local indicators that is collated on a quarterly basis.

In summary, 13 (68.42%) of 19 indicators were on target, 2 (10.53%) were within the 5% tolerance and 4 (21.05%) were not on target.

Compared to the first quarter in 2007/08 there was an improvement in 6 (33.33%), no change in 6 (33.33%) and a reduction in 6 (33.33%). There was no information available for 2 of the indicators, 1 of these only being introduced in 2008/09.

### *Housing Renewal Team*

#### 4.8 Private Sector Housing

Phase VII of the Dawdon Group Repair Scheme at Wynyard Street and Cottages Road is in the early stages of delivery. All residents have been visited by staff from the Home Improvement Agency (Care and Repair) to assess their eligibility to the scheme. Surveys have been undertaken and the scheme will go to tender by the end of September 2008.

The proposal for a Selective Licensing designation in the Wembley area of Easington Colliery has been submitted to Communities and Local Government (CLG) and a determination is expected by the end of September.

Groundwork East Durham have completed the door to door consultation exercise at Wembley, Easington and obtained a general census from residents and private landlords regarding the improvements needed in the area. This will influence the decisions as to how and where investment should be made.

We continue to tackle long-term empty property across the district by working with owners and, where necessary, taking formal enforcement action.

#### 4.9 Climate Change

The Council's Climate Change Strategy was officially launched in February 2008 by

the Minister of State for the Environment during his visit to Easington.

The Minister complimented the Council on their 'forward looking' strategy that aims to reduce district wide emissions by 10% by 2013. The document has been circulated to all local and regional partners and a Climate Change Awareness Campaign is currently being developed.

#### 4.10 Warm Homes Campaign

As from October 2008 all new tenants of Council owned properties will be issued with an Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) that will provide basic information on the energy performance of their home.

The Council was granted approval from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to develop an EPC Best Practice Toolkit to assist local authorities. This commenced in April 2008 in partnership with National Energy Action, the national fuel poverty charity.

*Housing Policy and Strategy Team*

#### 4.11 District Housing Strategy

We continue to deliver the 4 key priorities of the Council's Housing Strategy through active partnership working. A number of Area Based Grant bids have been developed and submitted for funding to support the delivery of the priorities. These include:

- Extension of the Youth Build project
- Fuel Poverty Initiative
- Anti social behaviour intervention project
- Additional supported housing project at Stage II, Shotton

#### 4.12 Area Renewal and Settlement Plans

Project plans for each of the 7 regeneration areas have been produced and the delivery of the key actions is continuing. The target of reaching the number of non-lettable void properties to less than 100 by 31 March 2008 was achieved.

Partner Development Schemes:

Blackhall

Barratt Homes have completed the 6 bungalows at the Sidings and these properties have now been allocated by East Durham Homes.

South Hetton

Phase 1 of the development at Argyle Place that includes 9 bungalows is expected to be complete in October/November 2008. Phase 2 of the development for mixed tenure housing will begin in December following completion of the first phase.

Easington

Durham Aged Miners Housing Association (DAMHA) is due to start work on the Leech Court Site in February 2009 where 12 two bedroom bungalows are to be built.

Housing Corporation funding has now been confirmed for a total of 24 social rented houses and flats on the Welfare Close Site.

## Shotton Colliery

The Housing Corporation bid for King Street and Moore Terrace has now been submitted by Three Rivers Housing Association. This includes 57 units and is a mix of family housing for rent and shared ownership.

## Murton

Phase 1 of the Watkin Crescent/Turnbull Crescent Site consisting of 15 properties for rent and 14 HomeBuy properties is due to begin in the near future.

## Wheatley Hill/Thornley

Consultants have now been commissioned and have started consultation in Wheatley Hill and central Thornley to develop a Masterplan for the area.

### *Supported Housing Team*

#### 4.13 Care Services

The service is to be reviewed by the County Council's Supporting People Team in October 2008 and the main focus of the review is to validate elements of the Quality Assessment Framework (QAF). The function of the review is to evidence continuous improvement, talk to staff and consult with service users. The staff are currently receiving training with regard to Protection of Vulnerable Adults (POVA) in preparation for the review.

Following the recent interim review we have identified and introduced improvements to our Support Planning process and all staff have received training on completing the revised support plan .

The number of Telecare users continues to increase and there are now 78 users in receipt of the service that enables and assists people to live independently. There are a variety of devices installed such as fall detectors, temperature extreme, flood detectors, gas shut-off valves, epilepsy sensors and wandering devices. The service delivery is through a service level agreement with Durham County Council.

The service has also been involved in the review of the pathway of care for COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease) clients and we provide a monitoring service for the Community Matrons on the status of their clients. In the near future we will be introducing a Telehealth pilot with the Matrons building on the current monitoring service. This will allow 8 residents in the district to access a device that will enable them to monitor their long-term conditions. The Telecare Coordinator will also monitor the devices and provide information to the Matrons.

#### 4.14 Homelessness and Housing Advice

Staff in the service are currently working in partnership on the development of a number of initiatives including the following;

Nightstop – emergency accommodation for homeless young people aged 16-25

Taster Flats – for young people leaving supported housing or care

Safe House – for victims of domestic violence or other violent crime

The service has also taken over the funding for the Life Wise Project that is aimed at

reducing the number of young people who are unable to sustain tenancies and prepare them for independent living.

## *Service Support*

### 4.15 Complaints and Compliments

During the 4th quarter of 2007/08 there were 2 complaints and 3 compliments received in respect of the Housing Service.

In the 1st quarter of 2008/09 there were 3 complaints and 4 compliments received.

Staff in the unit continue to carry out regular monitoring, customer satisfaction surveys and quality assurance checks in respect of the services we provide and those that are provided by EDH. The feedback obtained is reported and addressed by service managers and this helps to ensure the services provided to our customers are improved on a continuous basis.

## **5.0 Implications**

### 5.1 Policy Implications

There are no direct implications.

### 5.2 Legal Implications

The report complies with the reporting requirements contained in the Management Agreement between the Council and East Durham Homes.

### 5.3 Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications.

### 5.4 Risk Implications

A risk assessment has been completed and the necessary actions required to manage the identified risks will be implemented.

### 5.5 Communications

Appropriate monitoring information contained in the report will be communicated via the Council's Website, Infopoint, Tenants Newsletter and Notice Boards.

## **6.0 Corporate Implications**

### 6.1 Corporate Plan and Priorities

The evaluation of performance by East Durham Homes will maintain an overview of the company's contribution to the Council's Mission Statement and Strategic Objectives.

The Housing Service Plan makes a direct contribution to the Corporate Objectives of Decent Homes For All, Building a Healthy Community and Quality Services For Our People.

### 6.2 Equality and Diversity

There are no equality and diversity implications.

## 6.3 E Government

There are no e-government implications.

## 6.4 Procurement

There are no procurement implications.

## 6.5 Local Government Restructure

The Council's Head of Housing and EDH Chief Executive are both involved in the LGR Housing 'Workstream' – a working group of Senior Officers who have been tasked with developing and delivering the policies, practices and structures for the new Authority's Housing Service from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009.

Key achievements to date include reaching agreement through the County Council and Joint Improvement Team (JIT) to establish a core Housing Service within the new Regeneration & Economic Development Directorate from April 2009. This service will be responsible for Housing Policy & Strategy development, Private Sector Housing, Homelessness prevention & Housing Options, Supported Housing (including the Community Alarms & Wardens service) as well as the in-house provision of Housing Management services in Durham City and the strategic/performance management relationship with the existing public sector landlords operating across the County.

The new Authority will have 2 Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) – East Durham Homes, covering the current District of Easington area, and Dale & Valley Homes, covering the Wear Valley District Council area. In addition there will be an 'in-house' Housing Management/Landlord function for what is the current Durham City Council area. The new Authority will also have strong strategic relationships with the 3 existing Large Scale Voluntary Transfer (LSVT) landlords – Cestria Community Housing (the former Chester-le-Street Council housing stock), Derwentside Homes (the former Derwentside Council housing stock) and Teesdale Housing Association (the former Teesdale Council stock). The tenants of Sedgfield Borough Council recently voted in favour of 'stock transfer' of their homes to a new LSVT landlord and it is expected that this transfer will be complete before vesting day April 2009.

Work is currently ongoing to ensure that policies, structures and budgets are in place to deliver and effective performance management process within the new Housing Service and with the various ALMO and LSVT Landlord providers.

## 7.0 Recommendation

Members are recommended to note the information provided in the appendices to this report.

### **Background Papers/Documents used in the preparation of this report:**

- Corporate and Performance Plan 2007/08
- Housing Service Plan 2007/08
- Performance Files in Housing Service
- East Durham Homes Performance Files

**Item no.**

