



Board of Trustees

Meeting to be held on Monday 9 April 2018 at 10.00 am at Jubilee Court, Kenton Road, Gosforth, NE3 3BW

Contact Officer: Susan Darroch – Tel: 0191 211 6155 Email: susan.darroch@newcastle.gov.uk

AGENDA

Page No.

1. **Welcome and Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest in any matter to be discussed.**

Items for Consideration: Not Protected

3. **Minutes of Meeting held on 19 February 2018: Not Protected** 1 - 4
4. **Universal Credit Update** 5 - 10
5. **Performance Monitoring Report: Q3 2017/18 and Proposed Targets to August 2018** 11 - 20

Items for Information: Not Protected

6. **Communications Update** 21 - 24

Items for Consideration: Protected Items

7. **Update from Audit Committee 7 March 2018 - Draft Minutes for Information**

M Barnes Independent Chair of Audit Committee, will attend for this item.

8. **Minutes of Meeting 19 February 2018: Protected Items**
9. **Governance Update**
10. **Managing Director's Report**
11. **Leazes Homes Budget 2018/19**

Items For Information: Protected Items

12. **Delegated Decisions**
13. **Any Other Business**
14. **Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Mon 4 June 2018 at 10.00am Jubilee Court, Kenton Road, NE3 3BW



Board of Trustees 19 February 2018

Not Protected Minutes

PRESENT: W Midgley, (Chair), D Keightley, V Dunn, M Reynolds, C Waddell and M Brady

ACTION

In Attendance

All Items:

J Mitford - Managing Director, Leazes Homes
S Darroch - Democratic Services, NCC

Not Protected Items Only:

M Foreman - Customer Service Director, YHN
S Freed - Investment Delivery Manager, YHN/Leazes
J Gallagher - Project Officer, YHN/Leazes
E Farrow - Corporate Accounting Technician, YHN

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from D Theobald and Cllr. J Streater.

2. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Cllr Dunn declared an interest as a YHN Board member and NCC Cabinet member for Resources.

W Midgley noted that as outgoing Chair he would not participate in discussion relating to the recruitment of a new Chair of the Board.

Variation to order of the Agenda

RESOLVED – to vary the order of the agenda to consider protected items next, pending the arrival of officers from YHN.

At this point all officers left the meeting except J Mitford and S Darroch.

Back to Open Session

RESOLVED – To move back into open session following discussion of protected items. M Foreman, S Freed, E Farrow and J Gallagher joined

the meeting.

8. **MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 4 DECEMBER 2017: NOT PROTECTED**

RESOLVED – That the minutes of the meeting held on 4 December 2017 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Matters Arising:-

- (a) Communications Update (Minute 4 refers) – In view of the ongoing Housing Management procurement process, Board agreed to defer its request for an update on tenant telephone contact arrangements, recognising that this may form part of tender submissions and it would not be appropriate to discuss this with YHN officers.

It was confirmed that in response to previous suggestions by Board members a document had been prepared detailing Leazes Homes key achievements to date and also focusing on the future. Consideration was also being given to incorporating suggestions for some PR around achievements to date and plans for the future by factoring this into the next new development announcement piece.

JM/LL

- (b) Tenant Consultation Outcome (Minute 7 refers) – J Mitford confirmed that the Independent Tenants Voice could only carry out engagement work with NCC tenants.

9. **AIDS AND ADAPTATIONS POLICY**

Submitted: Report by Investment Delivery Manager (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes)

S Freed, Investment Delivery Manager, presented the report which set out differences between Leazes Homes current Aids and Adaptations policy with that of other Registered Providers. Board was asked to consider whether, as a means of providing a more objective threshold, it wished to impose a financial cap on the level of aids and adaptations Leazes would support, after which tenants would be directed to the Disabilities Facilities Grant (DFG). In presenting the report the following key points were highlighted:-

- Tenants often waited a long time for DFG funding and sometimes received a lesser service.
- Leazes Homes operated in accordance with statutory guidance and only refused requests in very rare circumstances.
- A financial cap provided more objectivity and removed any element of discretion. ISOS' Aids and Adaptation policy, attached for information was noted to apply a financial cap but still include a paragraph to explain that a request could be refused if re-housing

was deemed a better option.

- Under its current policy, Leazes had previously refused some applications, but these had not been challenged.
- Leazes had never exceeded its annual budget of £20k p.a for aids and adaptations.
- In the event that Board decided to apply a cap, consideration would be required on the level at which this should be set, and the steps that should be taken to direct tenants to further sources of finance, if funding requirements exceeded the cap.
- A cap may be easier to administer, but tenants could potentially wait longer and have to contribute.
- In relation to the Housing Management procurement process, J Mitford noted that Leazes Homes did not have to be bound by the policy applied by any future Housing Management provider and could determine its own approach.

Board members considered the relative merits of both approaches. In response to a query it was noted that it was not expected that the introduction of a cap would lead to any significant change in annual spend.

RESOLVED – That

- (i) On a vote (four in favour and one against), Leazes Homes would not adopt a financial cap on the level of financial support for aids and adaptations that it would fund directly;
- (ii) The Aids and Adaptations Policy be approved as presented, subject to an Equalities Impact Assessment being undertaken and the Managing Director being delegated to make any changes required as a result of that process; and
- (iii) The cost of funding aids and adaptations continue to be monitored through the budget setting and financial reporting processes.

JM/SF

JM/SF

10. **RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY**

Submitted: Report by Managing Director, (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes)

J Mitford introduced the report which presented an overarching Risk Management Policy for Board approval. It was noted that Leazes Homes already actively managed risk and had a number of risk management processes in place. The policy brought this together to help to embed risk management within the organisation.

In agreeing that the scope of the policy was appropriate for the size of the organisation, the Board particularly noted increasing landlord health and safety requirements and the HCA requirements

RESOLVED – That the Risk Management Policy be approved.

11. **COMMUNICATIONS UPDATE**

Submitted: Report by Communications Officer (previously circulated and copy attached to Official Minutes)

Reference was made to recent announcements on the level of grant funding available for Supported Housing. J Mitford noted that he was looking at the implications for Leazes Homes and would report back in due course.

JM

RESOLVED – That the update be received for information.

12. **CHARITY GOVERNANCE CODE**

Submitted: Report by Company Secretary (previously circulated and copy attached to official minutes).

RESOLVED – That the Charity Governance Code be noted for information

13. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

The Chair invited Matt Foreman, YHN Customer Service Director, to update on relevant Housing Management matters.

M Foreman reported that he had held a constructive meeting with the Leazes Homes tenant who had been incorrectly placed onto an NCC tenancy agreement, having confirmed with them that it was not possible to purchase their current property under Right to Buy. The tenant had indicated that they wished to remain in the same area and purchase a similar home, using their accrued discount. Proximity to current schools was a particular requirement.

YHN was working to identify a suitable property and there would be ongoing negotiation around the level of any financial compensation e.g. removal costs, etc.

Responding to a query M Foreman noted that he could not confirm timescales with the process being determined by property turnover in the area. In response to a query it was confirmed that the tenant would be likely to receive a home loss payment and current guidance on this would be followed.

RESOLVED – That the update be received.

14. **NEXT MEETING: MONDAY 9 APRIL 2018, 10.00 AM JUBILEE COURT**

RESOLVED – That the next meeting be held on Monday 9 April 2018 at 10.00 am at Jubilee Court.



Board of Trustees 9th April 2018

Universal Credit Update

Report by Molly Dunne, Universal Credit Implementation Manager, Your Homes Newcastle

For Information

1. Background information

- 1.1 This report is to provide Leazes' Board with an update on Universal Credit (UC) and a summary of key activity since the board report in February 2017. It sets out the progress YHN's implementation project has made and learning from the continued roll out of full service across all three Newcastle Jobcentres.

2. What is Universal Credit (UC)

- 2.1 UC is a means tested benefit for working age people who are on low incomes and working, seeking to work or unable to work. It continues to replace the following 'legacy' benefits and Tax Credits which are administered by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), HM Revenue & Customs and local authorities:

- Income-related Employment and Support Allowance
- Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income Support
- Child tax Credit
- Housing Benefit
- Working Tax Credit

2.2 Implementation

National Position

Universal Credit was introduced in 2013 and is being introduced in stages across Great Britain by postcode area.

As of 8th January, 1.9 million Universal Credit claims have been submitted nationally and 770,000 people are currently in receipt of the benefit.

Currently 234 full service Jobcentre Plus offices are accepting claims for single claimants, couples and families, with roll out to all Jobcentres due to complete by December 2018.

2.3 Introduction of Universal Credit in Newcastle

As at 8 February 2018, 14,135 residents of Newcastle are in receipt of Universal Credit, broken down by jobcentre as follows:

- City Jobcentre 5441
- East Jobcentre 3213
- West Jobcentre 5481

This is more than double the 6,441 people who were on Universal Credit in Newcastle in April 2017, which can be explained by the delivery of Full Service from Newcastle East and West Jobcentres in February and March 2017.

2.3.1 Impact on the Introduction of UC to Leazes Homes Tenants

We are aware of 74 tenants who are claiming UC within a Leazes Homes property. The rent collection rate for this group is 92.65 % of rent owed.

It is currently estimated that 180 households could move onto UC by 2022. If the current collection rate of 92.65% is applied to customers that move onto UC this could result in a potential loss of income for Leazes Homes of approximately £58,00 per year. (*based on an average rent and current rent collection rates.)

3. Continued roll out of Universal Credit

Universal Credit Full Service was introduced at Newcastle City Jobcentre on 25 May 2016, Newcastle East Jobcentre on 8 February 2017 and Newcastle West Jobcentre on 15 March 2017 for all new claims to the six 'legacy' benefits that Universal Credit is replacing. Residents who are on one of the 'legacy' benefits and have a change of circumstances which would warrant a new claim also need to claim Universal Credit. However, between 6 April 2017 and the end of January 2019 those with three or more children may have to claim 'legacy' benefits instead.

Currently, the national migration for all existing means-tested benefit claimants to Universal Credit is due to begin in 2019 and will continue until 2022.

4. Autumn Budget 2018

The following are the changes to Universal Credit that were announced in the Autumn Statement which are most relevant to Leazes Homes customers.

- 4.1 **Removal of waiting days:** Prior to 14 February 2018, some Universal Credit claimants did not have entitlement to benefit for the first seven days of their claim. These waiting days have now been removed which reduces the length of time claimants wait to receive their first full payment.
- 4.2 **Changes to Universal Credit advance payments:** Previously claimants were entitled to an advance of up to 50% of their estimated entitlement, to be repaid over a period of up to six months. From January 2018, claimants can get a full months' worth of Universal Credit within five working days and the repayment period for the advance payment can be extended from six to twelve months.
- 4.3 **Two weeks' Housing Benefit for new Universal Credit claimants:** From 11 April 2018, claimants in receipt of Housing Benefit who move onto Universal Credit will have a transitional payment of Housing Benefit for two weeks. This will be un-recoverable, automatic and received early in the first assessment period
 These are positive changes, but it is difficult to make accurate predictions on what the impact might be on the overall UC collection rate as it will depend on the individual circumstances of the claimant as to whether they will benefit from these changes.

Board will recall from previous updates that there has been ongoing government consultation around funding of supported accommodation and there have been the following developments in this area:

- 4.4 **Universal Credit claims in temporary accommodation:** Issues have been identified with the payment of Universal Credit housing element for claimants living in temporary accommodation as they often stay for short amounts of time. To address this, from 11 April 2018 people can claim Housing Benefit for periods in temporary accommodation (just like those in supported accommodation and other 'specified accommodation'). This means that from that date anyone on Universal Credit and entering temporary accommodation, will not make a claim for the Universal Credit Housing Element. Instead, they will make a claim for Housing Benefit.
- 4.5 **Plan to apply Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates to social housing has been abandoned and new model for funding supported housing:** Board will recall the government previously planned to apply LHA rates to the social rented sector and supported housing from April 2019. They are no longer progressing with these plans. In October 2017, the government published plans for a three-pronged approach to funding of supported housing from April 2020, based on three different categories of support:

- Sheltered and extra care housing – to be funded by a 'sheltered rent' retained in the welfare system
- Short-term supported housing – to be funded by a new ring-fenced grant for commissioning provision at local level
- Long-term supported housing – funding of 100% of eligible housing costs and retained within the welfare system.

The proposals were opened up to consultation and a council-wide response was co-ordinated and submitted in January 2018.

4.6 **18-21 year olds**

In the Summer Budget 2015, the government announced the removal of automatic entitlement to the housing element of Universal Credit for young people aged 18 – 21 years old from April 2017.

Following consultation, a number of exemptions were agreed and housing element for 18-21 is still payable in the following circumstances:

- People receiving Universal Credit housing costs prior to 1 April 2017 until they move off Universal Credit or cease to claim those housing costs
- certain vulnerable people
- people unable to live with their parents
- those claiming as a couple
- people who are not subject to all work-related requirements for receiving Universal Credit
- people who are in work, subject to minimum earnings
- people who have recently left work, subject to minimum earnings (In this case the help is available for a limited period)

Measures have been put in place by YHN to ensure housing applications for 18-21 year olds are reviewed by Young People Service and Housing Options to ensure we did not rehouse customers who would not be entitled to support. Furthermore, front line officers are aware of the change in rules should existing tenants find themselves without entitlement and require support.

Leazes Homes currently have 19 tenants aged between 18 and 21 years. The total income from this group is £153,835 per annum which accounts approximately 3.3% of an estimated annual debit of £4,594,479 for 2017-18

5. **Benefit Cap**

Leazes Homes currently have 2 customers affected by the Benefit Cap. YHN ran a bespoke Benefit Cap project to target customers affected when the new lower benefit cap was introduced nationally from November 2016. This project ran until Summer 2017 and these cases continue to be monitored. Where it is identified that customers are struggling with their finances, they are offered advice and support. Discretionary Housing Payment is also available to top up rent shortfall for customers unable to manage with their reduced entitlement.

6. **Work to mitigate against the impact of Universal Credit and wider welfare reforms**

The impact of Welfare Reform is having a significant impact on the lives of individuals and households across the city. From the early days of these reforms YHN were aware of the scale of the challenges that were to come and invested resource into preparing for the roll out of Universal Credit. Work continues through YHN's UC Implementation Project and has evolved as roll out continues.

7. Partnership Working

YHN are members of the Council's multi-agency Welfare Reform Strategy Board and operational group which consists of representatives from the council, YHN, Jobcentre Plus and the DWP. Furthermore, YHN are working with Newcastle City Council on a range of relevant projects aimed at aligning services to support residents including the Homelessness Prevention Trailblazer and ongoing preparation for the Homelessness Reduction Act.

8. Co-location

YHN continue to have staff co-located in each of Newcastle's three jobcentres to strengthen joint working arrangements with the jobcentres and to identify tenants who require additional support at the earliest stage. This arrangement has proved invaluable for resolving complex benefit related issues and ensuring tenancies are sustained.

9. Digital Support

Newcastle City Council and YHN are continuing to provide Assisted Digital Support (ADS) to customers who need help to make their initial Universal Credit claim. The dedicated ADS team are mobile across the city and have supported 818 online claims to Universal Credit between 1 April 2017 and 31 December 2017.

10. Income Management

YHN's Income Recovery Team pro-actively contact customers as they move onto Universal Credit to ensure they are made aware of how this will affect them and appropriate support is put in place. If customers are unable to manage their housing payment due to vulnerability or have significant arrears then an Alternative Payment Arrangement is applied for and rent is paid direct to landlord. There are currently 13 Leazes Homes tenants where an Alternative Payment Arrangement is in place.

11. Developments with DWP

YHN continue to retain Trusted Partner status with the DWP which allows us to apply for Alternative Payment Arrangements without the need for input from a DWP decision maker. YHN is also one of the first landlords nationally to test the Universal Credit Landlord Portal. This online inter-face allows YHN to verify rent details online and apply for Alternative Payment Arrangements. This streamlining of processes has freed up officer time.

YHN are also a valued member of the DWP Strategic Landlord Group and meet on a quarterly basis to feedback on roll out of Universal Credit.

12. Conclusions and recommendations

Board is recommended to:

1. Note the details of implementation of Universal Credit and Wider Welfare Reform changes in Newcastle
2. Agree to receive further reports on delivery of the project when necessary

Contact Officer:

Molly Dunne, Universal Credit Implementation Manager, Your Homes Newcastle, Molly.Dunne@yhn.org.uk, 0191 2771163



Board of Trustees 9 April 2018

Performance monitoring report

April 2017 – December 2017, quarter three 2017-2018 and proposed targets up to August 2018

Report by Managing Director, Leazes Homes

For discussion

1. Background information

- 1.1 Your Homes Newcastle (YHN) supplies performance information to the Leazes Homes Board on a quarterly basis, as set out in the agreement for YHN to provide housing management services to Leazes Homes' tenants.

In June 2017, the Board agreed the targets for 2017-18, see section two.

- 1.2 This performance monitoring report covers cumulative performance for the year from April to December 2017 and highlights any specific issues that have impacted during the period. It demonstrates how YHN is performing against Leazes Homes' key performance indicators (KPIs).

The performance monitoring report includes the following:

- Six tiles to report against agreed performance targets and seven tiles of indicators reported for information. Additional information is provided in one tile (section two).
- Further information relating to those KPIs in the performance summary report where performance is below target (section three)
- An update on welfare reform and its impact on rent arrears (section four).

- 1.3 Following the extension of the contract for the provision of housing management and other services by Your Homes Newcastle, for six months, appendix one details the proposed performance targets until August 2018.

Appendix one includes the definitions for all targets and indicators, which are unchanged from 2017-2018. The target values, for the targets will be based on maintaining the year end position, with further consideration for any increase in the rent not collected due to increased number of universal credit claims during the year. It is proposed that the target values are agreed with Your Homes Newcastle in April. At this time, the final year end position will be known and the target values can be based on this performance.

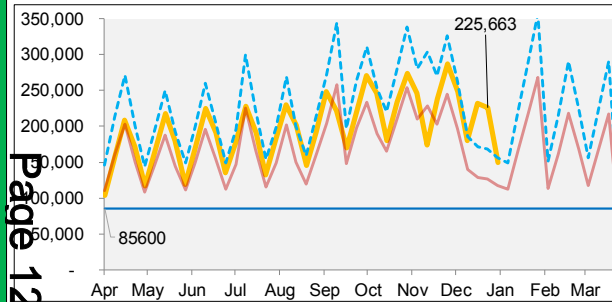
2. Performance summary report for quarter three 2017-18

Stock
694

Tenancies
661

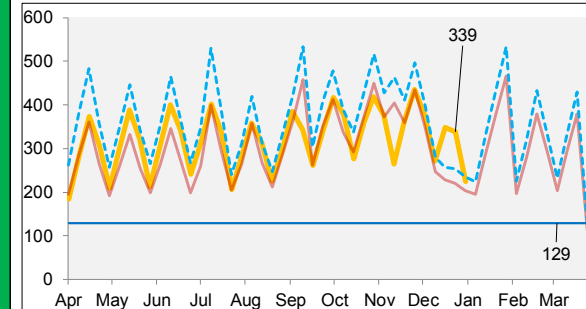
1. Rent arrears (target) - £85,600 by 31 March 2018

Arrears at end of Q3 were £226k which was above the profiled target. However, a week later arrears reduced to below the profiled target. This followed the second non-charging week and reflects the difference in the payment cycle in December this year, compared to the profile.



2. Average arrears per property (target) - £126 by 31 March 2018

Average arrears were £339 at the end of Q3, but reduced to £225 the following week, which is below the profiled target. This was due to a difference in the payment cycle in December this year, compared to the profile.



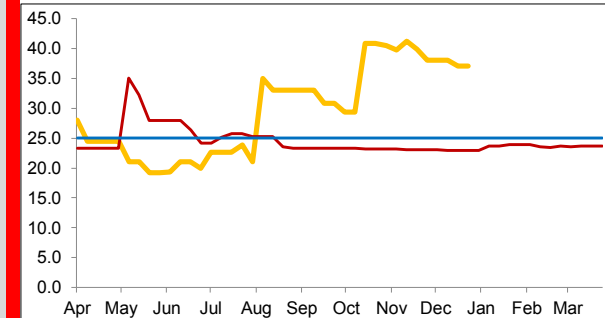
Key



3. Average re-let period, excluding supported (target) - 25 days by year end

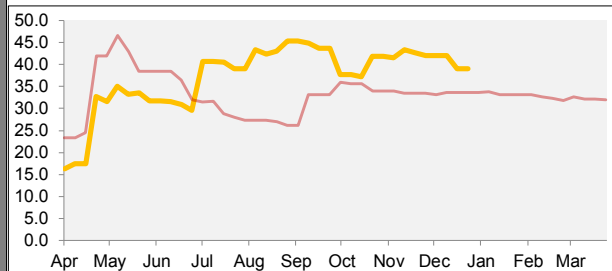
The average relet time increased during quarter three to 37 days, which is above the 25 day year end target.

The relet time increased due to reletting one property at Jubilee Court. Additional detail is provided in section three.



4. Average re-let period, including supported (indicator)

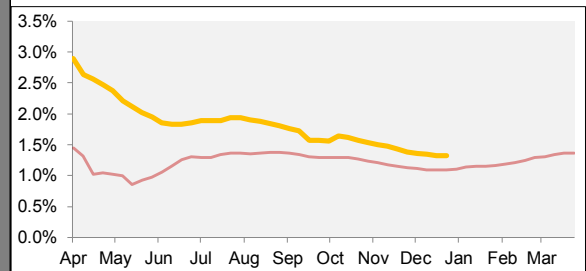
The relet time for all standard voids fell to 39 days during quarter three.



5. Void rent loss (indicator)

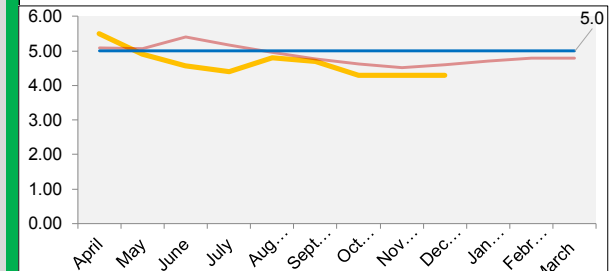
Void rent loss continued to fall over the period to 1.32%, following allocation of longer term voids earlier in the year.

Including rent loss before the first allocation of a new build property, the figure rises to 9.8% for all stock. The schemes with the highest VRL, before the first allocation, are Dewley House (£173k) and Holmes Close (£105k).

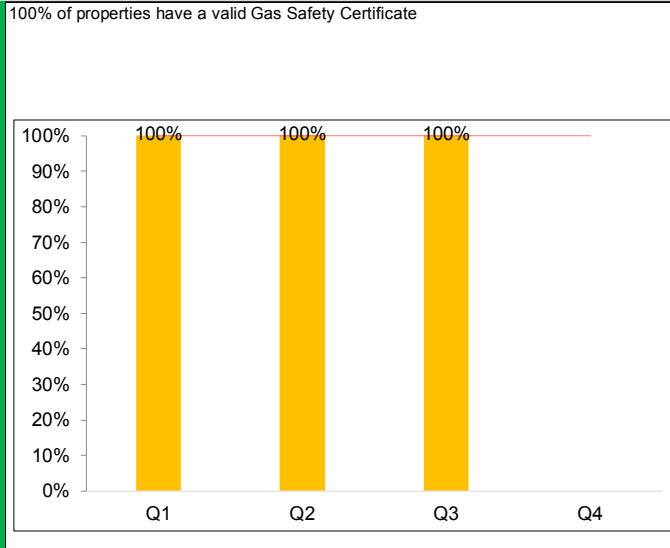


6. Average time taken to complete repairs (target) - 5 days by 31 March 2018

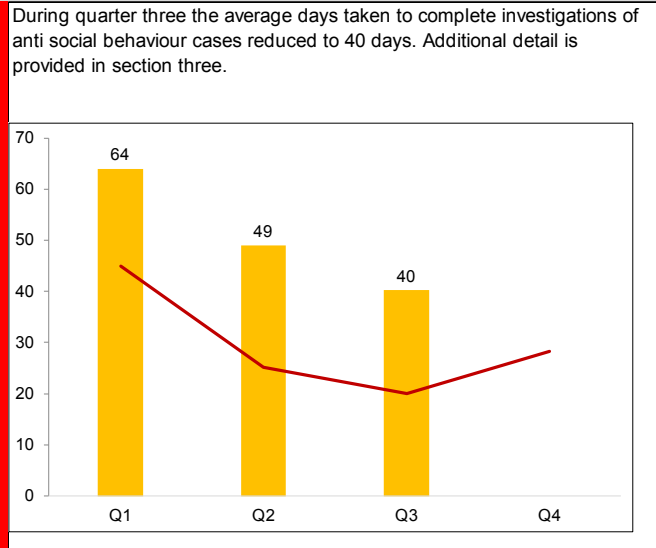
Average time to complete repairs reduced to 4.3 days.



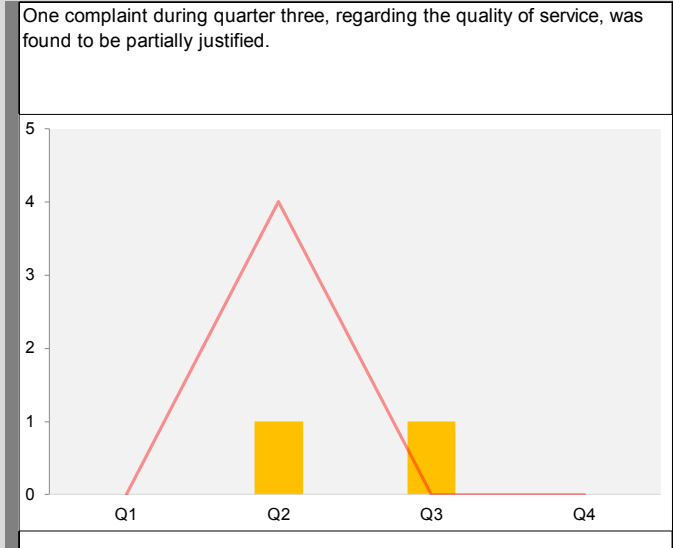
7. Gas safety (target)



8. Anti-social behaviour (target) - 30 days by 31 March 2018

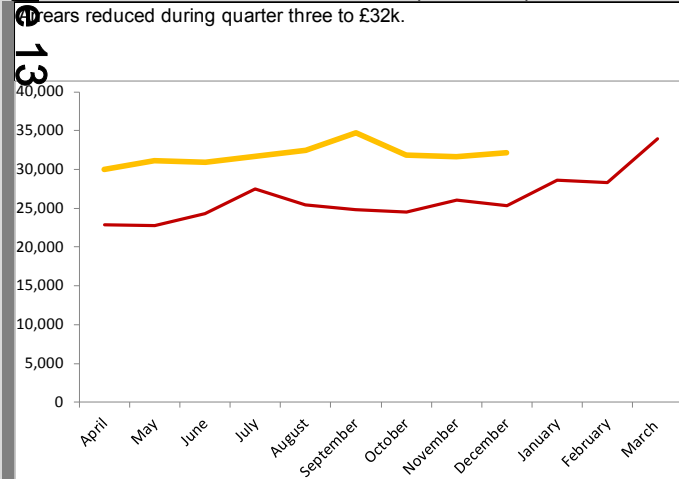


9. Complaints (indicator)

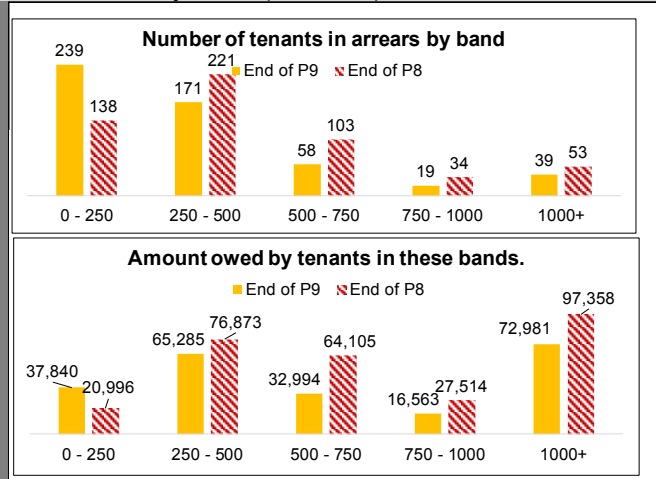


Additional Indicators

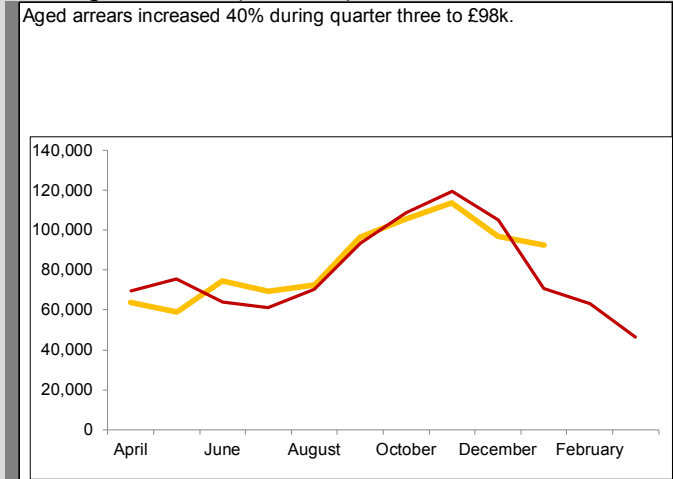
1a. Former tenants' rent arrears (indicator)



1b. Arrears by band (indicator)

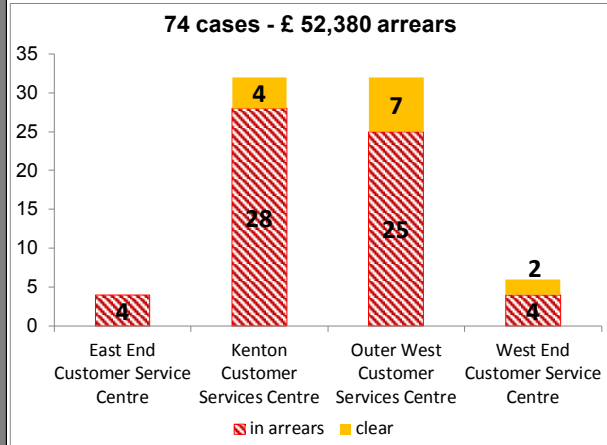


1c. Aged arrears (indicator)



1e. Universal Credit (indicator)

The number of tenants claiming UC increased to 74. The average arrears for tenants claiming UC, is £708, compared to £339 for all Leazes properties.



1f. Universal Credit (additional information)

The table below shows the number of UC tenants in arrears, by arrears band and the period since they claimed UC.

Since claimed UC	Clear	0-250	250-500	500-750	750-1000	1000+	Total
0-3 months	2	2	2	2	1	4	13
4-6 months	3		7	3	1	4	18
7-9 months	3	5	3	5	1	1	18
10-12 months	1	1	3		1	5	11
1 year +	4	3	1	1	1	4	14
Total	13	11	16	11	5	18	74

3. Supplementary performance information

3.1 Average relet time and void rent loss (Tiles 3, 4 & 5)

Overall void relet time (tile 4) reduced by five days (11%) to 39.0 days, during quarter three.

The standard void relet time (tile 3) has increased by 20% to 37.0 days, which is attributed to allocating one void property in Jubilee Court, which was empty for 224 days. Board is aware of difficulties in allocating properties at Jubilee Court from previous Board reports. This is the last of the long term voids at this scheme meaning Jubilee Court is now fully occupied.

The allocations at Jubilee Court have skewed the average relet time figures for this year. If these allocations were removed from the performance measure, then relet time would have been 19.7 days. By comparison, performance on this basis last year would have been 25 days.

The allocation of the Jubilee Court voids has meant that overall void rent loss has reduced during the year (tile 5). At the end of quarter three there were only five voids, across all Leazes Homes stock. At the time of writing this report, 4 of these voids were newly void (under 28 days) and one was a long term void.

Due to the low level of void properties and turnover, reducing the void relet time to target (tile 3) is unlikely to be achieved by year end.

Rent loss for all stock, including the time between the developer handing the scheme over to YHN and a new tenant moving in, is 9.8%. Ten flats remain vacant at Dewley House. Leazes Homes received £32k up to the end of quarter three, from Newcastle City Council, to compensate for rent loss at newly developed schemes.

3.2 Anti-social behaviour (tile 8)

There were six ASB cases in quarter three, with all six closed by the end of the quarter. The average days to resolve these cases was 13 days. The year to date average days to close a case of Anti-Social Behaviour now stands at 40.27 days.

Although the days to resolve target has been met for quarter three due to the low number of cases anticipated during the rest of the year, the annual target is unlikely to be achieved. However, as reported to Board in quarter one, there were two ASB cases which took much longer to close, owing to their complexity. If these were excluded from the calculation, performance would have been 26.3 days at quarter three, which is within the 30 day target.

4. Welfare reform

4.1 This section of the report provides Board with an update on the impact of Universal Credit (UC), the benefit cap and the removal of the spare bedroom subsidy for Leazes Homes tenants.

4.2 Universal Credit

At the end of quarter three, 74 Leazes Homes tenants were in receipt of Universal Credit (UC). 61 tenants were in arrears amounting to £52,380. The average arrears for these 61 tenants is £707.

Rent arrears from these tenants increased by £30,035 since claiming UC. However, 41 of these tenants were already in arrears before claiming Universal Credit.

13 tenants, owing £17,279, have Alternative Payment Arrangements in place, where housing costs are paid direct to the landlord.

The rent collection rate for tenants receiving UC was 92.65% up to the end of quarter three 2017-2018, compared to 98.50% for all tenants.

An update, including more detail on progress of Universal Credit, is provided to Board in a separate report.

4.3 **Under occupation and the benefit cap**

YHN continue to support tenants impacted by under-occupation and the benefit cap. Where tenants are identified to be facing financial difficulty YHN can provide additional advice and support. Discretionary Housing Payments continue to be used as a means of supporting tenants to cover their rent shortfall and sustain their tenancies.

At the end of quarter three there were 26 tenants whose Housing Benefit (HB) had been reduced, due to them under-occupying their homes. 23 of these tenants were in arrears at the end of the quarter. The combined benefit lost for these 26 tenants during the quarter was £5,221.

Two Leazes Homes tenants were subject to the benefit cap at the end of quarter three. One tenant was in arrears at the end of quarter three and one tenant was in credit.

5. **Business implications**

- 5.1 Mission and strategic objectives: This report specifically deals with performance measures against all of our strategic objectives.
- 5.2 Value for money/efficiencies: Monitoring performance against targets for average re-let time and the amount of rent collected will ensure a continued focus on those areas that can have a high financial impact.
- 5.3 Resources (financial, property, technological or human): Close monitoring of re-let periods and arrears levels will ensure that any poor performance is highlighted and addressed.
- 5.4 Impact on services/performance: This is integral to each part of the report.
- 5.5 Outcomes for tenants: Monitoring YHN's performance in delivering services for Leazes Homes and taking action to improve will help to ensure increased satisfaction and better use of resources for customer priorities.
- 5.6 Risk (reputation, relationship): A failure to monitor performance could place Leazes Homes at risk of failing in any of its strategic objectives. This, in turn, risks Leazes Homes' reputation, its income stream and its ability to develop and deliver much needed affordable housing.
- 5.7 Environmental: None.
- 5.8 Legal: YHN recognises its responsibilities to deliver a high quality service as part of the housing management services contract. The contract allows Leazes Homes to terminate it if there is a genuine belief that there is a risk of reputational damage as a result of the contract continuing or if there is a substantial breach by YHN of its obligations under the contract.
- 5.9 Equality and diversity: Monitoring performance using similar performance targets will help ensure that Leazes Homes' tenants have access to the same level of service currently available to YHN tenants.
- 5.10 Stakeholder involvement/consultation: The indicators highlighted within this report have been developed by YHN following a meeting with Leazes Homes' Managing Director.

6. Recommendations

6.1 Leazes Homes Board is asked to:

- Review and comment on the performance monitoring report for quarter three
- Agree the proposed target definitions for YHN
- Delegate authority to the Managing Director to agree target values with YHN.

7. Implementation

7.1

Background papers:

None

Contact officer:

If you have any questions about this report that you would like clarifying before the meeting, you can contact Jon Mitford, Leazes Homes' Managing Director, by telephone on 0191 278 8718 or email jon.mitford@yhn.org.uk

Appendix 1 - The table below sets out the definitions for the proposed key performance indicators for YHN during April 2018-August 2018.

The table below sets out the proposed key performance indicators for YHN during April 2018-August 2018 (column highlighted in pink). The proposed targets include six targets and three indicators.

It is proposed that the target values are agreed with Your Homes Newcastle in April. At this time, the final year end position will be known and the target values can be based on this performance. The below table therefore indicates that these figures are to be confirmed (TBC).

Target number	2017-18 target	Proposed target description	HouseMark indicator Y/N	Comments
1.	The average number of days taken to re-let void properties (including supported housing schemes).	The average number of days taken to re-let void properties (including supported housing schemes).	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported as an indicator This is the same indicator as 2017-18 This is a HouseMark indicator for benchmarking The indicator, in line with the HouseMark definition, will exclude major repair periods. We will continue to provide Board with data for all voids. The indicator includes allocations in supported housing schemes where the relet time can be delayed while a suitable applicant is identified.
2.	The average number of days taken to re-let void properties (excluding supported housing schemes) not to exceed 25 days during 2017-18	The average number of days taken to re-let void properties (excluding supported housing schemes) not to exceed (tbc) days.	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the same target as 2017-18, Voids in supported housing schemes, allocated by a panel, where the relet time can be delayed while a suitable applicant is identified, are excluded. This separation allows Board to see the performance of YHN in management of standard voids. Given that the number of allocations is quite low, the effect of an allocation that takes a long time is substantial. The target, in line with the HouseMark definition, will exclude major repair periods. Value will be based on year end performance

3.	The average number of days taken to complete repairs not to exceed 5 days during 2017-18	The average number of days taken to complete repairs not to exceed (tbc) days.	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a HouseMark indicator for benchmarking Value will be based on year end performance
4.	£80,600 target for rent and service charge arrears on current tenancies	£tbc target for rent and service charge arrears on current tenancies	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is a HouseMark indicator for benchmarking Value will be based on year end performance Value will also take account of any new build schemes which will be allocated before August. Delays receiving Housing Benefit for such schemes inflate rent arrears, albeit on a temporary basis
5.	Average level of arrears per property to be below £129 at the end of the 2017-18 financial year	Average level of arrears per property to be below £tbc at the end of August 2018	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the same definition for the target as 2017-18. Value will be based on year end performance Value will also take account of any new build schemes which will be allocated before August. Delays receiving Housing Benefit for such schemes inflate rent arrears, albeit on a temporary basis
6.	The average number of days taken to complete investigations of anti-social behaviour cases not to exceed 30 days by 31/03/2018.	The average number of days taken to complete investigations of anti-social behaviour cases not to exceed (tbc) days by at the end of August 2018	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This target will monitor how well YHN is managing ASB cases. Value will be based on year end performance
7.	100% of properties have a valid Gas Safety Certificate at 31/03/2018.	100% of properties have a valid Gas Safety Certificate at at the end of August 2018	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> This is the same target from 2017-18

8.	Void rent loss due to empty properties	Void rent loss due to empty properties	Yes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is reported as an indicator • This is the same indicator from 2017-18 • This indicator will report on both rent loss due to period to relet properties and the rent loss from the period from 'ready to let' to first allocation for new properties
9.	Complaints received	Complaints received	No	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is reported as an indicator • This is the same indicator from 2017-18



Board of Trustees April 2018

Communications Update

Report by Communications Officer

For Information

1. Background

- 1.1. This note is for information only and is intended to provide Leazes Homes Board with an understanding of the communications activity planned for the forthcoming months.
- 1.2. Regular communications activity is carried out for Leazes Homes' projects and activities and will be made available for Trustees to view at Board meetings or on request.

2. Completed programme – since February 2018

- 2.1. The Chair and Trustee vacancies on the Leazes Homes Board were advertised via Inside Housing and NCJ Media (including printed advertisements in the Journal and online advertisements through the Chronicle's website when accessed via a desktop or mobile phone). The online advertisements took readers to a story on the Leazes Homes website where more information was provided and the positions were promoted on the homepage of the website with a link to the same further information. The positions were also promoted via social media. The closing date was 12 March.
- 2.2. Following the creation of a leaflet promoting the five, five bedroomed bungalows for people with dementia at Holmes Close in Dinnington for use in

GP surgery waiting rooms and other places where people with dementia and their family members may see them, further promotion of the bungalows happened online (they are also mentioned in the next newsletter, see below for details).

- 2.3. A leaflet explaining changes to data protection under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) was created and sent to all tenants alongside their rent update letter for 2018-19. A new section has been added to the Leazes Homes website to update tenants on what the changes mean and the approach Leazes Homes is taking. There is also a link to the relevant section on YHN's website so that tenants are also aware of how they process data. This information is also included in the newsletter currently in draft.

The communications officer and others involved in promoting services from Leazes Homes and YHN have developed their understanding of GDPR, Board should be reassured that lots of work is going on across YHN to ensure staff understand and comply with the regulation.

- 2.4. YHN held information events in the West End to promote some new city council properties and the Leazes Homes properties at Dorcas Avenue were promoted to anyone suitable there – the same YHN office is letting the properties and they're in very close proximity, so it was decided a separate information event wasn't necessary. Neither Leazes Homes nor YHN anticipate any issues with letting these properties.
- 2.5. An opinion piece was drafted and issued in the Chair's name, which called on Government to reconsider the affordable rent model. The piece argued that providers like Leazes Homes are forced to charge rents that might not be considered truly affordable due to the model's approach, which encourages higher rents to make up for a reduction in grant funding. This was picked up by 24 Housing and Social Housing magazine and shared online and through social media.

3. Future programme

- 3.1. A newsletter is currently in draft that will be sent to all tenants. This includes a large section on GDPR and an update on upcoming changes to the Board. It also includes a section on the new build properties in Pendower and West Denton and sections on the dementia care and shared ownership bungalows. Now that we can announce our new grounds maintenance contract, a section will be added to cover this.
- 3.2. In addition to mentioning in the newsletter, we will also do some wider promotion around the contract for grounds maintenance.
- 3.3. Once the Board positions are recruited to and decisions made around start dates etc we will promote the appointments.

3.4. We will be promoting a session with Hadrian School where children will be learning about site safety and construction skills with a news release and website story.

3.5. Once the pending sale of a shared ownership bungalow goes through, we will also publicise this to try and encourage more interest in the offer.

4. Summary

4.1 The information in this report is not an exhaustive list of communications activity and is subject to change or variation.

If Trustees would like to be involved and contribute to any communications activity, or suggest items to be considered, they are welcome to raise at Board meetings, or contact Laura Liosi or Bill Midgley directly.

Contact Officer:

If you have any questions about this report that you would like clarifying, you can contact Laura Liosi by telephone on 0191 278 8190 or email laura.liosi@yhn.org.uk

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