

# Public Document Pack

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Head of Legal and Democratic Services  
Pennaeth Gwasanaethau Cyfreithiol a Democraataidd



To: Cllr Ron Hampson (Chairman)

CS/NG

Councillors: Amanda Bragg, David Cox,  
Peter Curtis, Ron Davies, Glenys Diskin,  
Rosetta Dolphin, Jim Falshaw, Alison Halford,  
George Hardcastle, Ray Hughes, Brian Lloyd,  
Mike Reece, Gareth Roberts and Sharon Williams

2 January 2014

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Dear Sir / Madam

A meeting of the **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** will be held in the **DELYN COMMITTEE ROOM, COUNTY HALL, MOLD CH7 6NA** on **WEDNESDAY, 8TH JANUARY, 2014** at **10.15 AM** to consider the following items.

**Members will note the start of the meeting is 15 minutes later than normal. This is for a short informal meeting at 10am to receive a briefing on declarations of interest from the Deputy Monitoring Officer.**

Yours faithfully

Democracy & Governance Manager

## **AGENDA**

- 1 **APOLOGIES**
- 2 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**
- 3 **MINUTES** (Pages 1 - 14)

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meetings held on 20 November and 13 December 2013 (copies enclosed).

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The Council welcomes correspondence in Welsh or English  
Mae'r Cyngor yn croesawau gohebiaeth yn y Cymraeg neu'r Saesneg

- 4 **HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY** (Pages 15 - 50)  
Report of Head of Housing enclosed.
- 5 **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND NEIGHBOURHOOD MANAGEMENT**  
(Pages 51 - 58)  
Report of Head of Housing enclosed.
- 6 **TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS AND ACTION PLAN** (Pages  
59 - 82)  
Report of Director of Community Services enclosed.
- 7 **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME** (Pages 83 - 90)  
Report of Housing and Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator enclosed.

# Agenda Item 3

## **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE** **20 NOVEMBER 2013**

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council held in the Delyn Committee Room, County Hall, Mold CH7 6NA on Wednesday, 20 November 2013

### **PRESENT: Councillor Ron Hampson (Chairman)**

Councillors: Amanda Bragg, David Cox, Ron Davies, Glenys Diskin, Alison Halford, George Hardcastle, Brian Lloyd, Mike Reece, Gareth Roberts and Sharon Williams

### **SUBSTITUTES:**

Councillors: Ian Dunbar for Peter Curtis and Dave Mackie for Rosetta Dolphin

### **APOLOGIES:**

Councillors: Jim Falshaw and Ray Hughes

### **CONTRIBUTORS:**

Cabinet Member for Housing, Director of Community Services, Head of Housing, Community Support Services Manager, Housing Asset Manager, Housing Renewal Manager and Housing Strategy Manager

### **IN ATTENDANCE:**

Housing and Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator and Committee Officer

## **31. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (INCLUDING WHIPPING DECLARATIONS)**

No declarations of interest were made.

## **32. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16 October 2013 had been circulated to Members with the agenda.

Councillor Mike Reece indicated that he had submitted his apologies for the meeting but they had not been recorded.

Councillor George Hardcastle referred to the second paragraph of minute 25 and the comments of the Chairman on the recent 'Inspire' awards which celebrated achievements for outstanding performance in various areas of Housing. Councillor Hardcastle said that in October 2013 there had been a problem at Prince of Wales Court due to a surge in electricity. He congratulated Kevin Eccles and Nik Evans for the fantastic job that they had undertaken and praised the workforce for assisting the residents by purchasing and installing replacement televisions. He asked that his thanks to the workforce be passed on by the Director of Community Services, Head of Housing and Cabinet Member for Housing.

## **RESOLVED:**

That subject to the suggested amendment, the minutes be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

### **33. SARTH**

The Community Support Services Manager introduced the report to update Members on the development of the Single Access Route to Housing (SARTH) Project across the North East Wales sub region and to seek support to continue with the project and implement the policy locally.

She detailed the background to the report, explaining that in 2011, the Welsh Government supported a project to explore the options for a sub regional common housing register and policy. In November 2012, Cabinet gave approval for Flintshire to put the policy out to public consultation. Members were invited to attend a workshop in April 2013 as part of that consultation and an update report had been circulated to Members in July 2013 providing feedback on the consultation results. The overall aim of the SARTH was to simplify access to a range of affordable housing options which was transparent, legal, efficient and accessible to all sections of the community. From a customer perspective, the policy would result in a simpler scheme than the current points based scheme and applicants would be given reasonable preference determined by a banding scheme which listed people in date order of their application within each band; the categories for reasonable preference were detailed in the report. The Community Support Services Manager explained that applicants who were not in the categories entitled to reasonable preference would not be given any priority in the banding scheme and would not be recorded on the housing register, however advice and assistance would be provided to assist those applicants in finding affordable housing that met their needs.

On the issue of a regional policy and register, the Community Support Services Manager explained that the development of a regional register to support the policy was more complex and required an IT system to be purchased or developed. Some work had been carried out to consider the most appropriate IT solution to support the policy but there had been no financial commitment from all partners to contribute to a regional system at this time. Flintshire County Council was committed to continuing with the regional project but a local register would support local service delivery which was closely aligned to the existing housing options teams. It had taken the step towards delivering the enhanced service by piloting a Central Housing Register Team. The proposal was that the Central Housing Register Team and the Housing Options Team join to form a 'Housing Solutions Model' which would deal with all requests for housing by assessing an individual's requirements and needs, and advising them on the most suitable option. The Community Support Services Manager explained that from 2015, the Local Authority would have a duty to provide full advice and assistance to all those who approached the Council in housing need. This early work would assist Flintshire County Council to manage the additional burden of the legislation change without needing to invest in additional staff resources.

A review of the Medical Panel had suggested that lower level issues be assessed by the Housing Asset Officer and Housing Occupational Therapist and

that better use be made of internal expertise including mental health services and Occupational Therapy. These changes would be supported by a robust appeals process.

The timeline for the implementation of the changes was detailed at appendix 2 where it was proposed that the change to the banding system be gradual but that the merging of the two teams start from January 2014, if the proposals were approved.

The Chairman suggested that an update be provided to a future meeting.

Councillor Alison Halford congratulated the Community Support Services Manager for her report. She referred to page 13 where the list of partners in the collaboration were reported and asked why this had not happened previously. She also queried that if Flintshire County Council were responsible for Flintshire needs why was a collaboration needed. The Community Support Services Manager said that all of the partners had signed up to a common policy of banding and a single access route for consistency. She added that even though a regional approach was still being considered, this would take longer to implement. Councillor Halford also referred to paragraph 3.13 and asked if Flintshire County Council was to provide the IT system for all partners. The Community Support Services Manager explained that not all partners would share the same capita system. She said that SARTH was more than just allocating properties; it was around giving options and advice.

Councillor George Hardcastle asked about the criteria that would be used for determining if a person would need to attend a medical panel. The Community Support Services Manager said that there were no proposals at present to change the medical points system but it was suggested that simpler cases be dealt with by the Housing Asset Officer and Occupational Therapist with only the more complex cases being referred to the Medical Panel.

Councillor Mike Reece said that there was currently a policy in place where a letter was sent from Flintshire County Council to local Members informing them of tenants who had moved into their wards. He asked if the other organisations in the collaboration would adopt the same policy. The Head of Housing said that discussions could be undertaken with the Housing Associations. Councillor Ron Davies said that local knowledge was important and that sensitivity when placing tenants also needed to be considered. The Head of Housing said that it was appropriate for the local Member to contact the Housing Officer about sensitive allocation needs but reminded the Committee that local Members could not be involved in the allocation of properties. Councillor David Cox felt that local knowledge provided by local Members was important in the consideration of where to house tenants. The Cabinet Member for Housing said that legal advice had previously been sought on this matter and local Members were not able to influence property allocations. The Head of Housing said that discussions between the Housing Team and local Members could be reviewed so that Councillors could give information to officers about their local knowledge without them being involved in making a decision as to who moved into their ward.

Councillor Cox asked if there would be a single point of contact for all partners and whether they would be located together. The Community Support Services Manager said that there would be a single contact number for Flintshire but that there would be different contact details for different organisations. On a regional perspective, the Head of Housing said that it would be difficult for all organisations to know details of all areas of North East Wales but that the best practice for the region would be delivered locally.

In response to a question from Councillor Halford, the Community Support Services Manager detailed the criteria for each of the bandings. Councillor Halford referred to paragraph 3(b) on page 31 about people who had left the armed forces under Discharge as of Right (DAOR) being excluded from this provision and would not be given band one status under category three; she raised concern about this issue. The Community Support Services Manager said that there had been an overwhelming amount of support in the consultation for those from the armed forces to be given high priority and they were therefore included in Band one. Councillor Halford referred to the difference between those who had left the armed forces under DAOR and those who had been made redundant from the armed forces without a pension. The Community Support Services Manager explained that the phased approach to bring in the policy had been suggested so that it could be ensured that it worked; the suggestion to further consider the needs of those who had been in the armed forces would be passed on to the Steering Group.

Councillor Amanda Bragg referred to the bullet point on page 16 and asked whether the new scheme would make it easier to determine timing for the likelihood of a property becoming available to tenants. The Community Support Services Manager confirmed that the date order in the new proposals would improve the situation about the timeframe as it would be easier for people to understand where they were on the list. She added that no-one currently on the register would be asked to come off it.

Councillor Ian Dunbar referred to prisoners who were provided with housing on their discharge from prison and asked if consideration had been given in the policy to amend the criteria to stop this from occurring under the new policy. The Community Support Services Manager explained that under the Homelessness Legislation, Local Authorities had a statutory requirement to house ex prisoners. The Head of Housing said that there was a suggestion that this could change so that in future the ex offender would need to prove their vulnerability.

In response to a question from Councillor Gareth Roberts, the Community Support Services Manager said that data cleansing work would be undertaken to ensure that those on the Housing register still needed to be on it.

Councillor Halford asked whether a Single Access Route would allow easier identification of those tenants who damaged properties then moved on to other authorities or organisations. On the issue of behaviour, the Community Support Services Manager said that there was a proposal in the policy to reduce a tenant's priority for unreasonable behaviour. The Head of Housing said that the shared information that SARTH would provide would improve the situation of tenants who did not look after their property. Councillor Halford also queried

whether there was still a need for the Local Housing Company if SARTH was approved. The Head of Housing said that the Housing Company was proposed to meet a range of housing needs that the Council were not currently able to meet through current structures/arrangements. This could include encouraging the private housing sector to rent their properties at a lower market rent, or developers gifting properties to the Council through the Planning system and major regeneration schemes.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the new allocations policy for Flintshire County Council be supported;
- (b) That the continued involvement in the regional project and the contribution of £10,000 in 2014-15 for the Regional Project Officer post be supported;
- (c) That the phased implementation of the new allocations policy and register in Flintshire as detailed in the project plan be supported;
- (d) That the Committee receive an update report in September 2014; and
- (e) That the comments made in relation to people who have left the armed forces under Discharge as of Right be conveyed to the Steering Group.

**34. IMPROVEMENT PLAN MONITORING REPORT**

The Director of Community Services introduced the report for the Committee to note and consider elements of the 2013/14 Mid Year Improvement Plan Monitoring Report relevant to the Committee for the period April to September 2013.

He explained that the new style Improvement Plan adopted by the Council in June 2013 was aligned to the new three year Outcome Agreement and focussed on the priorities which were expected to have the most impact during 2013/14. In addition to the Improvement Plan Monitoring Report, bi-annually performance highlight reports would be presented from the Heads of Service. The five sub-priority reports were included as appendices to the report and a short presentation on each of the areas was provided as follows:-

- Extra Care Housing – Director of Community Services
- Modern, Efficient and Adapted Homes - Head of Housing
- Achieve the Wales Housing Quality Standard – Housing Asset Manager
- Welfare Reform - Community Support Services Manager
- Fuel Poverty - Housing Renewal Manager

Councillor George Hardcastle thanked the officers for the report. He queried the initials used in the tables and highlighted pages 56 and 57 as an example. He also queried why the future actions section on page 56 was blank. Councillor Dave Mackie said that it had been proposed that a workshop be held to look at the layout of the new style Improvement Plan reports. The Director of Community Services said that the comments made about the style and layout of the reports could be forwarded onto the Policy Unit. In response to the question from Councillor Hardcastle, he explained that the gross score for the risk about

ensuring that the Council prevent delays in planning approvals for affordable housing developments was amber and that with the current action which was identified in the report, the score would change to green; a future action was therefore not required.

Councillor Alison Halford queried whether the previous system of Red/Amber/Green (RAG) and up/down arrows had now been replaced with this system. The Head of Housing explained that the Mid Year Performance Report (item 6 on this agenda) had been produced in the traditional format. She agreed that the risk information contained in this report had not been clear and that a simpler system needed to be developed.

In response to a question from Councillor Halford about whether the 3% target referred to on page 59 was about void properties, the Head of Housing explained that this was to do with private sector empty properties not Council housing; she gave assurance that the year end target would be achieved.

Councillor Halford also queried whether schemes for insulating properties also applied to landlords of private rented properties. In response the Housing Renewal Manager explained that if it was a solid walled property, schemes with a proportion of funding were available and he provided further information on the schemes. He also assured Members that the more challenging target of 6% which had been set for retuning empty properties back in to use had already been exceeded.

Councillor Ron Davies referred to the Extra Care Housing at Llys Eleanor, which he said was a great facility, and asked that his thanks be passed on to the Manager. Councillor Amanda Bragg referred to page 49 and asked where the two further extra care schemes which were currently being taken through the procurement process were to be sited. The Director of Community Services responded that these would be in Holywell and Flint but sites had not yet been chosen. Councillor Gareth Roberts said that it was important to include local Members when choosing sites due to their local knowledge of the areas.

Councillor Brian Lloyd asked if there had been an increase in the Council housing stock due to tenants in Council properties moving to Llys Jasmine or Llys Eleanor. The Head of Housing responded that she could undertake some analysis and report back to the Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) That the report be received; and
- (b) That the comments about the layout and style of the report be collated and sent to the Policy Unit.

**35. MID YEAR SERVICE PERFORMANCE REPORT**

The Head of Housing introduced a report for the Committee to note and consider the 2013/14 Mid Year Service Performance Report produced under the adopted business model of the Council. Members were also asked to comment on the new approach to performance reporting.



She gave a short presentation on the performance within Housing Services, and circulated a benchmarking report comparing housing performance to other landlords and outlining work which had been undertaken to improve performance and areas where improvement was needed, as outlined within the report.

In response to a question from the Chairman about Disabled Facilities Grants, the Housing Renewal Manager said that work was being undertaken to speed up the process which could include strengthening the process so that Occupational Therapy assessments were only undertaken where necessary. The average number of days for DFGs in Flintshire was 177 days compared to the national average across Wales of 271 days.

The Head of Housing highlighted page 104 where it was reported that the Housing Renewal Service had now completed the full accreditation process and had been awarded the Customer Service Excellence Standard award. The comment from the assessors had been included in the report and included the comments that *"Flintshire County Council Housing Renewal Service is a service that provides high levels of customer service. There was evidence that the Housing Renewal Service is committed and inspired in delivering the best possible customer experience"*. She said that the service should be proud of the achievement and added that other services were being identified to go through the accreditation process.

Councillor Alison Halford congratulated the Head of Housing for the report and in referring to page 95 and the section on Gas Servicing and No Access, queried why tenants had not allowed access to their properties. In response, the Housing Asset Manager said that since the report had been written the percentage of gas servicing carried out had increased to 98.8%. This had been as a result of staff working longer hours and offering appointments on Saturday mornings. The process of the number of times that a property was visited was to be reviewed to get to the end stage quicker. Work was also ongoing with the Neighbourhood Housing Management and a Housing Association had been visited to establish whether their working practices could improve the situation in Flintshire. On the issue of why tenants did not permit access, the Head of Housing said that some tenants may be working but others did not want to permit access due to issues with their tenancy. She reminded Members that the Council had a legal responsibility to undertake the gas servicing. Councillor Halford suggested that an update be provided to a future meeting of the Committee and that this be included in the Forward Work Programme.

In referring to page 98 and the section on Supporting People, Councillor Alison Halford asked if the funding had been reduced and what problems this would present. The Community Support Services Manager said that there were planned ongoing reductions but there were plans in place to undertake a lean approach without reducing the services provided at the moment.

Councillor George Hardcastle raised concern about the outturn of 36.11 days for the average number of days all homeless households spent in Bed and Breakfast (B&B) accommodation. The Community Support Services Manager explained that alternative options were being considered and that future reports would highlight the number of people who did not have to use B&B.

Councillor Halford praised the Housing Renewal Service for the Excellence award and congratulated the team on achieving it. She referred to the section on Gypsies and Travellers on page 103 and asked whether the officer working group that had been established was to take forward the regional needs assessment work. She also asked for an update on the proposed improvements at the Riverside site in Queensferry. The Chairman invited the Housing Strategy Manager to the table. The Housing Strategy Manager said that the group were considering issues relating to Gypsies and Travellers including unauthorised encampments and the better co-ordination of actions for their future needs. Any issues or concerns could also be fed through to the Regional Group for further discussion. On the issue of Riverside, he said that information from Natural Resources Wales had been sought. A planning application for the expansion of the site was being prepared and this would be submitted as soon as it was available. Work was also being undertaken with Highways on the existing access on to the A494 and it had been identified that the neighbouring scrap yard was to close so this would reduce the number of vehicles using the access; it was felt that the Riverside site would have a lower level of traffic movement than the scrap yard. The cabinet Member for Housing said that the issue of the A494 could be addressed in the North East Wales Transport Strategy. Councillor Ron Davies felt that the access onto the A494 was dangerous and that the alternative access into Pentre should be considered.

The Head of Housing introduced Simon Abbot to the Committee and explained that he had prepared the performance report and the Benchmarking Information which had been circulated to Members. She asked the Committee to acknowledge the work that he had undertaken.

**RESOLVED:**

That the report be received.

**36. FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Housing and Learning Overview & Scrutiny Facilitator introduced the report to enable the Committee to consider the Forward Work Programme.

The Facilitator explained that the budget meetings which had been scheduled to take place in December 2013 had been cancelled and replaced with workshops. It was suggested that a special meeting be held on 12 December 2013, which had initially been a slot for the budget meeting, to consider reports on Governance Arrangements for the Local Housing Company and also a draft Scooter Policy. On page 119, it was reported that a Joint meeting was to be held with Social and Health Care Overview & Scrutiny Committee at Llys Jasmine in Mold. Following consultation with the Chairman, it had been suggested that the meeting be arranged for Thursday, 6 February 2014 and that a tour of the facility take place prior to the meeting.

At the previous meeting, it had also been suggested that Carl Sargeant, the Minister for Housing and Regeneration, be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee. It had been suggested that he be asked to attend the meeting on 8 January 2014. Councillor George Hardcastle suggested that the meeting

could be moved from 8 January 2014 to accommodate the Minister being able to attend the meeting.

The Facilitator also indicated that an update on the Choices document be considered at the 5 February 2014 meeting. Following earlier discussions, update reports on Gas servicing and SARTH would also be added to the Forward Work Programme for submission to future meetings of the Committee.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Forward Work Programme be noted and updated accordingly.

**37. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS IN ATTENDANCE**

There were no members of the press or the public in attendance.

(The meeting started at 10.00 am and ended at 12.10 pm)

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**Chairman**

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**HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**  
**13 DECEMBER 2013**

Minutes of the meeting of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee of Flintshire County Council, held at County Hall, Mold, on Friday, 13 December 2013.

**PRESENT: Councillor Ron Hampson (Chairman)**

Councillors: David Cox, Peter Curtis, Rosetta Dolphin, Jim Falshaw, George Hardcastle, Ray Hughes, Brian Lloyd, Mike Reece, and Gareth Roberts

**APOLOGIES:** Councillors: Ron Davies, Glenys Diskin and Alison Halford

**ALSO PRESENT:** Councillor Haydn Bateman

**CONTRIBUTORS:**

Cabinet Member for Housing, Head of Housing Services, Head of Finance, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Neighbourhood Housing Manager, Capital Works Manager, and John Ennis and Mavis Crofts, representatives of the Tenants Federation.

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Housing and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Facilitator and Committee Officer

**38. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST (including Whipping Declarations)**

There were no declarations of interest.

**39. LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES AROUND ESTABLISHING A PROPOSED HOUSING COMPANY**

The Head of Housing Services introduced a report to explain the legal and governance issues around the establishment of the proposed housing company and to approve its creation. She provided background information on the proposals and gave a presentation on the following main points:

- Housing need – the evidence
- Homes and services needed
- What could be offered to meet the need
- Options to address the challenges

The Head of Legal and Democratic Services continued with the remainder of the presentation which addressed the questions which had been raised by Members during the workshop held on the establishment of a Housing Company, around the following issues:

- Governance
- Finance/Assets

- Operational matters
- How is the process being managed
- Technical issues

The Chairman thanked the Head of Housing Services and Head of Legal and Democratic Services for their detailed presentations and invited Members to raise any further questions.

During discussion Members sought further clarification around the financial, legal, and governance implications for the Authority of establishing a Housing company. They also raised queries in relation to gifted properties, the needs of elderly residents who owned a property which was difficult to maintain and no longer suitable for their purpose, and the letting and managing of properties on behalf of private landlords.

Councillor Brian Lloyd raised concerns around the possibility of the Authority being asked to stand as guarantor for the Housing Company in the future. The Head of Housing Services commented on the business plan currently being prepared for the Company and gave reassurance that there was no immediate intention to request the Authority to stand as guarantor. Members asked that if such a need arose that the Committee be consulted on any decision.

Councillor Rosetta Dolphin emphasised the need for more affordable homes to be built as part of any future residential developments. Members expressed the view that the focus of the Housing Company should be on homes to rent as opposed to homes to buy. Councillor Dolphin asked how many Local Authorities in England had established a similar Housing Company. The Head of Housing said she would provide this information to the Committee.

Officers responded to the comments and concerns raised by Members. The Head of Housing provided reassurance that the principle of the model was to ensure local services for local people. The Committee supported the need to establish the Housing Company and its intended purpose. It was suggested and agreed that quarterly updates on progress would be submitted to the Committee through the regular performance monitoring mechanism with additional reports if required.

### **RESOLVED**

- (a) That the Committee supported the establishment of the proposed Housing Company;
- (b) That the comments made by the Committee be passed to Cabinet; and
- (c) That the Committee receives quarterly update reports following the establishment of the Housing Company, with additional reports if required.

**40. COMMUNAL AREA MANAGEMENT AND FIRE SAFETY**

The Chairman introduced and welcomed John Ennis and Mavis Crofts from the Tenants Federation.

The Neighbourhood Housing Manager introduced a report on the options available for the management of communal areas in relation to fire safety. She provided background information and advised that a draft Mobility Scooter Policy was appended to the report for Member's consideration as part of the Council's approach to the management of communal areas.

The Neighbourhood Housing Manager referred to the main considerations in the report and outlined the benefits and disadvantages of the three options to reduce and manage risk in the Authority's 53 blocks of dwellings which contained common parts.

The Cabinet Member for Housing spoke in support of a 'Sterile Approach' as recommended by the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

The Chairman invited comments from the representatives of the Tenants Federation. Mrs. Mavis Crofts advised that this issue was considered at the last meeting of the Tenants Federation and it had been agreed that the Federation would support the approach recommended by the North Wales Fire and Rescue Service.

The Capital Works Manager referred to the draft Mobility Scooter Policy which applied to all motorised wheelchairs and scooters. During discussion the Committee welcomed the policy which outlined the Authority's approach to the keeping of mobility scooters by its residents in and around its schemes.

**RESOLVED:**

That the Committee supported a 'Sterile Approach', as outlined within the report, to manage fire risk in communal areas.

**41. ATTENDANCE BY MEMBERS OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

There were two members of the public and one member of the press in attendance.

The meeting commenced at 10.00 am and ended at 11.55 am.

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**Chairman**

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## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**REPORT TO:** **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** **WEDNESDAY, 8 JANUARY 2014**

**REPORT BY:** **HEAD OF HOUSING**

**SUBJECT:** **HOUSING ASSET MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.01 The purpose of this report is to inform and to seek the views of the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the proposals to deliver WHQS, through the development of a new Asset Management Strategy (AMS). The draft strategy also refers to changes which may need to be made to housing stock design and utilisation to ensure emerging housing needs can be met and all stock has a sustainable future. In addition, the draft strategy considers legislative responsibilities that need to be met and how the strategy can support delivery of the Council's Improvement Plan objectives particularly around the alleviation of fuel poverty.
- 1.02 Members are requested to consider the document and provide early views which can be shared with Cabinet.
- 1.03 Included with this report is a copy of the revised draft Asset Management Strategy (2014-2020).

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

- 2.01 Flintshire County Council, like all other Welsh social landlords, is required to comply with WHQS by the year 2020. The Council has agreed a business plan with Welsh Government to meet this target. Extensive work has been undertaken following the housing ballot to reduce costs and identify efficiencies and income generation options, to maximise the investment resources available.
- 2.02 The draft Asset Management Strategy has three key goals;
- To achieve the WHQS by 2020
  - To make the most efficient and effective use of funds available
  - To maximise job creation and training opportunities for local people.
- 2.03 The draft strategy is based on the levels of funding available through the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA), Capitalised Expenditure from the Revenue Account (CERA), and contributions from sales of housing land and properties. The investment strategy is currently based upon

the latest projections arising from resources within the existing subsidy system. The revised business plan requires an expenditure of circa £103 million to be incurred over a 7 year period to achieve WHQS. Currently, the Council can provide funds of circa £12 million per annum and this will need to rise to £15 million per annum in the last few years of the investment plan to fully achieve the standard by 2020. This gap could be met either by limited prudential borrowing or further income maximisation or serve cost efficiencies (other than those identified in the current business plan).

- 2.04 The Council commissioned a comprehensive Stock Condition Survey (SCS) in 2007, updated 2011 for the ballot purposes. A 25% representative sample of the whole stock formed the basis of the survey. A new SCS is currently being undertaken over the winter months to provide an additional 10% representative sample of the stock, and the remaining 65% of the stock will be surveyed externally. This will provide the Council the opportunity to confirm or adjust its business plan to achieve WHQS by 2020.
- 2.05 The current delivery plan, as approved by cabinet and following tenant consultation, consists mainly of internal elements of work such as kitchens, bathrooms, heating and smoke alarms. The new delivery plan is required to consider completion of these elements and in addition new work streams including further internal works; Envelope treatments, (see 3.02); External and Environmental work programmes (to fully meet the WHQS).
- 2.06 The AMS also describes the need to address other important factors such as, energy efficiency, estate re-modelling, regeneration and actions to aid the management of Anti Social Behaviour and the impacts of Welfare Reform.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

- 3.01 The Asset management team are formulating ideas around working in broader geographical areas, (perhaps estate by estate), in lieu of the current system of working in many ward areas each year and only completing one or two streets within those areas.

In addition the range of work streams now needs to be extended to achieve all the investment needs by 2020. Some of the key questions are whether external work streams commence now alongside a continuation of the internal work programmes, or whether the Council completes the internal elements first?

- 3.02 The four main work stream requirements can be clustered as follows:
- Internal work – Kitchens, Bathrooms, Heating, Re-wires, Smoke Alarms etc.
  - Envelope works – Roofing, Chimney work, Roofline works

(Gutters, fascias etc), Windows / Doors, Re-pointing / re-rendering etc.

- External works – Fencing, Paths etc
- Environmental works – Estate wide projects to include off street parking and larger environmental projects.

3.03 The Council will be looking at the potential cost savings of grouping elements together within a work stream, such as kitchens and bathrooms being completed at the same time (whole house). This approach is different from the existing method used, (individual elemental approach). This would achieve potential cost savings against both contractor and council contract management costs. This is because the council would be administering a smaller number of projects as opposed to managing a large number of contracts at the same time.

3.04 The Council will be tackling area specific issues and projects in the AMS through its Environmental schemes. Consultations will be required with Tenant groups, Members and other stakeholders to identify issues and solutions in specific areas and wards.

In addition the investment programme can be utilised to address housing management issues such as design issues which exacerbate ASB, or stock which needs to be changed to deal with issues such as Welfare reform or the changing needs of the local population.

3.05 The AMS aims to continue providing job creation and other community gain through the expenditure of the WHQS programme, (supporting the Welsh Government objective to maximise community benefit through investment programmes). The council is developing an ambitious goal to provide 200 local jobs and 20 apprenticeship schemes through its commitment to spend circa £100 million over all the streams of work to achieve WHQS during 2014-2020.

To help achieve this aim, the council will adopt the i2i model (developed by the Chartered Institute of Housing) within contracts for targeted recruitment and training and will be monitored through the Community Benefits Toolkit supplied by WG. The 200 local jobs shall be Recruited and defined as – providing 2 persons per £1 million contract value. Every vacancy on site including those with subcontractors, are to be notified to the council during the contract. The 20 apprenticeship schemes shall be defined as – 0.2 persons (or 11 person weeks) per £1 million contract value.

It is the intention to work closely with other organisations namely Coleg Cambria, Job Centre Plus, the CIH and other councils with similar investment programmes to pursue the option of developing a local training/jobs Academy to facilitate and manage the placement and training of individuals on apprenticeship schemes.

#### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 In order for views to be expressed to Cabinet (for consideration as it finalises the Asset Management strategy), members of this Committee are asked to:

- Give their support for the three key aims of the draft strategy as outlined in 2.02
- Give their views on the work stream approach to be adopted in the new plan, i.e.
- Geographical area planning
- Whole house v Elemental approach.
- Agreement of grouping of work streams.

4.02 The Committee is asked to note that once the strategy has been agreed that further consultations will be held with local councillors and tenant groups to develop schemes in more detail around specific areas and wards. The new plan will be agreed in consultation before it commences in April 2015. The 2014/15 programme will continue as previously agreed.

#### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 The HRA business plan allows for the full costs to achieve WHQS by 2020 with some further efficiencies and/or some prudential borrowing. The plan also allows for 6% costs to manage and deliver the work streams. Current costs are circa 3%.

5.02 The results of the stock condition survey may have a financial implication on the costs to achieve WHQS by 2020, though this is not expected to have either a negative or significant impact.

#### **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 There will be local job creation through these significant investment programmes. Work streams to improve the housing stock provide a direct benefit to the lives and living conditions for some of the poorest Flintshire residents.

#### **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 The agreed approach will have impact on the external environment of all areas affecting both the aesthetics of the landscape.

#### **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 A large percentage of the housing stock are allocated to older people people, therefore, the proposals in this paper will have an impact on this customer group.

## **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

- 9.01 FCC management costs will increase through the delivery of the workstreams, however the costs for staff increases have been accounted for in the management fees to deliver the project as a whole.
- 9.02 The WHQS expenditure will provide job creation through the i2i initiative and the Capital Works team will have potential for growth in staff to deliver the 7 year plan.

## **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

- 10.01 FCC will develop a number of ideas around the different approaches described in the draft strategy, and will forward these options for consultation with various stakeholders. The new 7 year plan will be agreed in consultation before final rollout of the programme.

## **11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

- 11.01 Initial discussions of the different approaches has been held at a Tenants conference recently and the results are being collated.

## **12.00 APPENDICES**

- 12.01 Asset Management Strategy (2014-2020).

### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985 BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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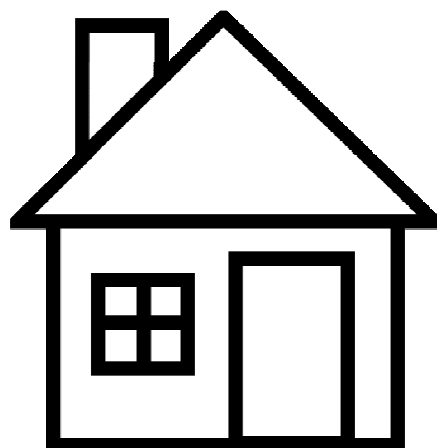


**Community Services Directorate**

**Housing Services**

**Housing Asset Management Strategy**

**2014-2020**



Last Review: <u>16/12/2013</u>	Housing Asset Management
Next Review Date: <u>14/12/2014</u>	Housing Asset Management Meeting

00. Contents ..... 2

## 00. Contents

0.0 Executive Summary ..... 3

1.0 Introduction..... 5

2.0 Aim of the Strategy ..... 6

3.0 Standards ..... 7

4.0 Promises ..... 7

5.0 Customer Involvement ..... 8

6.0 Asset Profile ..... 9

7.0 Sustainability ..... 14

8.0 Neighbourhoods ..... 22

9.0 Financial Investment ..... 23

10.0 Delivery ..... 25



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Asset Management Strategy sets out Flintshire County Council's plan for maintaining its housing stock, taking into account the investment needs of homes across the County and the money available for improvements.

The draft Asset Management Strategy has three key goals;

- To achieve the WHQS by 2020
- To make the most efficient and effective use of funds available
- To maximise job creation and training opportunities for local people.

The Council commissioned a comprehensive Stock Condition Survey (SCS) in 2007, updated 2011 for the ballot purposes. A 25% representative sample of the whole stock formed the basis of the survey. A new SCS is currently being undertaken over the winter months to provide an additional 10% representative sample of the whole properties and the remaining 65% of the stock will be surveyed externally. This will provide council with the opportunity to confirm or adjust their business plan to achieve WHQS by 2020.

Current estimates indicate that it will cost £103 million to bring all homes up to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS). Traditional funding arrangements will give £86 million to invest leaving a current shortfall of £17 million. The Council has confirmed its commitment to meet the WHQS by 2020 with either some form of prudential borrowing or further cost efficiencies and/or extended income generation.

The original strategy included a six-year plan showing how and where the available financial resources would be used to repair and improve the stock and contribute towards achieving the WHQS to ensure that the stock is effectively managed and well maintained.

The original delivery plan will be reviewed after the results of the new SCS are analysed and a new plan formulated to achieve WHQS over the period 2014-2020. The council will review the level of resources required and will take action to ensure that adequate funds are made available to deliver the programme of works.

The new seven year plan will encompass other work streams in addition to the Kitchens, Bathrooms, Heating and Smoke Alarm projects currently being undertaken. Other work streams such as Window/Door replacements; Roof line works; Re-roofing; Re-pointing / Rendering; Paths and Fencing; environmental projects will have to be addressed to upgrade properties to the WHQS.

A new approach will be required to ensure coverage of all workstreams, ensuring the council maximises the finances that are available. Items that need to be considered are; whole house approach to Internal workstreams (e.g. Kitchens and bathrooms together); Re-evaluate geographical areas for various workstreams

instead of pepper potting as at present; Re-consider choice and size of Contractors, including the Councils Trades team delivering some Capital Works projects. The new approach will be developed after various consultation exercises have been completed with Tenants Federation and local Members.

Consideration will be given to the local labour market, through the Welsh Governments i2i initiative, ensuring wherever practical and possible that funds incurred on WHQS expenditure will be kept in the local economy. The council aims to produce opportunities for local SME's tendering directly for various work streams and larger contractors will continue to be required to employ the local SME contractors on the larger projects. The council has set an ambitious aim of providing 200 local jobs and 20 apprenticeships through its commitment to spend circa £100 million over all the streams of work during 2014-2020.

The strategy is based on the levels of funding available through the Major Repairs Allowance (MRA), Capitalised Expenditure from the Revenue Account (CERA), contributions from sales of housing land and properties. The overall investment strategy therefore is based upon the latest projections arising from resources within the existing subsidy system.

The council has a housing stock as at December 2013 of 7,417 (including maisonettes not yet demolished), 1766 garages and 94 homes in which FCC has a leasehold interest. The council needs to implement an Asset Management Strategy to ensure that its stock meets the WHQS, within the cost constraints available and that its stock meets the needs and aspirations of its tenants now and in the future.

Over 59% of FCC's housing stock is houses in the form of detached, semi-detached and terraced homes; the remaining 41% of the stock consists of bungalows, flats and maisonettes. 46% of the stock was built between the years 1945 and 1965. There are a total of 346 non traditional dwellings, of which 270 (6.4%) of the stock are concentrated in the Flint area in the form of concrete high rise flats and maisonettes.

The Flint Regeneration scheme will provide an opportunity for FCC to review its housing stock within the regeneration area. A major consideration is the structural condition of the Maisonettes, in particular the Lea's and the Walks Maisonettes. In the light of the recommendations by Adams Structural Consulting Engineers who undertook a recent structural survey, decisions have been taken to demolish the Lea's and The Walks Maisonettes, to redevelop the area providing a mixture of housing to meet today's demographic trends. As a consequence, there will only be 270 non traditional properties left in Flint in the high rises.

There are many uncertainties ahead; including fine detail on the implications of exiting the HRA subsidy system, building price inflation levels over the next few years, HRA income uncertainties brought about by the implementation of Welfare Reforms, further changes to energy efficiency funding streams. The Asset Management Strategy will need to be a live document constantly updated to reflect any new information/analysis as it is presented.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 What is Asset Management?

*“This is the activity that ensures that the land and buildings asset of an Authority is optimally structured in the best corporate interest of the Authority concerned”*  
(Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors)

FCC understands asset management to be a technique for managing its stock and investment to maximise the utilisation of its land and property assets. It requires careful management of the Authority’s stock portfolio to benefit present and future tenants, including:

- Maintaining accurate and up to date information on the condition and sustainability of all properties to enable considered management decisions to be made.
- Reinvesting in dwellings and other properties in the right way and at the right time through Capital Works and routine maintenance programmes.
- Disposing of or redevelopment of dwellings/garages that are uneconomic to maintain and/or which no longer meet FCC’s strategic objectives.
- The Housing Service Priorities seek to ensure that over the next 7 years, all our Houses will be refurbished to the WHQS. Working with the private sector, Central Government and the Welsh Government in embracing new initiatives and attracting the maximum available funding.

### 1.2 Why have an Asset Management Strategy

Local Authorities have a number of statutory and non statutory responsibilities in relation to housing. There is a responsibility to make sure that FCC’s resources are used in the most effective way making sure they accord with their tenant’s aspirations and provide good value for money; incorporating robust yet flexible financial models and integrating these with the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) business plan.

This Asset Management Strategy is a live document and will be subject to an annual review incorporating any significant changes impacting over the previous year.

## 2.0 AIM OF THE STRATEGY

### 2.1 What are we trying to achieve

The Authority has a limited budget to reinvest in its housing stock. The Council's Housing Investment plan 2014/20 is committed to invest in a series of improvement Capital Works to meet statutory objectives and to reflect tenant expectation and aspirations.

A £103 million pound investment, spread out over 7 years, is required to provide home improvements that reflect tenant key priorities and achieving the WHQS.

### 2.2 Current Position against these objectives

Recent investment levels of approximately £10m spent annually have primarily concentrated on the original 6 year plan including packages of improvements that have included new heating installations, fitting of hard wired smoke detectors, bathroom replacements and kitchen replacements.

These packages of work have been completed over the financial years 2012/13 and 2013/14 and formed the first 2 years of the original 6 year plan.

### 2.3 How will we achieve our goals?

The remaining works from the 6 year plan will be integrated into a new 7 year plan to achieve WHQS from 2014 to 2020. This new plan will be developed from the results taken from the new Stock Condition Survey.

Procuring the works in partnership with other housing providers, local Authorities and utilising partnership procurement methods such as the North Wales Procurement Partnership, (NWPP), London Housing Consortium (LHC), Procure Plus or Fusion 21 Framework Agreements will ensure on going gains in efficiency and value for money.

### 2.4 How will we affect Local Employment?

FCC are committed to providing local jobs for the local community through its expenditure of funds spent on WHQS work. FCC aim to produce opportunity for local SME's tendering directly for various work streams and larger contractors are encouraged to employ the local SME contractors on the larger projects.

FCC aim to provide 200 local jobs and 20 apprenticeship schemes through their commitment of spending circa £100 million over all the streams of work to help

achieve WHQS during 2014-2020. To help achieve this aim, FCC have adopted the i2i model within contracts for **Targeted Recruitment and Training** and will be monitored through the Community Benefits Toolkit supplied by WG. The 200 local jobs shall be **Recruited** and defined as - providing 2 persons per £1 million contract value. Every vacancy on site including those with subcontractors, are to be notified to FCC during the contract. The 20 apprenticeship schemes shall be **Trained** and defined as - 0.2 persons (or 11 person weeks) per £1 million contract value.

### 3.0 STANDARDS

Government policy and statutory responsibility is an important context for the delivery of our services. There are a variety of UK and European legislation as well as national standards and regulations which impact upon our services. Some have direct and indirect influence upon the way we manage our assets.

The Council is legally obliged to maintain its properties up to an approved standard identified in the Appendices & Statutory Guidance listed at the end of this document. The key objective for FCC is for the housing stock to conform to the WHQS within the given timescale.

**3.1 Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)** the Welsh Government (WG) is committed to bringing all social housing up to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard by 2020 and in 2002 the National Housing Strategy for Wales “Better Homes for People in Wales” set out the Welsh Governments vision. That all households in Wales shall have the opportunity to live in good quality homes which are:

- Part 1 - In a good state of repair.
- Part 2 - Safe and secure.
- Part 3 - Adequately heated, fuel efficient and well insulated.
- Part 4 - Equipped with up-to-date kitchens and bathrooms.
- Part 5 - Well managed (for rented housing).
- Part 6 - Located in safe and attractive environments.
- Part 7 - As far as possible suited to the specific requirements of the household.

24 properties at Glan Y Morfa Court currently meet the standard in full. However almost all properties have a number of individual elements which meet the standard such as kitchen, smoke detection, heating.

## 4.0 PROMISES

The Choices Document presented to customers and subsequently supported for clearly set out comprehensive promises which are at the core of everything FCC will focus on over the forthcoming years.

The council will ensure the promises are delivered and in many areas this document presently plans to exceed the promises laid out in the choices document, in particular our achievement of the WHQS.

Delivery of the landlord capital improvement programme has outperformed the targets set in the Choices document in 2012/13, through strong project management and improved tender prices and is projected to emulate this in 2013/14. The programme itself has been stretched from £11m per annum in 10/11 to £12m in 13/14 and this is expected to increase to £13m per annum for each of the next 7 years to achieve the WHQS by 2020.

### HRA Capital programme 2012/13

- Heating upgrades- 600 homes planned- 1100 delivered
- Kitchen replacements- 922 planned-1100 delivered
- Smoke detectors- 884 planned- 2400 delivered
- Bathroom replacements- 56 planned- 62 delivered

### HRA Capital programme 2013/14

- Heating upgrades- 600 homes promised- 1000 in programme
- Kitchen replacements - 922 promised- 1000 in programme
- Smoke detectors- 884 promised- 1000 in programme
- Bathroom replacements- 0 planned- 60 delivered

## 5.0 CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT

### 5.1 Introduction

The Resident Involvement Strategy and Action Plan have been developed with Residents, Officers and Members working in partnership.

Few will build on the long standing commitment to work closely with the Flintshire Federation of Tenants and Residents Associations and will continue to develop this relationship by consulting on the delivery of housing services with all residents and the federation.

The latest Tenants Winter Conference (2013) debated ideas around the new WHQS delivery programme and the results of this will be analysed and utilised for FCC's new delivery plan.

In 2013 a STAR (Survey of Tenants and Residents) was carried out and asked tenants a suite of questions. Over half of the tenants and residents felt that parking was an issue in their neighbourhood. As such, it is necessary to carry out a more detailed assessment of the requirement to improve parking in the Authority’s neighbourhoods.

To what extent are any of the following a problem in your neighbourhood?

	No Problem	Minor problem	Major Problem
Abandoned or burnt out Vehicle	97%	2%	1%
Racial or other harassment	93%	5%	2%
People damaging property	86%	10%	4%
Vandalism or graffiti	83%	13%	4%
Other Crime	82%	15%	3%
Drunk or Rowdy behaviour	76%	17%	6%
Drug use or Dealing	76%	14%	10%
Noise from traffic	74%	18%	7%
Noisy Neighbours	72%	18%	10%
Problems with pets / Animals	71%	20%	9%
Disruptive children / teenagers	66%	26%	8%
Rubbish or litter	54%	32%	14%
Dog Fouling / mess	46%	31%	23%
Car Parking	43%	26%	30%

- The biggest issues for residents are car parking with 56% finding this to be a problem to some degree, dog fouling/mess 54% and rubbish/litter 46%.
- There is almost no problem with abandoned or burnt out vehicles or with racial or other harassment.

## 5.2 Customer Information

The Tenant Involvement team are currently working with the Asset Management team developing systems and procedures reviewing contract specifications prior to inviting tenders. Part of this ongoing consultation process takes into account the Tenant Involvement team’s comments as well as comments from the resident’s satisfaction surveys from those who have had works carried out. This is done so that the Asset Management Team continuously improves its performance.

## 6.0 ASSET PROFILE



## 6.1 Introduction

For the purpose of managing the stock, the County is divided into area's North (2533), South (2700) and East (2022), with strategically located neighbourhood offices for the purpose of service delivery.

The property portfolio covers a wide geographical area across the County. The towns of Buckley, Connah's Quay, Flint, Holywell and Mold have the greater concentrations of stock, with smaller percentages located near to or within villages around the County.

## 6.2 Property Type

The three most common property types are:

- Traditional properties, comprising of detached, semi-detached, terraced bungalows and flats.
- Solid wall properties.
- Non-Traditional properties, Airey houses, Easi-form, Maisonettes and High Rise flats.

Percentage of property types are:

Property Type	No. of Properties	% of Stock
Houses	4353	58.6%
Bungalows	1489	20.5%
Flats	1304	17.2%
Maisonettes	271	3.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7417</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 6.3 Age

There is a varied age within the stock which has been split into bands

Age Band Width	No. of Properties	% of Stock
Pre 1919	120	1.6%
1919-1944	884	11.9%
1945-1965	3458	46.6%
1965-1974	1817	24.6%
Post-1974	1137	15.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>7417</b>	<b>100%</b>

## 6.4 Non-Traditional Housing Stock

A key area of focus for stock investment decisions is in relation to the non-traditional stock that FCC owns and a breakdown of this stock is shown in the table below.



The non-traditional properties have a significant impact upon the business plan due to the structural repair requirements to ensure they have a meaningful future life. In addition the properties have not always benefited from routine improvement programmes.

Some of the existing non-traditional houses have already been repaired, refurbished or their sites re-developed. A summary of these types and numbers are as follows:

Property Type	Address List Numbers	Numbers Unimproved
Airey Houses	35	1
Easiform Houses	74	74
Various Timber Houses	5	1 (11 sunnyside)
Tower Blocks	3 Blocks, 270 Properties	264

### Flint High-rise blocks and other non-traditional homes

The regeneration proposals for Flint town-centre do not include the three high-rise blocks and these homes will remain.

These three blocks require a range of external repairs as well as internal improvements to bring all three blocks and all the flats up to the WHQS. External repairs include:

- Comprehensive concrete repair programme
- Renewal of the mastic in the panel joints and roof finishes
- New insulated roof systems
- Overhaul of glazing
- Application of an over-cladding system to improve thermal performance and provide weatherproofing.

The cost of this external work for all three high-rise blocks is circa £3.5 million. In addition, other (non-energy related) improvements are required to individual flats to bring them up to standard.

The measures needed to improve the flats would be suitable for utility company funding. Estimates indicate that currently around £1.1million could be secured. It is recommended that a watching brief is maintained to review any increases in funding and if necessary insert the flats into the domestic energy efficiency work programme. Funding may increase or decrease over time but is expected to be available in some form and value for up to eight years.

It is recommended that heat metering is also introduced in each of the dwellings in the flats so that heat usage and billing can be managed more effectively. This would enable the heating costs to be removed from the current arrangement of being included within the service charge. This should dramatically reduce heating use by tenants reducing FCC's carbon footprint and creating more comfortable and affordably warm homes.

Of the remaining non-traditional homes, 76 require structural improvements to bring them up to standard and provide them with a thirty-year life. In addition, all these homes require a range of internal improvements to bring them up to the WHQS.



## 6.5 Flint Town Centre Regeneration Scheme

The plan for Flint is based around the following six strategic objectives:

1. Transform Flint's physical image
2. Reconnection of Flint's assets
3. Promote the town and its opportunities
4. To better serve the local people
5. Create economic growth through job creation
6. To embed Flint into a sub-regional tourism network



Following approval of the Masterplan and building on its work, a housing development brief was commissioned for Flint. The significant footprint of the existing maisonette blocks provides an opportunity to re-build nearly a quarter of the original medieval planned town - with new houses and streets aligning more sensitively to the original grid pattern. It is intended that the new build provision within the redevelopment will provide between 173 and 180 units dependant upon an agreed final layout. These will be made up of a mix of apartments, and 2 and 3 bedroom houses.

## **6.6 Deeside Centre Regeneration Scheme**

Housing Asset Management are currently working with other FCC services in a joint initiative for WG's Vibrant and Viable Places programme. If FCC are successful with the bid then substantial programmes of work can be accelerated in the Deeside area. FCC's bid aims to tackle long standing regeneration issues associated with Deeside including aims to tackle traffic issues, regeneration of the town centre and large scale environment schemes.

## **6.7 Sheltered Accommodation**

The traditional warden support service has transformed into a Community Based Accommodation Support Service. The support service is no longer linked to tenure. There are some properties designated for the over 55 group which are not suited for this group due to design, size, location or access making them low demand properties and hard to let. There are changing expectations and lifestyles of older people will impact on the provision required. The development of a Community Based Accommodation Support Service enabling people to receive support in their own home and the development of other options for older people including Extra care may also affect demand for some sheltered properties.

Within its Housing Stock Portfolio, the council has 55 sheltered schemes in various mixes of bungalows, flat complexes and bed-sits, which consists of approximately 40% of the total stock. Some of which are difficult to let due to there being insufficient bedroom space, lack of local services or amenities for the less mobile and inappropriately located

Unsuitable sheltered blocks could be re-designated single persons or general needs accommodation, the current occupiers being offered more suitable accommodation.

The Welfare Reform Act and the 'bedroom tax' has increased demand for one and two bed properties for the under 55 age group. Consideration around changing the designated age group for some of these properties will meet a specific housing need, increase demand for properties and make best use of housing stock.

Aspects to consider are:

- Remodelling to address design/ASB issues.
- Consultation with both present and prospective residents and implement their affordable aspirations.
- Scheme Remodelling - addition of bedrooms, Lift installation, conversion of storage areas into mobility scooter storage/charging areas.
- Compliance with the Disability and the Equality Act 2010, in particular the need to provide investment for the provision of low level access equipment, ramps and accessible taps etc.
- Ensure that the recommendations of new Fire Risk Assessments are completed.

**At this strategic level there are many other influences including:**

- Future demographic trends - Single occupation, living longer
- Rural transport availability - both present and future.
- Availability of other local services - Care and Repair Service
- Long term sustainability - *“providing homes that meet a variety of needs and lifestyles for now and into the future”*

## 6.8 Leaseholders

The council is currently responsible for 94 leasehold properties located within the County. Lease holders are fully consulted on any significant issues that might impinge on their rightful use and access, as required under S20 notices. These leases have been let historically on different agreements and present challenges to FCC when refurbishing blocks, issues such as window replacements, fire risk issues in communal areas are just a few of these challenges.

## 6.9 Garage Sites

Garages are included within FCC's property portfolio. These are situated around various locations of the County. Curtins report on the condition of Concrete structures identified maintenance costs to the garage batteries/car parks located near Bolingbrook and Castle Heights due to corrosion of the reinforcement causing spalling of the concrete and work needs to be undertaken by a specialist contractor to maintain their integrity.

Other garage sites across the County are pre-fabricated concrete panels with up and over doors with an asbestos concrete sheet roof; some garage sites have become so dilapidated that the only viable option available is demolition, as demonstrated at Glynne Street, Connah's Quay and Yowley Road, Ewloe.

The Housing Service is working in partnership with Valuation and Estates in order to carry out a thorough review of its garage sites.

Site plans are in the process of being developed for the 104 council owned garage sites. Once the plans have been produced, each site will be assessed to test its suitability for the following:

- To remain as a garage site
- For demolition
- Housing development
- For other uses such as community garden, play area, parking etc.

The review will be completed by the Spring and will result in a Member Workshop; participants will be invited to share their views on the development potential for each of the sites in their ward.

The results of the consultation will influence a final set of recommendations to Members in preparation for Scrutiny Committee in April 2014.

## 7.0 SUSTAINABILITY

### 7.0 Energy Efficiency in FCC's Stock

Significant work has been undertaken since 1997 to improve FCC's housing stock. Whilst there has been a steady rise in the number of homes meeting the minimum WHQS heating standard of SAP 65 it has become obvious that there are big data gaps concerning properties that fall short. The focus within the team addressing energy improvements in the Housing Service shall be to develop sufficient information to clearly identify what houses need what measures and at what cost in order to comply with the WHQS standard. Improvement needs to be seen in record keeping, stock profiling and in the operation and maintenance of the technologies being introduced especially in off gas properties. FCC has been nationally recognised for its work to improve the energy efficiency of its stock and its focus on reducing tenant's energy bills. In particular it has been recognised for its work in combining owner occupied, private rented and FCC stock in programmes which is recognised as the way to deliver best value programme for communities. Welfare reform has created a substantial challenge to FCC but through providing energy efficient homes FCC has an ability to respond swiftly and protect tenants whilst in the process supporting local labour and suppliers in a developing market.

The £1.3billion a year made available through the latest energy company obligation funding is a tool that FCC is using to achieve good value in its programmes. This funding is expected to be around for at least eight years. This provides the incentive to invest alongside the obligation of the WHQS commitment.

### 7.1 Statutory commitments



The WHQS dictates that every home must be adequately heated, fuel efficient and well insulated. In addition there are a number of energy efficiency components, including:

- Minimum SAP rating of 65 out of 100 must be achieved.
- Landlords should do whatever they reasonably can to minimise the cost of heating dwellings to a comfortable level.
- All cost effective opportunities to upgrade the thermal and ventilation performance of the dwelling must be taken.
- Heating systems must be reasonably economical to run and capable of heating the whole of the dwelling to a comfortable level in normal weather conditions.
- External doors and windows must be sufficiently well fitting so that they do not cause severe draughts.
- The main entrance door should not open directly into the living room.
- The hot water tank must be effectively insulated.
- Kitchens and bathrooms should have an adequate amount of mechanical ventilation.

## 7.2 Affordable Warmth

Affordable warmth means that a household is able to afford to heat their home to the level required for their comfort and health. Conversely, households that are unable to afford adequate heating are said to be living in “fuel poverty”.

A widely used definition of fuel poverty states that households needing to spend more than 10% of their income on fuel are classed as fuel poor and households needing to spend more than 20% of the total income on fuel are classed as severely fuel poor.

Adequate heating is generally accepted as achieving 21°C in the main living room/lounge area and 18°C in all other parts of the house. The Welsh Government remains committed to eradicating fuel poverty in all homes by 2018.

Affordable Warmth is the solution to fuel poverty. Fuel poverty occurs when Households are considered by the Government to be in 'fuel poverty' if they would have to spend more than 10% of their household income on fuel to keep their home in a 'satisfactory' condition. Households needing to spend more than 20% of their total income on fuel are classified as severely fuel poor.

It is a measure which compares income with what the fuel costs 'should be' rather than what they actually are. Whether a household is in fuel poverty or not is determined by the interaction of a number of factors, but the three obvious ones are:

- The cost of energy.
- The energy efficiency of the property (and therefore, the energy required to heat and power the home)
- Household income.

### **7.3 SAP Rating**

A stock condition survey was carried out in 2007 which gave an estimated average SAP rating of 67.9. which is within the WHQS requirement, however, the installation of fuel efficient boilers and other measures such as fuel switching from electric heating to gas and increased loft and cavity insulation, will help to increase the SAP rating further.

Whilst the heating replacement programme is progressing this may not be enough in some properties to lift them above the minimum SAP rating of 65. Properties with solid walls or in off gas areas for example may need additional investment. The diversification of the programme for the next three years reflects this. However, the first step is to identify the stock that falls below the 65 level and identify the measures and respective cost that are needed for full compliance. A warm and comfortable home is a right of all tenants but a lot of tenants put up with homes that are cold or draughty. Time will be spent updating and reviewing records and proactively looking for these hard to treat homes.

For the last few years, the Corporate Energy Unit has been estimating the SAP rating of FCC properties based on the numbers of properties receiving loft & cavity wall insulation and heating improvements as a key performance indicator. It is recommended that this function is brought back in to the Housing Service since, with the improved record keeping that is being recommended, understanding the current profile of the housing stock and having sufficient control to improve it should be a core activity of the Housing Service.

### **7.4 Loft and Cavity Wall Insulation**

The energy unit has had a budget since 2000 for installing loft and cavity wall insulation, and as of 2011/2012, nearly all suitable cavity walls have been insulated and nearly all suitable lofts have now been topped up to 250-300mm.) Properties where tenants have previously refused or where there was incomplete information in the database are being completed where possible. There are also a few properties where outstanding repairs work must be completed before insulation can be installed.

Funding has historically been available through the Energy Efficiency Commitment and Carbon Emission Reduction Target utility funding schemes to help subsidise this work. The priority now is to identify properties that haven't had the insulation installed properly and so aren't seeing the full benefit of the improvement. Whilst the numbers of these properties are few it is necessary to do this work since in some instances bad installation can lead to structural issues with the property including damp and mould growth.

### **7.5 Hard to treat cavities / Gas infill projects.**

These cavities are still being defined by Ofgem but currently include damp cavities or cavities that are less than 49mm thick. Whilst consultation into the definition of

these cavities is still ongoing there is significant funding allocated for their remediation and whilst this funding is available it is worth the council allocating resource to coordinate an installation programme.

Additionally, there were approximately 418 'infill' fuel switches from oil, solid fuel, and mainly electric storage heaters to gas between 1997 and 2010, and the remaining circa 900 properties should be completed in 2013/17. Gas infill refers to properties that are near to the gas main but use a more expensive and more carbon intensive fuel. CESP funding of up to £1805 per property is available during 2011/12 available for gas installation for gas infill projects, and the home energy conservation officer and capital works are taking advantage of this for current and future projects.

As energy efficiency, fuel poverty, and carbon reduction measures have been Government priorities for many years, consequently there are funding sources available to assist social landlords in making energy efficiency improvements to their stock. A significant amount of funding (exact figure has been well over £300,000) has been brought in through the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme. Understanding and obtaining the different types of funding available requires a close partnership working between the Home Energy Conservation Officer and the Asset Management team.

## 7.6 Solid Wall Insulation/Non-Traditional Housing

Around 825 properties are either solid walled or must be treated as solid walled due to having cavities unsuitable for insulation. These properties, particularly the semidetached and terraced houses, and those in off-gas areas have some of the lowest SAP ratings in the stock. It is highly unlikely that a solid walled property will meet WHQS without being insulated (or achieve a SAP rating of 65).

473 of the 825 solid walled properties are the high-rise flats and maisonettes in Flint. This leaves 352 properties that are either solid walled or otherwise unsuitable for cavity wall insulation. Currently the SAP rating of these properties varies from 50 to 60. 123 of these have now been insulated in Holywell, Connahs Quay and Dee Cottages in Flint, with the remaining properties being insulated in two phases from 2015/16 onwards.

These FCC properties have been improved from an average SAP rating of 57, below the WHQS minimum, to an average of 67. The lowest SAP rating after installing insulation is 66 whilst the maximum is 70. All of these properties therefore now meet the WHQS minimum energy efficiency standards.

Savings to tenants' bills from these schemes average £252 annually based on current costs, with total annual savings of £24,873 and an anticipated lifetime CO2 reduction of 2,539 tonnes. As a result the tenants' risk of fuel poverty has been significantly reduced.



The council has secured added value through the service's continued success in leveraging in grant funding through the Welsh Government and Utility Company funding.

### **7.7 Ventilation strategy**

It is important to consider ventilation alongside the installation of solid wall insulation. When solid wall insulation is applied, either internally or externally, it affects the breathability of the property and so moisture from within the property needs to be able to get out. One option of many is to install mechanical heat ventilation systems which pump out air much like an extractor fan but recycle up to 75% of the heat in that air. These products are already being installed as part of the kitchen and bathroom programme. When a property is considered for improvements ventilation is one aspect of a complex survey that is carried out but provision within programme budgets needs to be made.

### **7.8 Renewable Energy**

The following renewable micro generation systems have been installed in FCC housing since 2007:

- 21 Ground Source heat pumps (Cilcain and Caerwys).
- 2 Air Source Heat Pumps (Trelawnyd and Cymau).
- 61 solar thermal hot water heating systems (Trelawnyd, Shotton).
- 182 Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Electric Panels Installed & Connected To the National Grid at Greenfield & Bagillt

The properties selected for heat pump installations and the first solar thermal installation in Trelawnyd were chosen primarily due to their position off the gas main (oil-fired central heating that is more expensive than gas and experienced significant price spikes in 2008 which left many with difficulty paying for deliveries) and their suitability for the installations.

In Higher Shotton, area-specific CESP and Arbed Phase 1 funding was secured for the installation of solar thermal systems in FCC properties to further reduce energy bills in the homes being improved.

In Greenfield, CESP funding has been secured to subsidise photovoltaic installations. In both Bagillt and Greenfield, the schemes qualify for feed in tariff income.

In the future more work will be done in areas not on the gas network. This means that other low carbon ways of heating homes will have to be considered. The energy programme reflects this move and shows increasing investment in heat pumps and other renewable technologies over the next three years.

The properties improved with these systems were selected primarily due to their position off the gas main (oil fired central heating which is more expensive than gas and the fuel subject to unpredictable price increases) and their suitability for the installations.

PV systems have an advantage to both tenant and council; the tenant receives a reduction of approximately £150 saving per annum on their electricity bill and the council will receive a feed in tariff of approximately £1500 to £2000 for each registered property per annum for the next 25 years.

## 7.9 Funding Future Works

The Welsh Government estimates that over £10billion is available for investment in the Welsh Housing Stock for energy efficiency retrofitting over the next decade. Annually £1.3billion is available across the UK through the Energy Company Obligation (ECO). However, the fact that there are no geographical restrictions on how this money needs to be spent provides a threat as well as an opportunity. This is the warning issued by the WLGA who recognise that organisations in Wales will need to work hard to secure a fair share.

Accessing the funding is a complex process and carefully considered strategies are the only way to prevent higher levels of investment and benefits accumulating elsewhere in the UK.

The service has developed a strategic programme that supports both the councils commitments and national commitments to reduce climate change, help eradicate fuel poverty and boost economic development and regeneration in Flintshire and Wales.

In 2012/13 the council delivered energy efficiency measures to 587 homes securing sufficient external finance to exceed the invest to save ratio of £1 spent for every £5 saved. This achieved average annual heating bill savings of £308 per property or £181,080 annually over all.

Over the last 16 years over 41,079 measures have been installed in council homes with over £7million being secured in the last few years alone to finance them. This has resulted in current heating bill savings of over £2.3million.

Over this period the average saving per measure is just over £58 reflecting the availability of lower cost installations and in particular low energy light bulbs. In the last five years the move to more expensive but more effective measures has yielded an average annual heating bill saving per measure of £244.

When considered with the work in privately owned homes and private rented sector just under £100million in energy bill savings has been achieved over the 16 year period. This is money that is now available to homeowners and tenants instead of being committed on energy bills or, in the case of the fuel poor, it is money they don't have to find to adequately heat their home.

## Progress so far:

Measure	1997 to 2013	Average per year	Estimated lifetime carbon emission savings (tonnes)	Current estimated annual heating bill savings (£)	Income generator (FIT / RHI)
Roof Insulation	5,147	322	18,272	257,350	
Cavity Wall Insulation	4,032	252	56,448	544,320	
Hot Water Tank Insulation	381	24	777	17,145	
Solid wall insulation	123	8	5,843	60,270	
Double Glazing	2,709	170	36,842	460,530	
Door & Window Draught Stripping	782	49	3,597	43,010	
Boiler Replacement (Standard)	1,175	74	5,523	31,725	
Boiler Replacement/New Central Heating - Gas Condensing	2,241	140	23,584	504,225	
Fuel switch to gas	74	5	1776	27,750	
Low Energy Lights	23,422	1,464	60,897	351,330	
Mechanical heat ventilation recovery	700	44	74	38,500	✓
Ground Source Heat Pumps	21	1	672	6,090	✓
Air Source Heat Pumps	9	0	64	2,610	✓
Photo-Voltaics (PV)	187	12	5,460	37,400	✓
Solar thermal	76	4	362	4,180	✓
<b>Total</b>	<b>41,079</b>	<b>2,566</b>	<b>220,191</b>	<b>2,386,435</b>	

## What are we doing next:

Note: Only three years ahead planned reflecting the current national UK grant funding timeframe.

Measures	2013-2014	2014-2015	2015-2016	Anticipated lifetime carbon emission savings (tonnes)	Anticipated annual heating bill savings (£)	Income generator (FIT / RHI)
Roof Insulation	80	50	50	639	9,000	
Cavity Wall Insulation	20	20	20	840	8,400	
Solid wall insulation	15	150	150	14,725	147,250	
Door & Window Draught Stripping	0	200	200	1,840	22,000	
Boiler Replacement/New Central Heating - Gas Condensing	55	50	50	2,232	46,500	
Fuel switch to gas	250	50	50	8,400	131,250	
Mechanical heat ventilation recovery	700	700	700	2,520	115,500	✓
Ground Source Heat Pumps	0	0	0	0	0	✓
Air Source Heat Pumps	20	30	50	3,200	29,000	✓
Photo-Voltaics (PV)	0	30	50	2,400	16,000	✓
Solar thermal	0	20	50	403	3850	✓
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,140</b>	<b>1,300</b>	<b>1,370</b>	<b>37,199</b>	<b>528,750</b>	

## 8.0 NEIGHBOURHOODS

Demand for FCC's properties will have an important influence on any decision FCC may take to invest in its stock. The demand profile obtained from analysis of the stock will form an important data source for the purpose of potential investment/non-investment decisions.

Although the majority of stock is popular, there are a number of unit types that suffer from low demand. The majority of these are in hard to let properties such as sheltered bedsits or where properties are in unpopular locations/estates.

Historically blocks such as Coppa View and Alyn Meadow have suffered from low demand, but initiatives to make the schemes more attractive have now resulted in

both these blocks being fully let. Additionally the impact of Welfare Reform has increased demand for smaller properties such as bedsits which were originally in less demand.

The types of properties which now prove to be a challenge to let are 2+ bedroom flats which are above ground floor. This is because FCC avoids letting properties above ground floor to families with children. Previously the Authority would have been in a position to let these types of properties to single applicants or couples, but the impact of welfare reform has meant that many applicants now would not be able to afford these properties.

It is therefore proposed that a proportion of these properties be assessed for feasibility to re-configure the layout from two bedrooms to one bedroom, or three bedrooms to two.

Some demand issues can be addressed through consideration of amending allocations criteria such as re-designation of sheltered accommodation.

Sustainability is not just about letting properties, the rate of turnover also needs to be considered. Some works to reconfigure properties, such as Glan-Y-Morfa Court have already been carried out, and this has proven to be successful, both in terms of increasing demand, but also in reducing turnover.

The following are proposals made by the area housing teams based on their experience in managing the housing stock in recent years;

- Off street parking and pedestrian access issues.
- Security - improved lighting schemes.
- Kitchens - A number of properties have very small kitchens that would welcome extensions if funding permitted.
- Provision of Lifts - on certain blocks where access to upper floors is a problem.
- Consideration of reconfiguration of some family houses to one bed flats.
- Concerns over lack of single person accommodation.

The demand for housing can be banded into High, Medium and Low. The major conurbations being of higher demand down to the more rural areas in the low demand banding. The current data shows the demand in each category as follows:

High Demand 46.77% of the housing stock  
Medium Demand 37.80% of the housing stock  
Low Demand 15.42% of the housing stock

## 8.1 Built Environment for Sustainable Neighbourhoods

*“Sustainable Development is based on the idea that the quality of people’s lives, and the state of our communities, is affected by a combination of economic social and environmental factors. It challenges single-issue*

*thinking, as people do not see their quality of life in terms of ‘a good environment’, a thriving economy’ or ‘social equality’. It is about all of these things and more. By understanding the links between the environment, the economy and equality it is possible to develop integrated lasting solutions, based on harmony”. Flintshire Housing Strategy 2012-2017*

## 9.0 FINANCIAL INVESTMENT

### 9.1 Annual Budget for WHQS works and other planned maintenance to 2020

A strict interpretation of the data arising from the current level of surveys of WHQS works and planned maintenance needs over the next 7 years indicates an annual budget requirement in the order of £15m per year including fees and VAT but excluding inflation costs.

### 9.2 Asset Management Plan 2014/2020

The financial plan looks at the resources required to meet the expenditure on our properties over the next 7 years. This includes expenditure on:

- Responsive repairs (including voids).
- Gas servicing.
- Cyclical painting and repairs.
- Reinvestment including meeting and keeping the WHQS.
- Based on stock condition information of the properties, currently 24 dwellings of FCC’s stock comply with the WHQS. To meet the requirements of WHQS the financial plan will include the initial capital expenditure required to meet the standard, but will also include the required expenditure to maintain the WHQS standard.

The highest cost components requiring replacements (excluding VAT, fees and excluding inflation) over the next seven years are:

Components	Current Remedial Costs (excl VAT & Fees)
Kitchens/Bathrooms/Heating	£51.1m
Roofs	£10.5m
Doors and Windows	£ 4.2m
Building Structure	£ 5.3m
External Works	£ 8.8m
Off Gas provisions	£ 5.0m
Asbestos	£ 5.5m
Environmental	£ 7.4m
Fees	£ 5.8m
<b>Circa Total</b>	<b>£103.6</b>

## 9.4 Financial Resources

FCC will, as part of the business planning/budget setting process, make available financial resources to deliver approved Asset Management Plans. Where a decision to divest in properties is the preferred option (sale) any financial benefit from the sale will be ring fenced (where legislation allows) for reinvestment into the remaining stock.

For the 7 year period commencing April 2014, the Authority has identified an investment need (based on stock condition information) of £103, which equates to an annual investment need of £15m including works to the high rise flats and demolition of the maisonettes in Flint and excluding £31m for responsive and void repairs.

FCC through its budget planning process will set aside sums to deliver the approved Capital Works Programme. Where there is a shortfall during any year, between resources allocated and those required, FCC will investigate other possible sources of funding.

Current spending on the housing stock includes:

- Routine repairs and general day to day maintenance. This includes reactive repairs, works to empty homes prior to reletting, annual servicing of electrical, gas equipment and other cyclical work such as external painting. Annual investment amounts to approximately £7.9 million per annum on this type of work.
- Major improvement works; Major improvement works are carried out when component parts of a dwelling need to be replaced.
- A programme of improvements is decided upon using the data extracted from the stock condition survey, Officers and Members local knowledge. The annual spending is currently approximately £12 million pounds.

The Housing Asset Management Strategy is a live document and will be updated on a regular basis to reflect changes in legislation, costs and funding, this will usually be annually.

## 10.0 DELIVERY

The Council is currently in year 2 of the original 6 year pre-ballot WHQS delivery programme. It is the intention to continue with year 3 of this original programme while FCC digests the information that will be gathered from the current Stock Condition Survey. FCC will formulate a new plan (from 2015 to 2021) showing what works will be completed in each year and in which areas of the County.

To date, the original 6 year plan concentrate primarily on the Internal workstreams of the delivery programme, as this was what Tenants supported for to be dealt



with first. FCC have to complete work to the following 4 workstreams (consisting of individual elements) to comply with the WHQS;

- Internal workstreams - Kitchens, Bathrooms, Heating, Re-wires, Smoke Alarms etc.
- Envelope workstreams - Roofing, Chimney work, Roofline works (Gutters, fascias etc), Windows / Doors, Re-pointing / re-rendering etc.
- External workstreams - Fencing, Paths etc
- Environmental workstreams - Estate wide projects to include off street parking and larger environmental projects.

The council will be looking at the potential cost savings of grouping elements together within a workstream, such as kitchens and bathrooms being completed at the same time. The advantage of this is less contractor management costs and less FCC management costs trying to effectively administer those contracts. If FCC were to maintain all individual elements as single contracts and tried to complete all those individual elements within the 7 years, then FCC management costs will not be compatible within FCC's business plan. Currently FCC's business plan has an allowance of 6% management fees; if all individual element approach were adopted then FCC's fees could be as high as 15%. This could potentially cost another £9 million in management fees alone over the programme period.

The council will also be formulating new ideas around geographical areas in lieu of the current system of working in almost every ward area each year and only completing one or two streets within those areas each year. It is more cost effective to group more streets together within slightly larger areas. However, it is FCC's intention that some elemental or workstream package of works will be completed in all areas in each financial year. The Geography of those areas can be divided into the following or any combination of the areas after consulting with all parties concerned;

- East and West area.
- North / South and East areas.
- Split into 5/6 large town cluster areas.
- Follow street scene areas, 13 in total.

The council will continue to utilise existing frameworks and look for new frameworks to help procure contractors for the delivery programme. The council will procure large PLC type contractors through this process and will continue to invite local SME's to tender for smaller schemes of work ensuring that the local labour market is involved in WHQS expenditure.

The council will continue to work closely with other Local Authorities maximising its buying power through collaborative working and procuring joint contracts with other Local Authorities

We will also look at the possibility of utilising the DLO in the capital works expenditure programme, delivering smaller schemes similar in size to the SME workforce.



The existing responsive repair service is carried out by an in-house workforce consisting of over 100 trade's staff. Work is completed and priced based on a Schedule of Rates. FCC seeks to reduce reactive maintenance expenditure by investing in the stock through Capital Investment Programmes as part of achieving WHQS.

The voids team, disabled adaptations team and the capital works team are also working much more closely together in terms of carrying out improvement works to WHQS standards. The collaboration between the newly formed in-house adaptations team and capital works ensures that adaptations are now being completed to WHQS standard and contributing towards the improvement targets.

### **10.1 Planned Maintenance**

In terms of asset management, one of the principal areas for consideration is co-ordination of materials used in improvement works to ensure long life replacement availability for ease of repair together with an evaluation of costs-in-use (i.e. life cycle costing) to ensure best long-term value.

This principle will be developed through data gathered from framework agreements and data sharing with Travis Perkins, FCC's preferred stores provider. The results will inform and direct FCC's Capital Works programme and Maintenance strategy in the use of materials.

### **10.2 Alignment of repairs with Capital Programme**

To avoid unnecessary maintenance expenditure, it is of primary importance to ensure that all maintenance works are fully co-ordinated with the capital works programme and that responsive versus planned repairs are properly categorised.

This will be achieved utilising Capita 'Open Housing' - Capital Works - Scenario planner and Service modules. The core data held on the computer system will assist in managing the capital programme. Capita Open Housing makes the necessary information available to all users as a central information sharing tool.

FCC are currently reviewing the existing software to ensure that future reporting mechanisms are substantial and robust enough to project financial data for 30 year projections on its housing stock. Other software system manufacturers are being reviewed and compared with our existing Capita IBS system to ensure FCC's Asset Management Software systems are capable of being sustainable for the future.

### **10.3 Cyclical Maintenance**

The cyclical maintenance programme includes:

- A seven year external painting programme to address approximately 1000 properties annually. The programme includes the painting of internal

communal parts to flatted accommodation. The painting of the garages is also included under this programme.

- Gas servicing ensures that all gas appliances are serviced on an 11 month cycle to ensure FCC meets its statutory responsibility the work is carried out by the In-house DLO Team
- Smoke detector servicing is carried out on an annual basis. Over the next six years it is intended to service approximately 1200 smoke detectors per annum. A ten year replacement programme runs concurrently with the servicing replacing life expired units to ensure that every property is protected up to a minimum standard of LD3 - alarms fitted in escape routes only e.g. hallways and landing/s.
- Periodic Electrical Testing - installations to all dwellings are checked for safety on a ten year cycle. This ensures that every property attains a level of safety as required by the National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC) and is the UK's consumer safety organisation. This testing is maintained throughout the installations expected life of forty years and subsequently informs the whole house rewiring programme.

#### **10.4 Reactive Maintenance**

FCC's responsive repair works are currently carried out by the Housing Asset Management In-house DLO Team.

The introduction of a mobile working and late evening response is aimed at improving the efficiency of the reactive repair system, as operatives can receive work through hand held devices, with a wide range of benefits which includes better planning of their workload and travel time.

FCC's aims to reduce reactive maintenance expenditure, by investing in the stock through capital projects, such as upgrading kitchens and bathrooms with an emphasis on quality and reliability of the materials used. This approach aims to reduce future maintenance costs as high specification materials give a greater reliability and lifespan.

#### **10.5 Vacant Properties**

FCC has a void turnover of circa 5.27% of its properties per year (560) this compares with the average void times for Welsh social Housing Providers.

To maximise rental income, void properties must be returned to the rental stream as quickly as practicable and systems are being developed to streamline the process. Properties that are included in the capital improvement programme and subsequently become void during the course of the contract will be addressed by the relevant contractor on an agreed rapid turnaround basis and completed within two weeks of being advised.

## 10.6 Out of Hours Service

The Housing Asset Management Service currently provides an out of hours service accessed via Care Connect, based in Conwy County Borough Council's Call Centre this service enables tenants to request/report emergency repairs or incidents 24/7 - 365 days.

## 10.7 Gas Servicing

FCC has introduced a formal procedure for the successful management of servicing heating appliances. Housing Asset Management are currently introducing measures to improve the quality of its maintenance service that will include repairs by appointment, extended working days and Saturday morning appointments.

## 10.8 Asbestos Management.

The 'Control of Asbestos Regulations' (CAR) April 2012 requires duty holders to:

- Take reasonable steps to find materials in premises likely to contain asbestos and check their condition.
- Presume that materials contain asbestos unless there is written evidence that they do not.
- Make a written record of the location and condition of asbestos and presumed asbestos containing materials (ACMs) and keep the record up to date.

In order to meet its statutory obligations under CAR, FCC records the existence of asbestos in dwellings on Capita 'Open Housing Asbestos module' putting effective risk management systems into place, developing a suitable program of asbestos re-inspections.

Housing Asset Management also undertake specific asbestos surveys for all capital projects, the results of which are included with the pre-construction information, in accordance with the Control of Asbestos Regulations 2012 and The Construction (Design and Management) Regulations 2007 (CDM).

## 10.9 Risk of Legionella

FCC have appointed Hertel Maintenance to manage and record all communal sites that have an associated risk of legionella. The risk of Legionella affects 3 sites that Housing Services manage.

## 10.10 Fire Risk Assessment

FCC is compelled by the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 to maintain the fire safety arrangements. Properties with common parts must be assessed

periodically for ‘fire risk’ to ensure the continual compliance with the legislation. There is an ongoing budgetary commitment in the Capital Works programme to ensure all required locations meet the standard of the ‘fire safety order’.

#### **10.11 The Disabled Discrimination Act 1995, DDA, element of the Disability and the Equality Act 2010,**

The Disabled Discrimination Act as amended in 2005, places an obligation on FCC to make reasonable adjustments for disabled people so that they do not face difficulties accessing buildings. Savills have undertaken a survey of all FCC’s stock with common areas. Works are being actioned in line with the action plan prepared by Savills. Costs are included for the ‘high priority’ issues in the Capital Works programme with the medium and low priorities being addressed during the following years to enable FCC to meet its obligations under the act.

#### **10.12 Communal TV Upgrades**

Many of FCC’s grouped dwellings - e.g. sheltered complexes, block of flats - enjoy the provision of a communal TV distribution system fed from single aerial points.

This has been upgraded in recent years, so that all existing dwellings on a communal system have access to a digital aerial connection. The equipment used is serviced through the installer Stanley Security Solutions who are responsible for the upkeep and maintenance of 2500 homes within the County through a long term maintenance agreement with the company.

## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**REPORT TO:** **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** **WEDNESDAY, 8 JANUARY 2014**

**REPORT BY:** **HEAD OF HOUSING**

**SUBJECT:** **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR AND NEIGHBOURHOOD  
MANAGEMENT**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress of the service in relation to the management of anti-social behaviour (ASB) within neighbourhood housing management.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 In 2013 the new ASB Policy was approved by Cabinet and adopted by the Neighbourhood Housing Team. It's aim was to:

- Prevent anti-social behaviour from happening in the first place.
- Increase confidence within the community to report anti-social behaviour
- Reduce the impact of anti-social behaviour on victims, witnesses and those around them.
- Take decisive action to tackle those who behave in an anti-social manner to stop it from happening again.
- Provide a service that is value for money and which provides sustainable outcomes.

Briefings were carried out with staff over the summer to ensure that all Neighbourhood Housing Officers and Antisocial Behaviour Officers were familiar with the content, and the revised policy position.

2.02 The introduction of the new policy is supported by the promise to tenants of the appointment of additional officers to tackle ASB and by investment in a new case management system – ReACT.

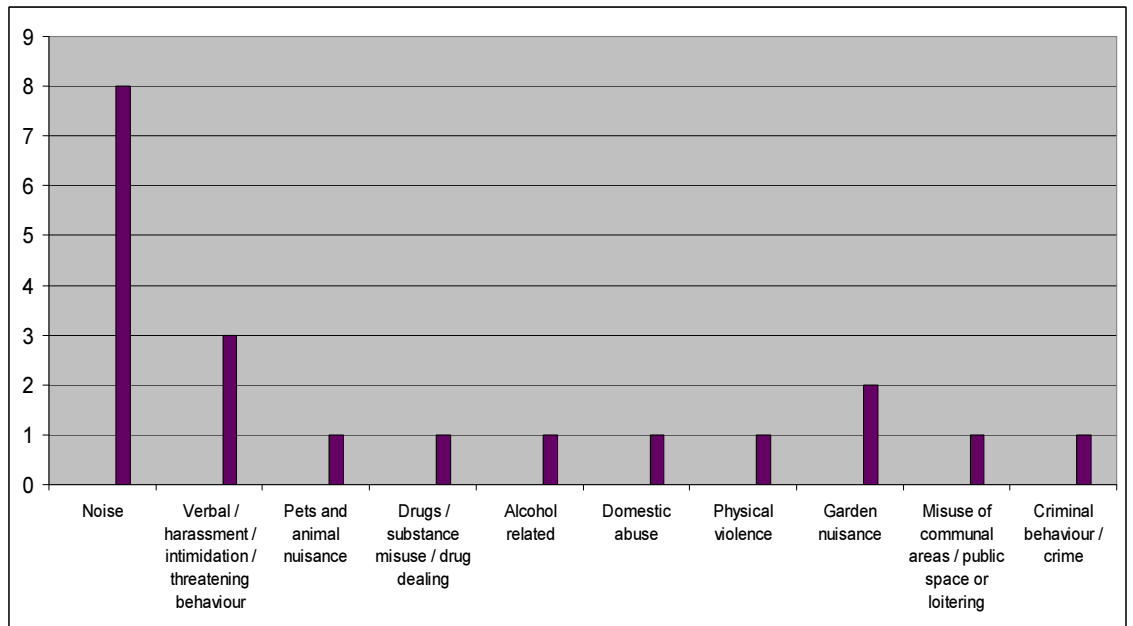
### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

#### **3.01 ReACT**

ReACT is the IT system that has been purchased by the Council to be able to properly record and manage complaints of anti-social behaviour.

The system was implemented in November 2013 with training for staff taking place throughout November.

Since its implementation on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2013, there have been 20 reported cases of anti-social behaviour. The majority of these cases have been in relation to noise or verbal abuse.



The following map shows in which areas of the County complaints have been made:



3.02 In addition to being able to see the number, types and geographical location of

anti-social behaviour complaints, the system also enables better management of complaints.

Once a complaint has been made, Officers have key actions within set timescales which they must undertake. The system will remind Officers if actions are nearly due, and will alert Team Leaders if actions become overdue.

By having a computerised system, other staff members are able to advise customers of the progress of their complaint, even if the Investigating Officer is not available.

A further feature of the system is the ability to keep a track of all costs associated with each case. This means that staff time, mileage costs, legal costs etc can be calculated for each case. Ultimately this will be important so that the Council can evaluate whether the service provides value for money, and it will be possible to benchmark the costs of Flintshire County Councils service with that of other landlords.

### 3.03 Anti-Social Behaviour Team

The Council in its offer to tenants through the Choices Document promised to establish a team of 3 specialist Antisocial Behaviour Officers.

In addition to the existing officer, a further two officers have now been recruited. One of whom commenced employment in November, and the other who is due to start in early 2014. These officers are responsible for the complex, serious and persistent cases of anti-social behaviour, and for arranging legal action to be taken where appropriate.

Both additional officers bring with them a wealth of experience and have a mixture of relevant skills to complement the existing team member.

### 3.04 Out of Hours Service [Protec]

2013 also saw the launch of the new 'Out of Hours' service for victims and witnesses of antisocial behaviour.

This service is provided by an external supplier, and offers a range of options for supporting victims and witnesses out of hours, including telephone support, on site support and professional witness services.

This has been particularly valuable for vulnerable customers who may require the additional option of being able to report incidents out of hours, and obtain support and advice over the telephone.

In a small number of particularly sensitive cases, provision has also been made for on-site attendance. This means that if an incident occurs out of hours, and the victim/witness requires it, a Protec Officer will go to the victim's home and provide support, and if the incident is still occurring when they reach the address, they are also able to act as an independent witness.

Additionally, Protec also support the work of the Council's Housing Officers by making regular reassurance calls to victims and witnesses.

3.05 Sanctions

The Council has now adopted the approach supported by the Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2013 to reduce priority for any property improvement works, where the tenant has been guilty of causing anti-social behaviour.

This approach has been adopted in all cases where there has been a Notice served on the tenant, or where legal action has commenced.

The Council is also taking a firm stance on cases where tenants have caused damage to their council homes through either deliberate damage or negligence.

3.06 Case Studies

3.06.1 Leeswood:

On 24<sup>th</sup> September at 3:30pm, a young tenant of the Council from Leeswood telephoned his Housing Officer to report that a male had come to his property and threatened him in the belief that he had given information to the police about drug dealing. Thinking quickly, the tenant had switched on the video recording device on his mobile telephone, and captured the male continuing to make threats and also ripping his garden gate from it's hinges.

The Council took both the threats to the tenant, and the criminal damage to the gate seriously, and offered to make an emergency application for an Anti-Social Behaviour Injunction to protect the tenant.

Within 24 hours, an application had been made and presented to the Court and the Judge granted an immediate injunction with a power of arrest. Due to the threats and risk to the tenant, the Council had been able to do this without notifying the perpetrator.

The Court then listed a further hearing to provide the perpetrator with an opportunity to defend an application for a full injunction.

The perpetrator did not defend the application, and the Judge gave a full injunction, ordering the perpetrator not just to refrain from threatening the tenant, but also including wider prohibitions preventing him from causing anti-social behaviour to others living in the locality.

Since the injunction was granted the situation has much improved in the area, and the tenant was nominated for an award for his firm stand against anti-social behaviour.

3.06.2 Holywell:

A family in the Holywell area who had been renowned for serious crime and anti-social behaviour for many years were evicted.



The catalogue of incidents perpetrated by numerous members of the family spanned many years, however most witnesses were too frightened to provide details of what was happening either to the police or to the Council.

In the summer of 2013 a serious incident occurred when adult males of the family threatened a young pregnant woman with baseball bats. Although the victim was too afraid to personally give evidence she allowed the Council to submit her statement anonymously. Coupled with the Anti-Social Behaviour Officer's own statement of the family's impact upon residents in the area, and a statement from the local police constable confirming how frightened witnesses were, the District Judge found that the tenants had breached their tenancy agreement and that it was reasonable for them to be evicted from their home.

Eviction is the ultimate sanction, and one which is usually used as a last resort, however in the circumstances, taking into account the help and support which had been offered to the family to change their behaviour and the devastating impact their behaviour had had on the local community, it was deemed to be the most appropriate response.

#### 3.06.3 Flint:

The Council received complaints from residents in a scheme of bungalows about verbal abuse and harassment from a neighbour.

There were a number of complex issues to consider in the case including the alleged perpetrator's mental health, but also the vulnerability of some of the victims and witnesses.

The Council has worked closely both with residents and with the perpetrator and has obtained an injunction to prohibit the perpetrator from causing further nuisance, including restrictions which exclude him from certain areas which may otherwise bring him into contact with witnesses.

Feedback from residents is that this injunction has made a substantial difference and has been adhered to by the perpetrator.

This example is illustrative of the reason why injunctions are often a very effective tool at tackling anti-social behaviour and preventing further incidents. They allow the Council to manage behaviour usually without the need to resort to evicting someone, which can in many cases, simply displace the problem, rather than solve it.

#### 3.07 **Visit by the Minister for Housing and Regeneration**

In November 2013, Carl Sargeant visited the Community House, Holway, Holywell to meet with residents who had experienced anti-social behaviour and to talk to them about their experiences.

Residents described how anti-social behaviour had impacted upon their lives,

of their decision to talk to the Council and the action that the Council had taken to address the problems they were experiencing.

In both cases, the Council had taken legal proceedings to obtain injunctions, and the Minister heard how action could be taken quickly to provide almost immediate protection for victims, unlike legal proceedings for possession and eviction which can take many months for an outcome to be reached,

The Minister was keen to hear about what worked well for victims and witnesses, and what didn't and spoke of his commitment to raising standards for tenants who experience anti-social behaviour.

The Minister also met with the Domestic Abuse Co-ordinator from the Council and the Chair of the Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) to discuss how the police and Council work together to tackle Domestic Abuse,

The Housing Service is developing a range of initiatives to enable better identification of domestic abuse, and improved services for those who experience it. This work is still in its infancy but another local housing provider is also keen to be involved in the proposals and work will be continuing on this into 2014.

### 3.08 **Plans for 2014**

#### 3.09 Domestic Abuse

As stated above, there are plans being developed to improve services for tenants who are experiencing domestic abuse.

This includes a whole range of initiatives including:

- Training for staff who may be well placed to identify issues, such as on-call joiners, income officers and estate based staff.
- A Domestic Abuse Champion in each team
- In depth training for housing officers and anti-social behaviour officers
- An identifier so that those who may want to disclose domestic abuse, know in advance that the person they are talking to is trained in dealing with domestic abuse.
- Initiatives to improve the relationship between individuals working in housing and those working in domestic abuse.
- Permanent agenda item on team meeting agendas.

#### 3.10 Pet Nuisance:

In line with issues raised by residents as part of the STAR Survey (see

Agenda Item Tenant Satisfaction Survey and Action Plan), and with issues raised by residents both directly through complaints and via feedback at the Tenant's Conference, the Council aims to develop a Responsible Pet Ownership policy.

This will ensure a consistent and fair approach towards the requests that the Council receives for permission to keep pets and animals, whilst promoting the principles of animal welfare and responsible pet ownership, and reducing issues arising from those who do not look after or control their pets.

### 3.11 Benchmarking

Quarter 4 of 2013/14 will be the first full quarter for which the Council will have data with which to benchmark its ASB Service and this will be submitted to the Housemark Benchmarking Service so that comparisons can be drawn with other Welsh Social Landlords.

## **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 Members of this Committee are asked to consider the content of this report.

## **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 The introduction of the ReACT system will allow for improved recording and monitoring of costs associated with ASB which will in turn inform future service planning.

## **6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 No negative impact.

## **7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 The ASB Policy positively impacts upon environmental crime and anti-social behaviour.

## **8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 The work around domestic abuse is statistically likely to have a more positive effect on females.

## **9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 No further implications, 2 additional members of staff have been recruited.

## **10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 Consultation will be required for the development of the Responsible Pet Policy

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 Consultation with tenants was undertaken during the development of the ASB Policy through one to one interviews with those who had previously reported ASB, at the Tenants Conference and through the Housing News.

**12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 None

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985**  
**BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None

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## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**REPORT TO:** **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** **WEDNESDAY, 8 JANUARY 2014**

**REPORT BY:** **DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES**

**SUBJECT:** **TENANT SATISFACTION SURVEY RESULTS AND ACTION PLAN**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To report on the results of the independent tenant satisfaction survey and to present proposals for improvement to further raise satisfaction levels to achieve top quartile outcomes

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 A STAR survey (Survey of Tenants and Residents) is a voluntary survey for use by social housing providers. It provides social housing landlords with the means of benchmarking satisfaction results in relation to the services provided for customers. STAR was launched in July 2011 and has been endorsed by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS).

2.02 The predecessor to STAR was STATUS, a survey which was carried out by Flintshire County Council in 2010. After English government departments and regulators signalled the ending of requirements to conduct the former standard (the STATUS survey), HouseMark received requests from its members to devise a standardised approach to measuring satisfaction that could replace STATUS on a voluntary, self-regulatory basis, and therefore STAR was developed.

2.03 Housemark is a national benchmarking organisation with circa 900 housing organisations as members, Flintshire County Council has recently joined and is starting to benchmark its performance with other similar landlords.

2.04 In order to be statistically valid, and allow us to have confidence in the results of the STAR survey, it was necessary to have a minimum of 550 responses

2.05 The Customer Involvement Strategy Group also wanted to maximise the opportunity of the survey, by having statistically relevant information across the three housing management areas of North, South and East, so that comparisons could be drawn. This information will be utilised to ensure consistent performance and

provide evidence as to whether the current housing management areas remain fit for purpose. Therefore a larger sample size of 3,630 addresses were randomly selected, 1,210 from each area.

2.06 A total of 1410 surveys were returned which constituted a 39% response rate overall. This means that the results can be said to be representative of customer views.

2.07 The survey was a postal survey and was sent out to tenants in June 2013. Reminders were sent out to each address 3 weeks later. The questionnaire was designed as a bilingual booklet in English and Welsh. None were returned using the Welsh part.

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 The Survey asked a number of key questions which the Council has been able to benchmark with other organisations through Housemark's Benchmarking Groups.

3.02 Additional 'question sets' were also asked to provide the Council with more detailed information on customer views, and to aid service planning and improvements.

3.03 A copy of the full report of the STAR survey is annexed to this paper, however a summary of the main findings are as follows:

<b>Core Question asked on survey</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Welsh Housing Association comparison (Median quartile)</b>
Satisfied with the housing service	74%	81%	85%
Satisfied with their neighbourhood	86%	88%	83%
Satisfied with the quality of your home	80%	83%	83%
Feel rent provides value for money	81%	84%	78%
Satisfied with repairs and maintenance	67%	71%	76%
Satisfied that we listen to your views and act on them	65%	63%	72%

3.04 81% of surveyed customers said that taking everything into account they were happy with Flintshire County Council's Housing Service. This is an increase since 2010 at which time 74% reported that they were happy with the service.

3.05 90% of respondents said that they felt safe in their homes and 88%

were happy with their neighbourhoods. This was consistent across the county with little difference in results across the three operating areas of North, South and East. Notably, 95% of respondents who were aged over 65 reported feeling safe in their home.

3.06 When asked about issues in their neighbourhoods, respondents identified issues such as dog fouling, car parking and litter as the main causes of concern. 81% said that in the last three years, their neighbourhood had either improved or stayed the same with 19% feeling that there had been a decline.

3.07 Only 8% of respondents said that they had reported any type of anti-social behaviour in the last year. Of those that had, they reported predominantly that staff were usually or always helpful and courteous, but there was a need for improvement in relation to how knowledgeable staff were and how responsive.

3.08 Overall customer satisfaction for the repairs and maintenance service has improved since 2010. Satisfaction levels have increased from 67% to 71%. However, the median quartile for Welsh Housing Associations is 76%, therefore Flintshire's Repairs and Maintenance service needs to further improve to meet this level, however it should be noted that many Associations will have newer and better quality housing stock than Flintshire does at present.

3.09 Satisfaction was significantly higher amongst the group that had received a repair in the last 12 months against those who were judging the service on historical performance. This coincides with the significant improvements in performance achieved within this service in that period. This figure was 79%, which sits above the median Welsh average.

3.10 Satisfaction levels ranged from 68% to 91% on specific questions relating to the repairs and maintenance service. 91% of customers were satisfied with the attitude of the repairs and maintenance service workers with 85% being satisfied with the overall quality of the work. The lower satisfaction levels were around time taken for work to be carried out and the ability to make an appointment for repairs to be completed with results of 68% and 70% respectively.

### 3.11 **ANALYSIS**

3.11.1 The results tell us that that overall, tenants are more satisfied with services than they were three years ago. This is encouraging as the service has been striving to continuously improve and these results provide evidence that the impact of these improvements is now being felt by tenants. However by benchmarking these results through the Housemark Benchmarking Service, it is evident that there is still work to do in some areas to be able to reach upper quartile performance.

- 3.11.2 There were high levels of satisfaction with the Disabled Adaptations process and also with services linked to Sheltered Housing, with older tenants reporting higher satisfaction levels across the whole range of question sets. 84% of customer's feel their rent provides value for money compared with only 78% of Welsh Housing Association tenants.
- 3.11.3 The survey results provide valuable and detailed information in relation to the areas where the service needs to improve. This information is being used to help the service to make informed decisions.
- 3.11.4 In terms of customer engagement, only 63% of customers are satisfied that the Council listens to their views and acts on them compared to 72% across Welsh Housing Associations. This is a gap which will be a focus of activity over the next few years. There is much work to do in terms of engaging with all tenants. The Housing team will be seeking the support of the Flintshire Tenants and Residents Federation to try and achieve this.
- 3.11.5 In addition there was a commitment within the Housing Ballot Choices document to provide a greater people resource in this area. A new post of Customer Involvement Assistant has been created specifically to engage with hard to reach customer groups, including younger customers in order to gain more representative involvement. A strategy including the uses of new forms of communication including Facebook, Twitter and other social media will be developed to utilise new ways of opening up a dialogue with customers.
- 3.11.6 It is not clear whether customers who have completed the survey have responded to this question thinking of the Council's formal and informal involvement activities, or whether satisfaction is influenced more by how the Council responds when complaints are raised.
- 3.11.7 The results of the specific question set in relation to complaints would suggest it was the latter, with only 38% of customers being satisfied with the outcome of their complaint. Further exploration of this result is required to understand whether this is due to levels of expectation that are beyond the level of financial resources available. Further improvements to the repairs and maintenance service and potential changes to the delivery WHQS investment programme are likely to have a positive impact on this. In addition the revised structure for Housing Asset Management, has changed the way in which complaints are now handled. This has allowed for significant improvements to be made in terms of the quality and timeliness of the response.
- 3.11.8 Only 62% were satisfied with the standard of cleaning services provided by the Council. This service is therefore under review so that the standard of the service offered to tenants is greatly improved,



whilst providing the Council with an opportunity to look at how the service can be delivered in a way which provides greater value for money.

- 3.11.9 54% of customers surveyed said that dog fouling was an issue in their neighbourhoods, and in response the Neighbourhood Housing Team are developing a Responsible Pet Ownership Policy with associated initiatives to reduce pet related nuisance.
- 3.11.10 There is opportunity for significant improvement around the Council's management of reported anti-social behaviour, (ASB), although it is worth noting that this survey was completed just as the new ASB policy went live and significant improvements to the service have recently been made, including the appointment of an additional 2 officers and the introduction of an IT backed case management system for reported incidents. There is now a witness support line operated out of office hours to ensure victims are better supported.
- 3.11.11 For the repair and maintenance service, a number of measures have been implemented which will contribute to improving satisfaction levels in the areas of required improvement: -
- 3.11.12 The historic backlog of repairs has been addressed and performance, particularly in the non-urgent repair category, has seen significant improvement as repairs are being attended to considerably quicker. This improvement continues each quarter as more repairs are being completed within the target times. In November, the average time taken to complete a non-urgent repair was 17 days against a target of 32 days. This is the best ever performance in this category and importantly 86% of repairs were fully completed in the target time. Both Emergency and Urgent repairs performances are within set targets and again the percentage of repairs completed within target continues to improve each quarter.
- 3.11.13 The number of repairs carried out by appointment has also increased month on month and through the extended hours project appointments are being offered to customers up until 6pm.
- 3.11.14 A review of van stock management is currently being undertaken to ensure that each trades person carries a fit for purpose stock of materials suitable for the work they undertake. This will enable more repairs to be completed on the first visit with a reduction in the required journeys to collect materials. There is also a reduction in the number of inspections being undertaken with the move to trades persons attending site and conducting their own inspections. This will again reduce the end to end times of repair completion and also mean a reduction in visits to customer homes.
- 3.11.15 Flintshire County Council have agreed a revised business plan to meet Welsh Housing Quality Standards by 2020. As part of the

revised business plan a new 7 year delivery model will be developed which will provide tenants with definitive investment programmes and timescales and provide clarity around improvements to Flintshire homes.

- 3.11.16 Customers need to feel more involved in policy development. This process can take some time, and may not be very visible to tenants. Currently, views are sought following articles in housing publications, or through face to face discussions in a community setting. It is vital that we keep customers informed throughout this process to demonstrate that the final documents produced do take account of tenant's comments and suggestions.
- 3.11.17 Potential actions being considered are highly visible notice boards in estate areas, along with a poster campaign in community venues showing the 'Outcomes' of customer consultation. A 'You said – We did' approach is also being utilised through tenant conferences. On a more local level, when any customer gives us their views either at a community event, formal consultation activity, or whilst attending an externally organised event, they are recorded, so the Service can track how customer involvement impacts on policy/procedural development and a response to customers can be made within an appropriate timescale.

### 3.12 **REALITY CHECKERS**

#### **Background**

- 3.12.1 The Reality Checker group was developed to allow tenants to be more involved in assessing service quality. It consists of 5 Tenant representatives chosen from amongst the membership of the Flintshire Federation of Tenant and Resident Groups, with support from the Customer Involvement Officer and administration services.
- 3.12.2 Within the umbrella of the reality checker group, volunteers from across the county were recruited and received training as 'Tenant Auditors' to undertake telephone surveys, mystery shopping exercises, and undertake face to face customer satisfaction interviews with tenants who had received planned kitchen renewal. This recruitment and training is ongoing for any tenant who wishes to become involved.

#### **Work to date**

- 3.12.3 The reality checker group has undertaken two service reviews to date, one on the customer perspective when reporting and receiving a repair and one for customer advice available on ASB, (with the report on the latter due early in 2014).
- 3.12.4 Outcomes from the first review on repairs identified learning

opportunities for staff on customer care practices, with two main weaknesses identified from tenant feedback. The first on giving tenants timescales for their repairs to be completed, and the second on a need for improved communication throughout the process. Tenants surveyed were very positive on the professionalism of staff who undertook their repairs.

- 3.12.5 Feedback on the positive outcomes as well as the learning opportunities were given to staff through 'tool box talks', at team meetings and through 121's.
- 3.12.6 The action plan drawn at the end of the review identifies the improvements that need to be made following the review, and is further monitored after six months to ensure implementation of the improvements has taken place, and to identify any further work.
- 3.12.7 Tenants who have been surveyed were delighted at being asked to participate to make service improvements and it is felt that they spoke more openly to other tenants who had received training, than they may have either to staff or on a form.

### **Conclusion**

- 3.12.8 It is pleasing to receive independent verification from tenants that the Housing Service is continuing to improve. However the areas where further improvements are needed will continue to be a focus for the service plan over the next few years. These include continued improvement in the repair and maintenance service, further work with customers to develop involvement and then to communicate better that their views are taken into account, In addition work is already underway to improve cleaning and estate management services and the new ASB policy will provide a much improved service to complainants.
- 3.12.9 A further satisfaction survey will be undertaken in 2015.

### **4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 401 Scrutiny committee are asked to note the outcomes from the survey and to support the areas for continued improvement.

### **5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.01 The survey was funded from the 2013 HRA budget. Any improvement actions with a financial implication will be considered as part of the annual budget setting exercise.

### **6.00 ANTI-POVERTY IMPACT**

- 6.01 No issues arising from this report.

**7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 Work to improve the estate management service will further improve tenant satisfaction with their neighbourhoods.

**8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 Older tenants and those living in sheltered housing report the highest levels of satisfaction.

**9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 There are none arising from this report.

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 Further consultation work to be carried out targeting harder to reach customers.

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 The design of the survey and the question sets used were selected by the Customer Involvement Strategy which consists of both elected members and customers.

**12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Flintshire Standard Tenants and Residents (STAR) Survey

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985  
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS AND APPENDICES**

None

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WYMAN  
DILLON



## STAR Survey 2013 Results

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## **Introduction**

Over June and July 2013 Wyman Dillon conducted a Standard Tenants and Residents (STAR) Survey on behalf of Flintshire County Council Housing Services.

The methodology adopted was postal with one full reminder (including a second copy of the questionnaire) despatched to non-responders after three weeks.

In order to achieve Housemark's required margin of error of +/-4% at the 95% confidence level across the Council's entire housing stock of c.7,200 properties, approximately 550 responses were required. This would entitle the Council to submit their Core Question Scores and gain access to Housemark's benchmarking data from other social housing providers.

However, the Council wished to be able to look at results for their three Neighbourhood Housing Teams; East, North and South, and it was decided to target a larger response to give robust findings at the area level.

A total of 3,630 addresses were randomly selected, 1,210 from each Team. The initial mailing was despatched the week commencing 17th June 2013 and 2,651 reminders were posted three weeks later.

The final response rates and resultant margins of error were:

East	457 (38%)	+/- 3.9%
North	471 (39%)	+/- 4.1%
South	482 (40%)	+/- 4.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,410 (39%)</b>	<b>+/- 2.3%</b>

The questionnaire was designed as a bilingual tumble-turn booklet in English and Welsh, although none were returned using the Welsh part.

## Summary of Main Findings

- In general tenants are happy with the services provided by Flintshire County Council Housing Services.
- There are very few significant differences in performance between the Neighbourhood Housing Teams.
- In nearly all measures those in sheltered housing give higher satisfaction ratings than those in general needs accommodation.
- Bungalow dwellers are the happiest in general, followed by those living in flats and the least satisfied are those in houses.
- There are not many instances where the satisfaction ratings differ significantly between the genders.
- As a general rule, the older the tenant the happier they are with the services provided by the Council's Housing Services.
- The Housemark Core Questions to be submitted for benchmarking purposes all score well, although repairs and maintenance and responsiveness a little less well:
  - ❖ Core Question 1: ***Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Flintshire County Council Housing Services?***  
81% were very or fairly satisfied. 15% expressed some degree of dissatisfaction.
  - ❖ Core Question 2: ***How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall quality of your home?***  
83% were very or fairly satisfied. 14% dissatisfied.
  - ❖ Core Question 3: ***How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your neighbourhood as a place to live?***  
88% were very or fairly satisfied. Just 9% were dissatisfied.
  - ❖ Core Question 4: ***How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your rent provides value for money?***  
84% were very or fairly satisfied. 10% were fairly or very dissatisfied.
  - ❖ Core Question 5: ***How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that your service charges provide value for money?***  
80% were very or fairly satisfied. 9% were dissatisfied.
  - ❖ Core Question 6: ***Generally, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Flintshire County Council Housing Services deals with repairs and maintenance?***  
71% were very or fairly satisfied. And 24% were not.
  - ❖ Core Question 7: ***How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Flintshire County Council Housing Services listens to your views and acts upon them?***  
63% were very or fairly satisfied. 21% were dissatisfied with this performance.

## Respondent Profile

The demographic profile of respondents is outlined below.

### Age

16 – 24	2%
25 – 34	6%
35 – 44	8%
45 – 54	11%
55 – 64	16%
65+	58%

### Gender

Male	33%
Female	62%
Both (!)	5%

### Same gender as assigned at birth

Yes	88%
No	12%

### Sexuality

Heterosexual	85%
Gay	0%
Lesbian	0%
Bisexual	1%
Prefer not to say	14%

### Marital status

Single	49%
Married	36%
Civil partnership	2%
Widowed	11%
Divorced	2%

### Impairment

Yes	44%
No	51%
Prefer not to say	5%

### Nature of impairment

Mobility	71%
Dexterity	8%
Blind/visually impaired	11%
Deaf/hearing impaired	25%
Mental health	17%
Learning/cognitive	3%
Other	14%

### Nationality

British	41%
English	15%
Welsh	42%
Scottish	1%
Irish	1%
Other	0%

### Ethnicity

White British	99%
Other	1%

### Preferred language

Welsh	2%
English	98%

### Religion

Christian	77%
Other	2%
No religion	17%
Prefer not to say	4%

### Housing type

Bedsit	1%
Bungalow	34%
Flat	20%
House	44%
Maisonette	0%

### Neighbourhood Team

East	32%
North	33%
South	34%

### Stock type

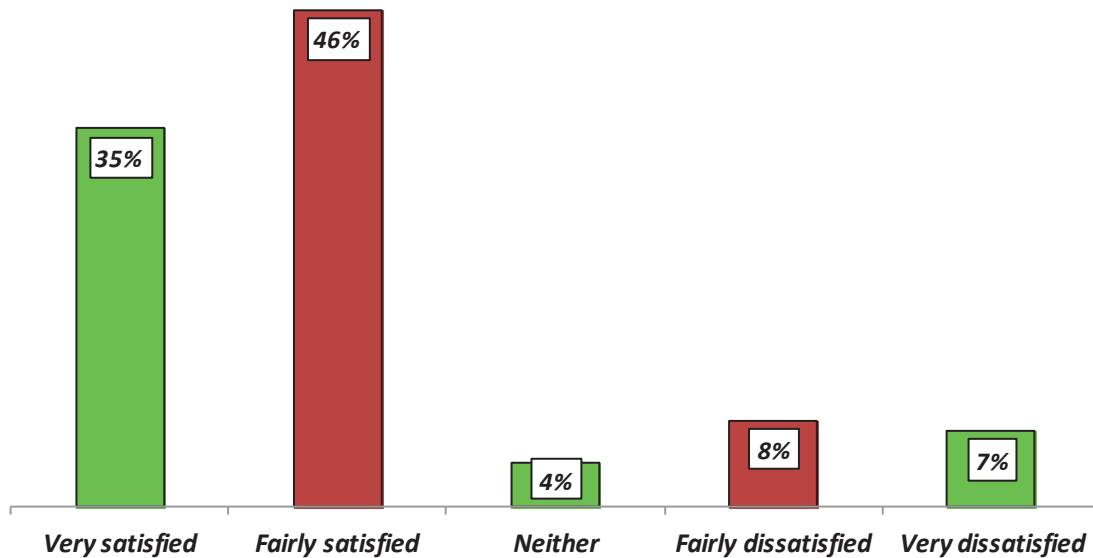
General needs	62%
Sheltered	38%



**Your Home**

Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Flintshire County Council Housing Services?

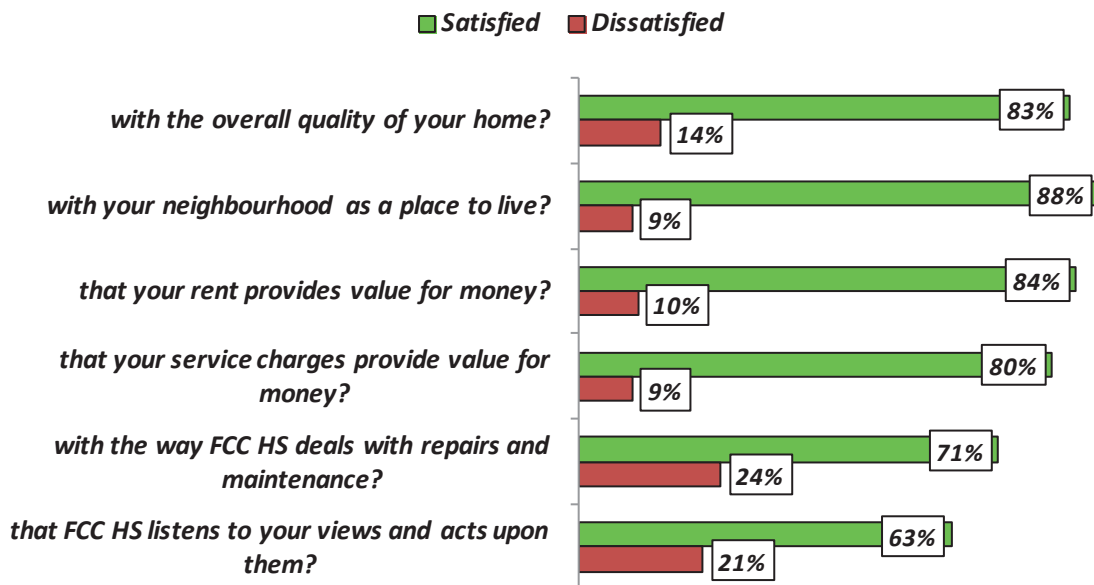
Housemark Core Question 1



- 81% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the overall service.
- There was hardly any difference in this performance between areas; East 79%, North 83%, South 81%.
- 89% of those in sheltered accommodation were satisfied compared to 76% of general needs.
- Occupants of bungalows (89%) and flats (86%) were happier than those in houses (73%).
- And the older the tenant, the more the satisfied they were.

**How satisfied or dissatisfied are you ...**

Housemark Core Questions 2 to 7



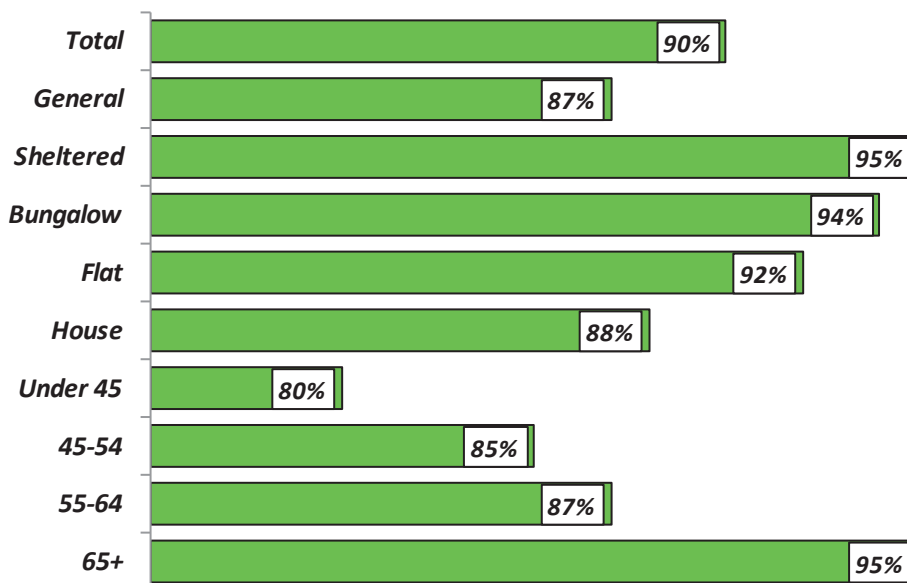
- Those happiest with the overall quality of their homes were those in sheltered housing, bungalows and flats and the older age groups.
- The only group where the proportion of those satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live fell below 80%, were those aged under 45 where the level fell to 74%.
- The younger age groups were also least happy with their rent levels, under 45s 67% and 45-54 year olds 73%. As well as with the value for money of the service charges, under 45s 60% and 45-54s 69%.
- The handling of repairs and maintenance produced the highest level of dissatisfaction within the core questions. 11% were fairly dissatisfied and 13% very dissatisfied. Again the younger age groups were more likely to express dissatisfaction, 50% of under 45s and 39% of 45-54 year olds. Those living in houses were also less satisfied than those in bungalows or flats.
- Just under two thirds of all respondents, 63%, were satisfied that FCC HS 'listens to your views and acts upon them'. Once again, this was driven by the younger age groups and those living in houses.

**How happy were you with the allocation process?**

- 82% were fairly or very happy and only 7% unhappy.
- Among 45-54 year olds the proportion of those happy with the process fell to 67% and it was highest for those in sheltered housing at 91% and in bungalows at 90%.

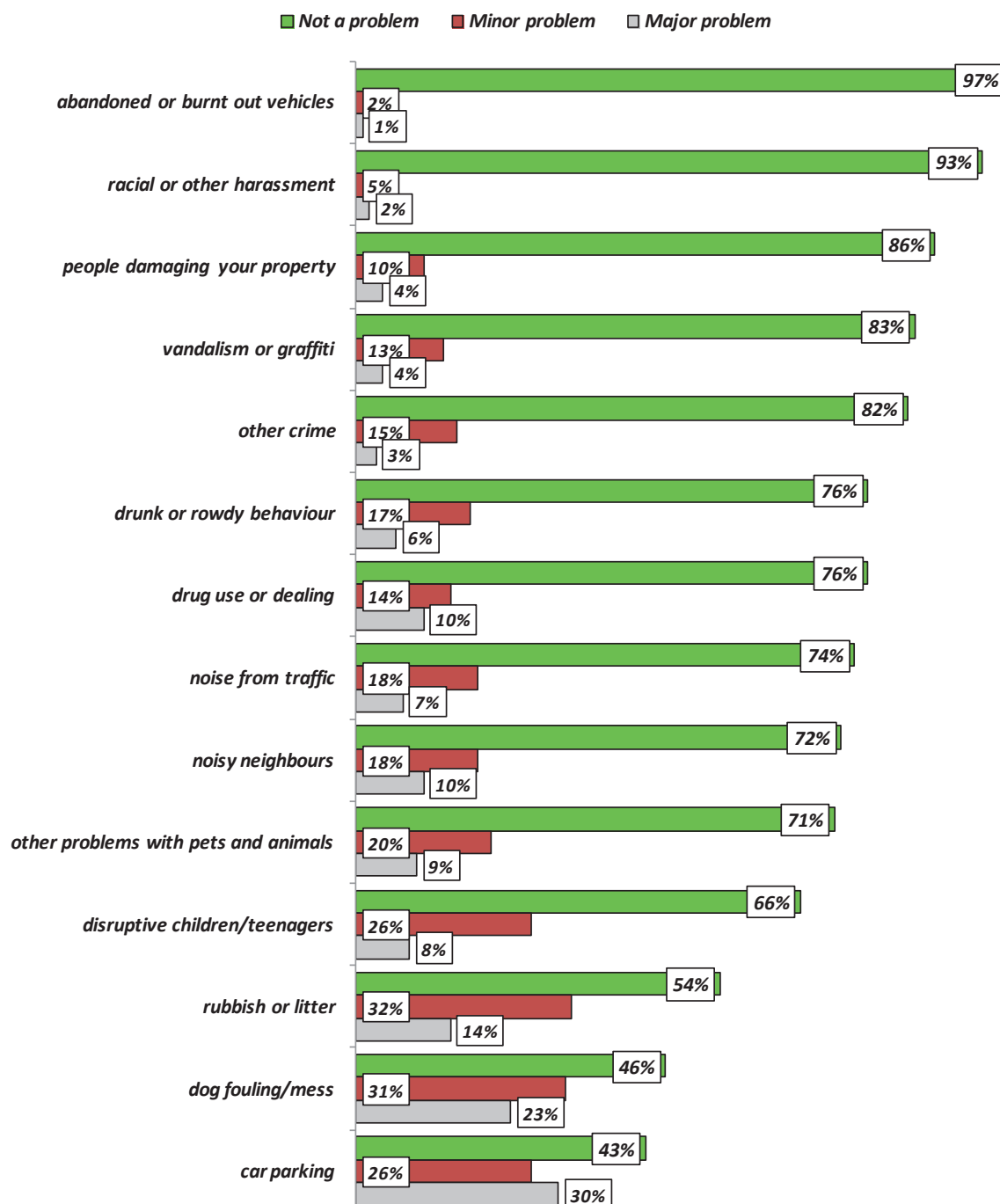
**Do you feel safe in your home?**

- 90% feel very or fairly safe in their home.



## Your Neighbourhood

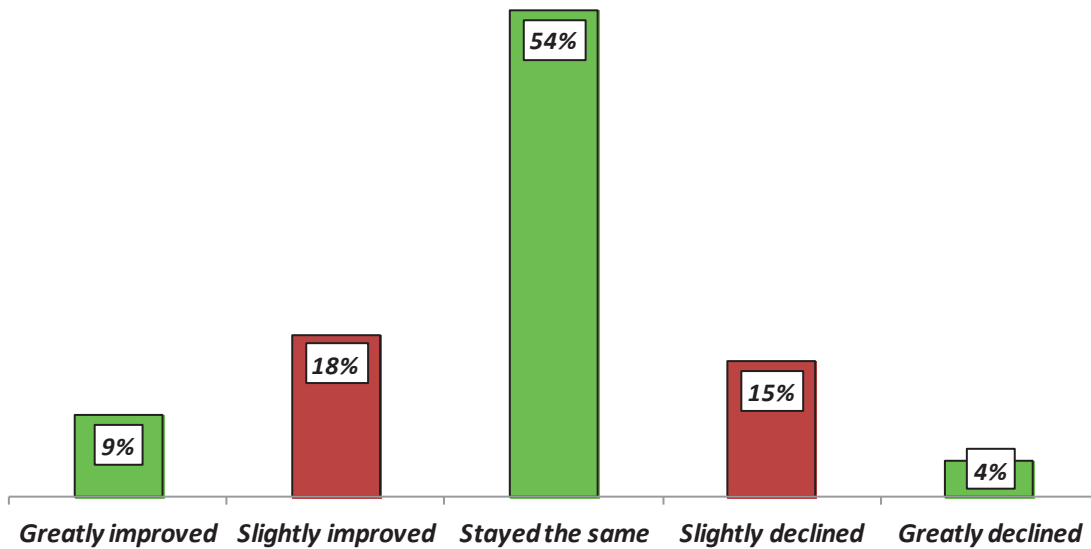
To what extent are any of the following a problem in your neighbourhood?



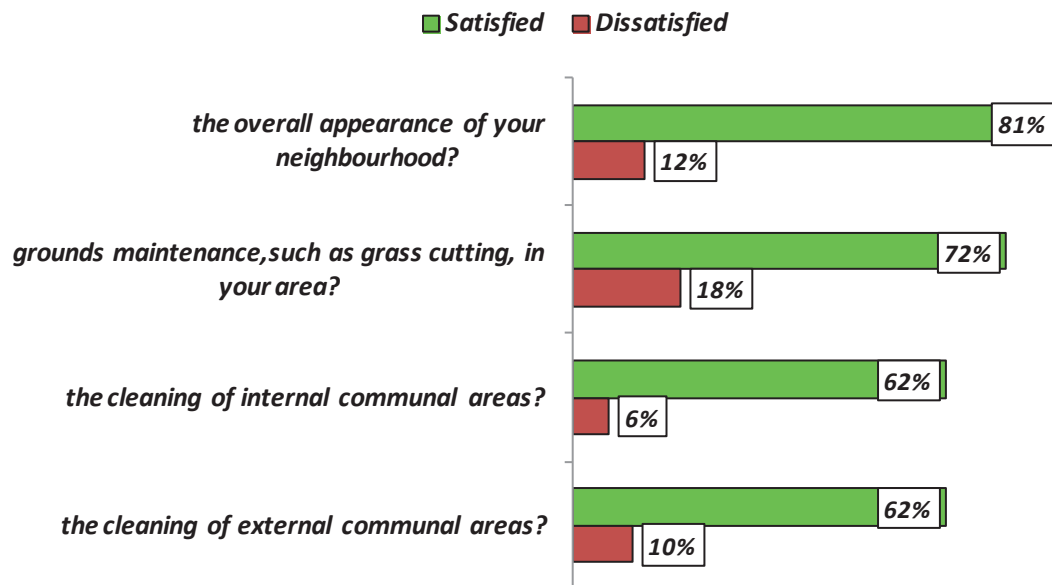
- The biggest issues for residents are car parking with 56% finding this to be a problem to some degree, dog fouling/mess 54% and rubbish/litter 46%.
- There is almost no problem with abandoned or burnt out vehicles or with racial or other harassment.
- For all issues those in sheltered housing were less likely to perceive a problem than those in general needs accommodation.
- For all issues those living in bungalows were less likely to perceive a problem than those living in houses.

- There are no huge differences between areas, but drug use or dealing is considered a problem to some degree by 31% in the East, 25% in the South and 18% in the North.

**In the last three years, would you say your neighbourhood has improved or declined?**



**How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with ...**



- Those living in sheltered housing and bungalows, as well as those aged over 65 were most likely to be satisfied with the appearance of their neighbourhood.
- Those in the North, living in a flat or aged over 65 were most likely to be satisfied with grounds maintenance.
- Tenants in the North, in sheltered housing or aged over 65 most appreciated the cleaning of both internal and external communal areas.

### Anti-Social Behaviour

**Have you reported anti-social behaviour to FCC HS in the last 12 months?**

- Only 8% of respondents state that they have reported anti-social behaviour although this rises to 13% for those aged under 45.

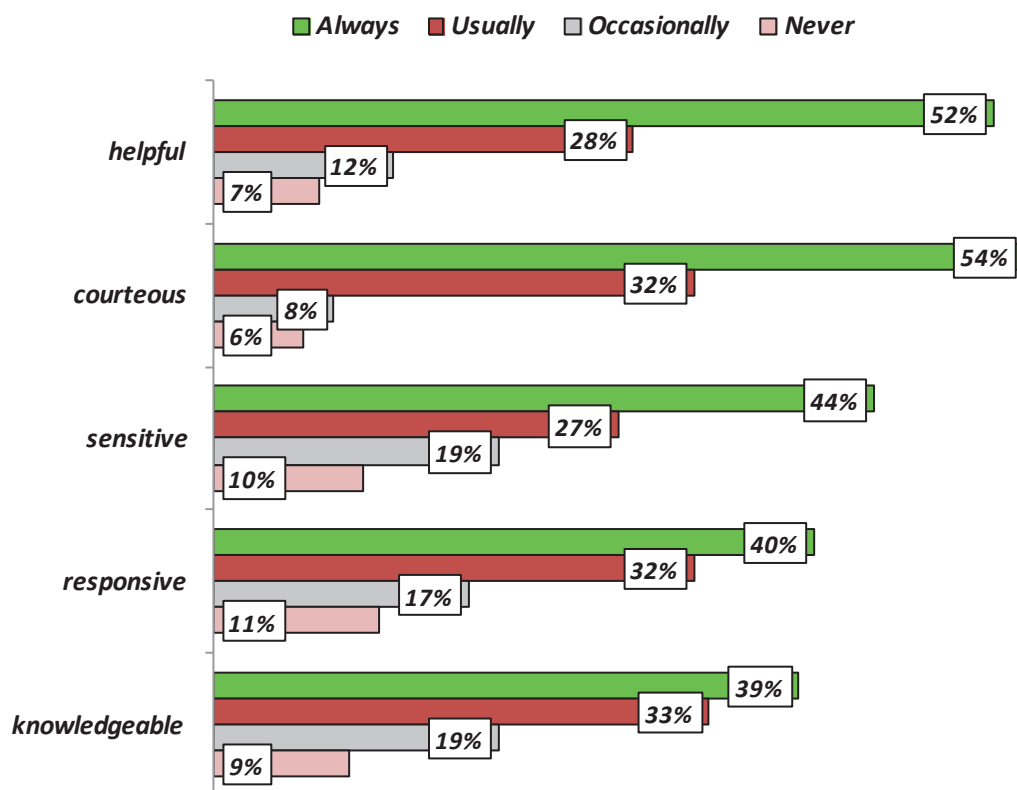
**At the beginning, how easy or difficult was it to contact a member of staff to report your anti-social behaviour complaint?**

- 53% found it easy to report and only 15% found it difficult.

**How would you rate how quickly you were initially interviewed about your complaint (either in person or over the phone)?**

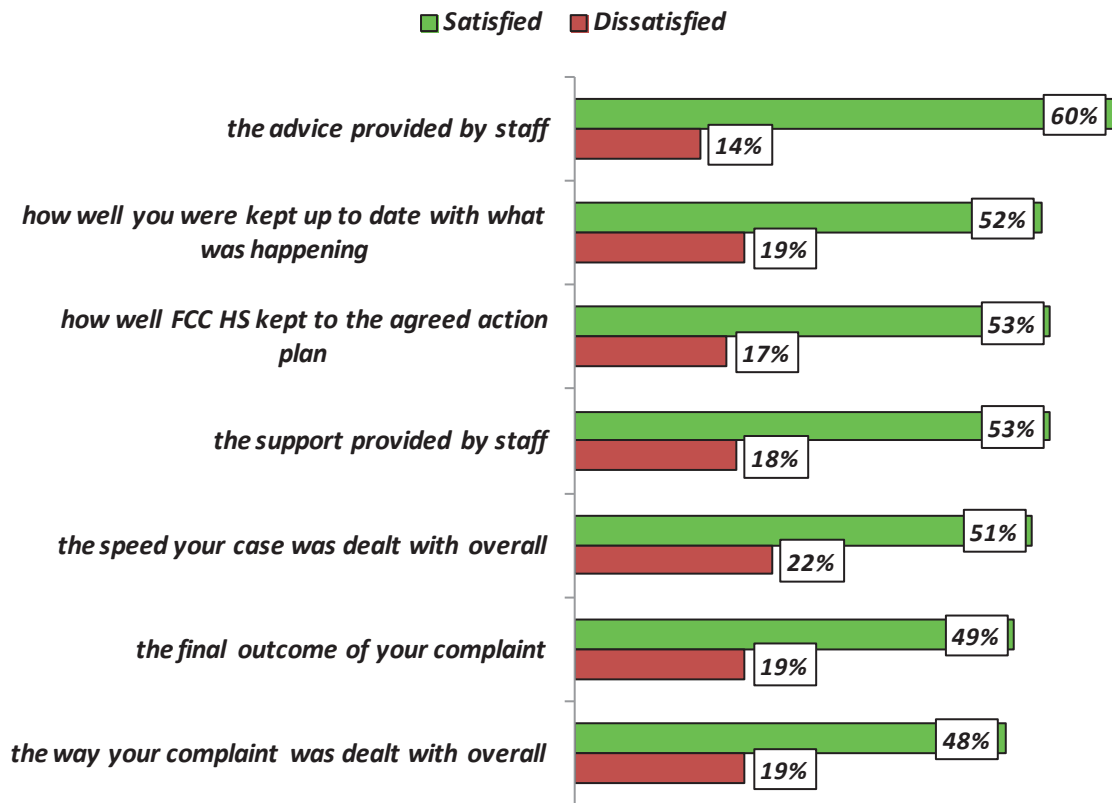
- 29% rated the process as good, 33% as fair and 16% as poor.
- General needs tenants were more likely (21%) to rate the process as poor compared to 9% of sheltered housing tenants.

**How would you describe the member(s) of staff dealing with your complaint?**



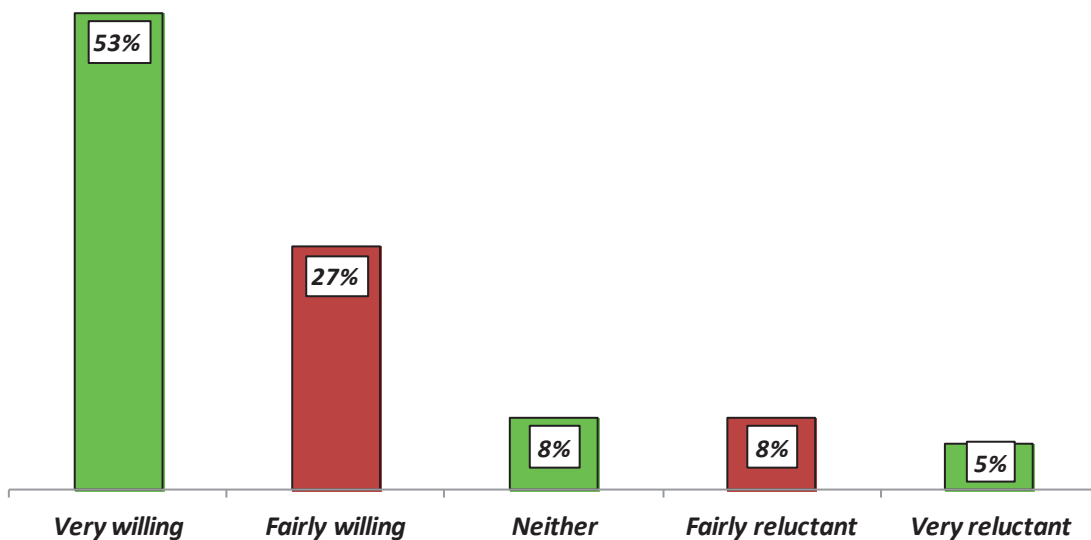
- The over 65s are much more likely to rate staff positively against all the specified attributes than the younger age groups.
- Similarly, sheltered housing tenants give better ratings than those in general needs.
- And those living in bungalows give more favourable ratings than those in flats, with house dwellers giving the lowest rating for each attribute.

**How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the following aspects of the anti-social behaviour service?**



- For all measures, those living in sheltered housing were more likely to express satisfaction than general needs tenants.
- Similarly, those in bungalows were most satisfied as were those aged 65 or over.
- There was not much difference in ratings between areas, although those in the East were slightly less happy with being kept up to date and the overall way the complaint was dealt with.

**How willing would you be to report any anti-social behaviour to FCC HS in the future?**



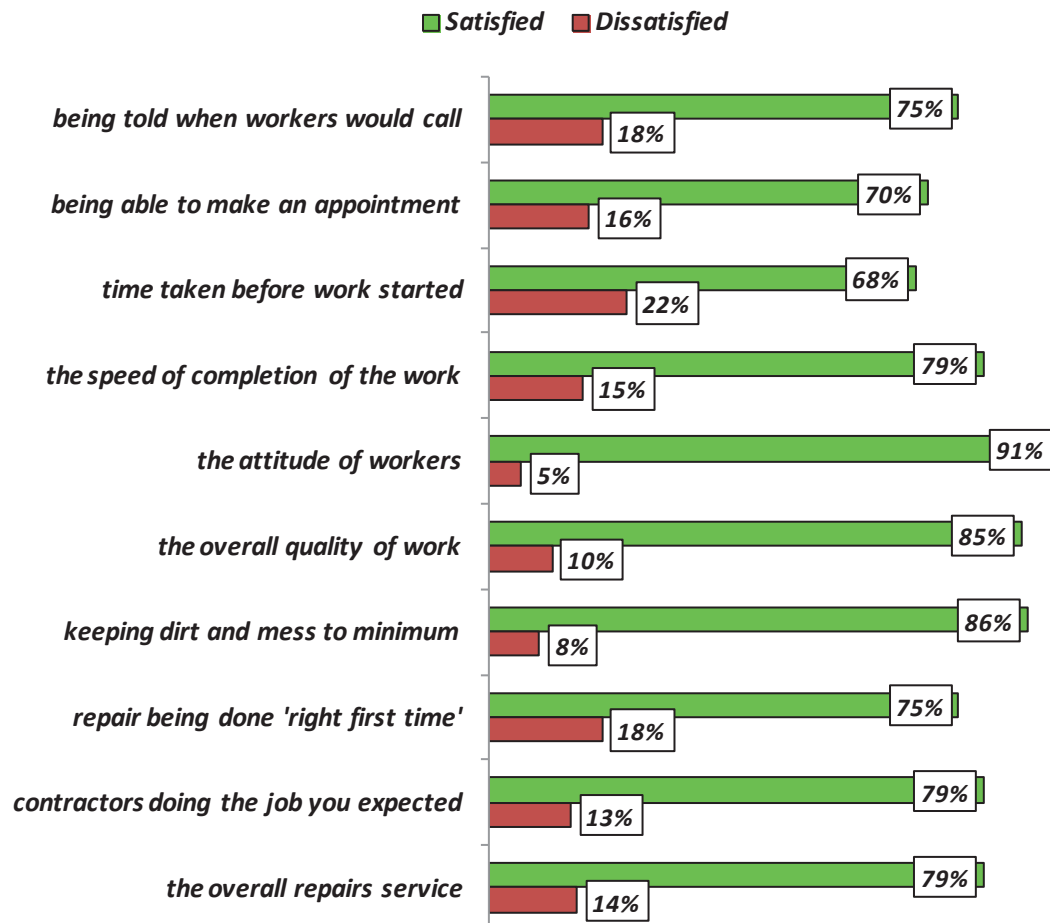
- 79% would be willing to report anti-social behaviour in the future, although this falls to 62% among those aged under 45.

## Repairs and Maintenance

### Have you had any repairs to your home in the last 12 months?

- 73% of respondents state that they have had a repair in the last year.

Thinking about the last repair completed, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the following?



- Across all measures of the repairs service those in sheltered housing were more likely to be satisfied.
- And those living in houses tended to be less satisfied.
- Whilst for all measures, the older tenants were happier than their younger counterparts.
- There was not much variation between areas, although those in the East were slightly happier with the speed of the completion of the work. And those in the North were marginally less satisfied with the contractors 'doing the job you expected'.

### Did the contractor show proof of identity?

- 65% said they did, 17% said not and 17% could not remember.
- The same demographic differences as above applied.

### If you had an appointment for this repair, was it kept?

- 71% stated that their appointment was kept.

### ***Service Standards***

#### **Are you aware of FCC HS publishes service standards?**

- Only 38% are aware of the published standards. This is slightly higher in sheltered housing (44%) than in general needs (35%), and among flat dwellers (47%).

#### **Are you aware of how to challenge FCC HS published service standards?**

- Even fewer, 27%, claim they know how to challenge the standards. This falls to just 14% for those aged under 45.



### Complaints

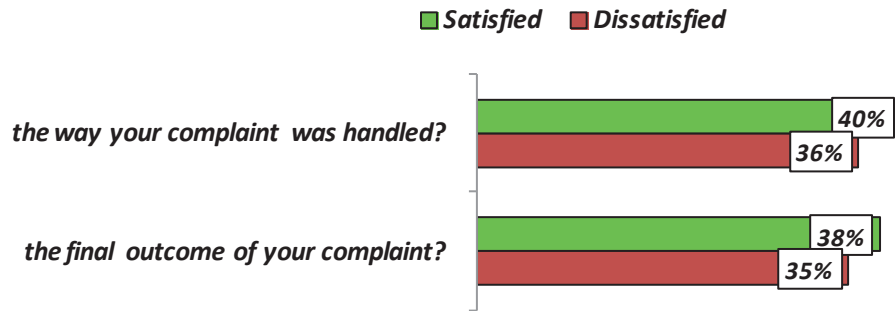
**Are you aware that FCC HS has a formal complaints procedure?**

- 49% are aware there is a complaints procedure.

**Have you made a complaint to FCC HS in the last 12 months?**

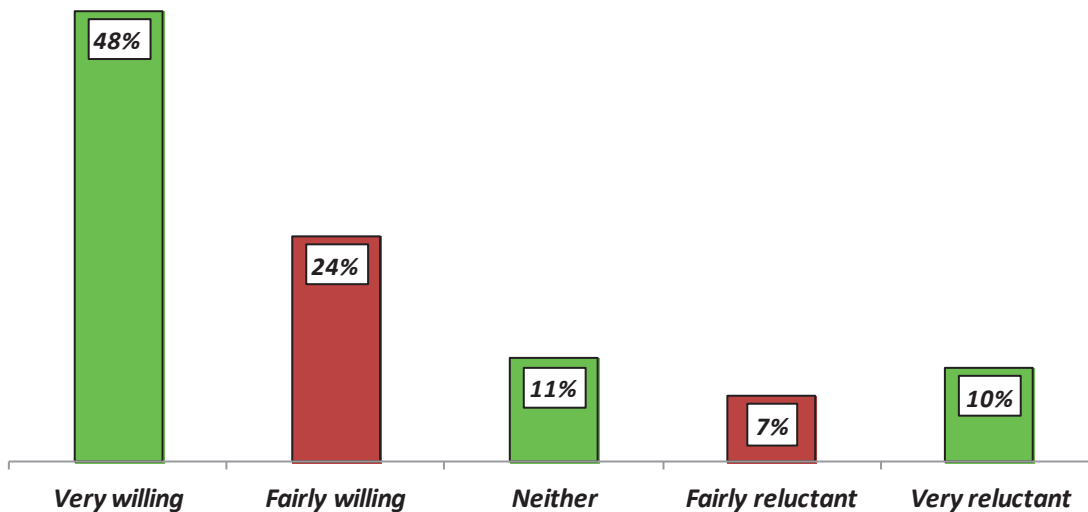
- And 14% of respondents have made a complaint in the last year.

**How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with ...**



- Those living in flats and those aged over 65 were more likely to be content with the complaint handling and outcome.

**How willing would you be to make a complaint to FCC HS in the future?**



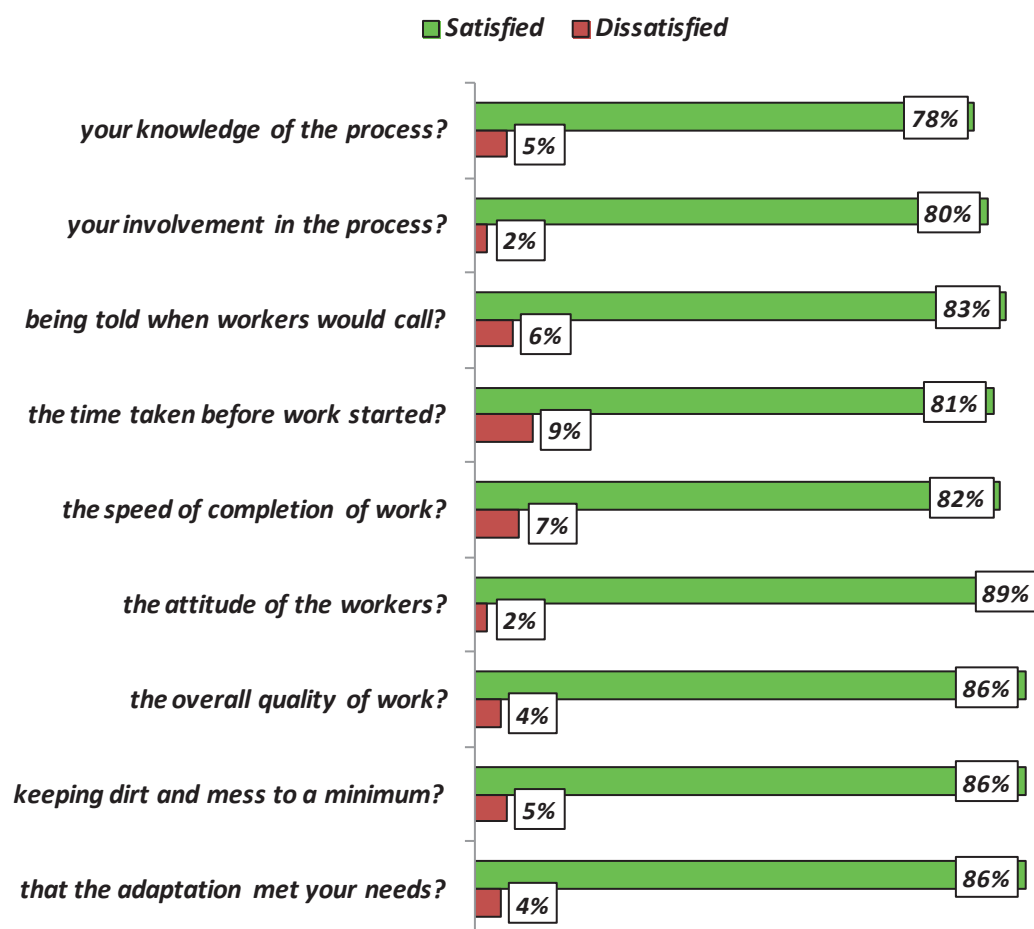
- Nearly three quarters (72%) of responders would be willing to make a complaint in the future. Those most reluctant were the under 45s at just 56%.

## Adaptations

### Have you had any adaptations to your home in the last 12 months?

- 15% of respondents have had an adaptation in their home in the last year.

Thinking about the adaptation work completed, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the following?



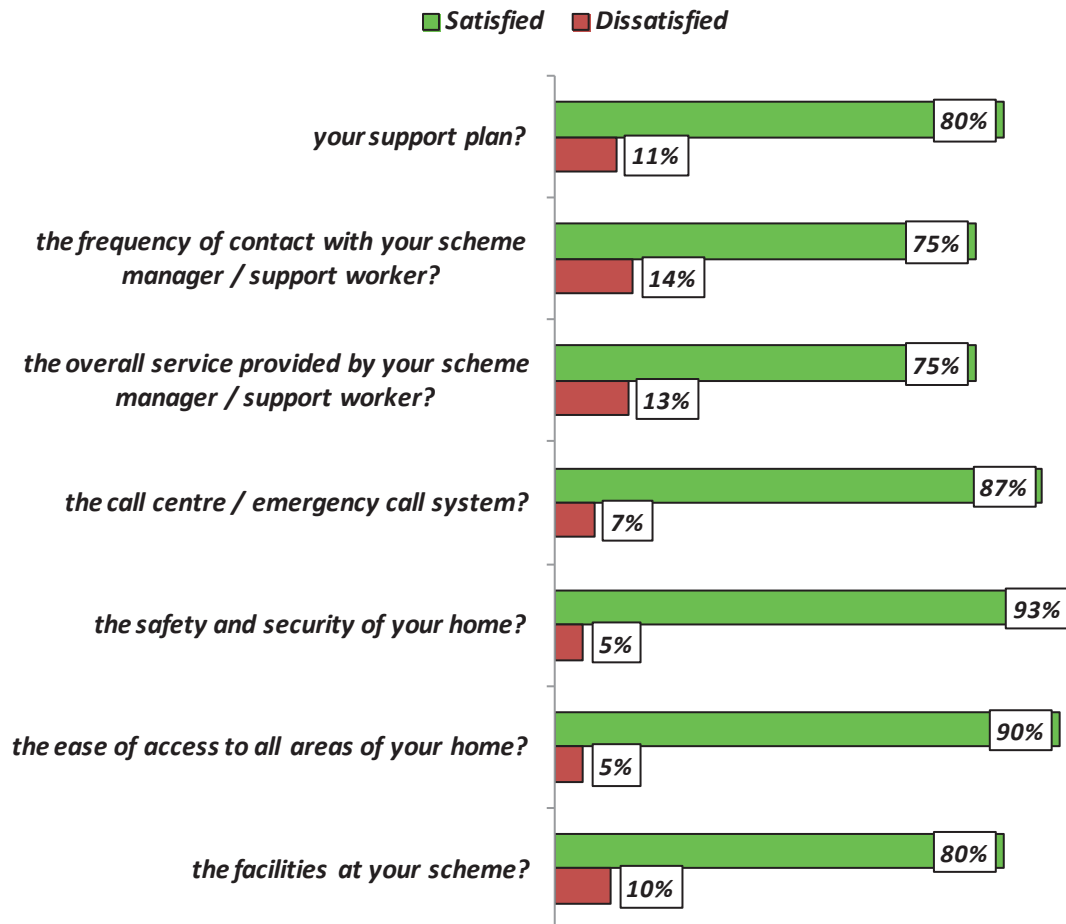
- There was a high level of satisfaction with all measures, with only *'your knowledge of the process once the Occupational Therapist had visited'* dipping just below 80%.
- The highest level of dissatisfaction was with *'time taken before work started'*, though even this was less than 10%.
- As with other topics, the over 65s are consistently more satisfied than their younger counterparts.

### Sheltered Accommodation

#### Do you live in sheltered accommodation?

- 39% of respondents claim to live in sheltered accommodation. Although, of these, 17% are classified as living in general needs housing.

Thinking about where you live, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following?



- Once again, high levels of satisfaction were reported across all measures.
- The two areas which fell below a score of 80% were both concerning the scheme manager / support worker. Though even these issues were rated satisfactory by three quarters of respondents.
- Within this sector, females tended to be more likely to express satisfaction than males.

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## FLINTSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**REPORT TO:** **HOUSING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**DATE:** **WEDNESDAY, 8<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY, 2014**

**REPORT BY:** **HOUSING AND LEARNING OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY FACILITATOR**

**SUBJECT:** **FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME**

### **1.00 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

1.01 To consider the Forward Work Programme of the Housing Overview & Scrutiny Committee.

### **2.00 BACKGROUND**

2.01 Items feed into a Committee's Forward Work Programme from a number of sources. Members can suggest topics for review by Overview & Scrutiny Committees, members of the public can suggest topics, items can be referred by the Cabinet for consultation purposes, or by County Council or Directors. Other possible items are identified from the Cabinet Work Programme and the Strategic Assessment of Risks & Challenges.

2.02 In identifying topics for future consideration, it is useful for a 'test of significance' to be applied. This can be achieved by asking a range of questions as follows:

1. Will the review contribute to the Council's priorities and/or objectives?
2. Are there issues of weak or poor performance?
3. How, where and why were the issues identified?
4. Do local communities think the issues are important and is there any evidence of this? Is there evidence of public dissatisfaction?
5. Is there new Government guidance or legislation?
6. Have inspections been carried out?
7. Is this area already the subject of an ongoing review?

### **3.00 CONSIDERATIONS**

3.01 Overview & Scrutiny presents a unique opportunity for Members to determine the Forward Work Programme of the Committees of which they are Members. By reviewing and prioritising the Forward Work Programme Members are able to ensure it is Member-led and includes the right issues. A copy of the Forward Work Programme is attached at Appendix 1 for Members' consideration which has been updated following the last meeting.

**4.00 RECOMMENDATIONS**

4.01 That the Committee considers the draft Forward Work Programme attached as Appendix 1 and approve/amend as necessary.

**5.00 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.01 None as a result of this report.

**6.00 ANTI POVERTY IMPACT**

6.01 None as a result of this report.

**7.00 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT**

7.01 None as a result of this report.

**8.00 EQUALITIES IMPACT**

8.01 None as a result of this report.

**9.00 PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS**

9.01 None as a result of this report.

**10.00 CONSULTATION REQUIRED**

10.01 N/A

**11.00 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN**

11.01 Publication of this report constitutes consultation.

**12.00 APPENDICES**

12.01 Appendix 1 – Forward Work Programme

**LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION ACT) 1985  
BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

None.

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**CURRENT FWP**

<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>	<b>Scrutiny Focus</b>	<b>Responsible / Contact Officer</b>	<b>Submission Deadline</b>
<b>21 January 2014</b>	<b>Housing Revenue Account (HRA)</b>	To receive and consider budget proposals and key service issues for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA)	Consultation	Director of Community Services / Head of Housing	
<b>5 February 2014</b>	<b>Collaborative Working within Housing Services</b>	To receive and consider current and future collaborative initiatives	Service Delivery	Head of Housing	<b>28 January 2014</b>
	<b>Sheltered Housing Improvement Project</b>	To consider progress following the review of sheltered accommodation.	Performance Monitoring	Head of Housing	
	<b>Update on the delivery of the Choices Document</b>	To receive an update report on the delivery of the Choices Document.	Service Delivery	Head of Housing	
<b>6 February, 2014</b> <b>Meeting to be held at Llys</b>	<b>Disabled Facilities Grant (and the use of removable 1 bedroom/bathroom pods)</b>	To inform Members of current performance in relation the administration of Disabled Facilities Grants.	Performance Monitoring / Service Delivery	Director of Community Services	

<b>Jasmine</b>	<b>Supporting People</b>	To update Members on the Supporting People Programme in Flintshire.	Service Delivery	Director of Community Services	
	<b>Telecare</b>	To update Members on the regional plan for Telecare / Telehealth.	Service Delivery	Director of Community Services	
	<b>Extra Care</b>	To update Members on the development of further Extra Care schemes in Flintshire.	Service Delivery	Director of Community Services	
<b>5 March 2014</b>	<b>Private Sector Housing Renewal</b>	To consider progress on the delivery of Flintshire's first Renewal Area, general service developments and county wide projects	Performance Monitoring	Head of Housing	<b>26 February 2014</b>
	<b>Universal Credit Implementation Update</b>	To receive a report on the implementation of Universal Credit	Service Delivery	Head of Housing	
<b>16 April 2014</b>	<b>2013/14 Quarter 3 Improvement Plan Monitoring Update</b>	To consider Q3 performance outturns for improvement targets	Performance Monitoring	Director of Community Services	<b>8 April 2014</b>



	<b>Update on the Repairs and Maintenance Service</b>	To monitor the approach and effectiveness of repairs and improvements to the Council's housing stock, to include void management.	Performance Monitoring	Head of Housing	
	<b>Welfare Reform</b>	To consider the impact that Welfare Reform is having on the Council, Council tenants and other residents in Flintshire and work the Council is undertaking to manage and mitigate the impact as far as possible.	Service Delivery	Head of Housing	
<b>21 May 2014</b>					<b>13 May 2014</b>
<b>10 June 2014</b>	<b>Quarterly Performance Reporting</b>	To consider Q4/Year End performance outturns for improvement targets	Performance Monitoring	Director of Community Services	<b>3 June, 2014</b>

**Joint meeting with the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee – date to be confirmed**

- Empty Homes
- Adopted/Un-adopted land and review of garage sites

**Items to be scheduled**

- Update on the implementation of SARTH (September, 2014)
- Update on Gas Servicing

**REGULAR ITEMS**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Item</b>	<b>Purpose of Report</b>	<b>Responsible / Contact Officer</b>
<b>Quarterly / Annual</b>	<b>Performance Reporting</b>	To consider performance outturns for improvement targets against directorate indicators.	Director of Community
<b>Six monthly</b>	<b>Update on Repairs and Improvements</b>	To enable Members to monitor the approach and effectiveness of repairs and improvements to the Council's housing stock, to include void management.	Head of Housing
<b>Quarterly</b>	<b>Sheltered Housing Improvement Project</b>	To receive progress with the review on sheltered accommodation.	Head of Housing
<b>Six monthly</b>	<b>Private Sector Housing Renewal</b>	To consider progress on the delivery of Flintshire's first Renewal Area, general service development and county wide projects.	Head of Housing
<b>Quarterly</b>	<b>Collaborative Working within Housing Services</b>	To receive and consider current and future collaborative initiatives.	Head of Housing

**STRATEGIC ASSESSMENT OF RISKS AND CHALLENGES**  
**TOPICS ALLOCATED TO OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEES**

**SECTION 1 - COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP**

Category	Risk Reference	Title	Committee
Strategic Partnerships	CL04	Affordable Housing	Housing

**SECTION 2 - COUNCIL DELIVERY**

Category	Risk Reference	Title	Committee
Environment	CD08	Shotton and Deeside Renewal Area	Housing
Housing	CD12a	Housing Strategy	C&H
	CD12b	Housing Management	C&H
	CD12c	Housing Repairs & Maintenance	C&H
	CD12d	Homelessness	C&H
	CD12e	Sheltered Housing	Housing
	CD14	Housing Ballot	C&H
	CD19	Gypsies and Travellers	C&H
Social Care	CD26	Disabled Facilities Grants	S&H and Housing (joint meetings)

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