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Annual Report 2013/14

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A full copy of our financial statement is available online. Go to:
www.derbyhomes.org/annualreport

Opening of Davies Close

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Welcome

The last year has been the start of a new era for Derby Homes. The new 'Partnership Agreement' with Derby City Council is now embedded and throughout this annual report we cover some of the major achievements against our joint targets.

Our new governance structure is now established and we have created a new Operational Board which focuses on service delivery and is where tenants make decisions on the things that affect them directly.

In June 2014 Bob Osler, the previous chair of Derby Homes passed away. This came as a great shock to us all at Derby Homes but we are determined to carry on with the great work that Bob believed so passionately in.

I am honoured to have the support of the board to take on the role of Chair and, like Bob, I also believe in the values of working in partnership. I am committed to supporting our tenants and leaseholders as we work through one of the most challenging periods ever faced by the public sector.

I live in Derby and have a background in education. I have seen for myself how the provision of good quality housing strengthens communities and in turn enriches life opportunities. After many years involvement with a locally based housing association I believe that the ALMO partnership option provides the Council and tenants with the best of both worlds.

Throughout this annual report you will see how our work over the last year is about building strong communities and opportunities for the future. I believe that social housing should be a home of choice, not a home of last resort.

I would like to thank my fellow board members and all of our staff and tenants of Derby Homes for working together and achieving these successes over the year.

Mike Ainsley
Chair of Derby Homes

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New Homes

Derby Homes and the Council have agreed an ambitious target of providing 700 new homes to be completed and occupied by April 2019. These will be provided by either building new homes, converting existing buildings or by purchase on the open market.

At the end of October 2014 we have already delivered 117 homes and have over 100 more on site at the time of publishing this report.

Rose Homes interior

Rose Homes

Rose Homes was formerly known as Oakvale House. This sheltered scheme had stood empty since 2009. Using a combination of our own workforce and small local contractors we have now remodelled the building and created 26 modern homes for people over the age of 50.

Rt Hon Margaret Beckett MP and Councillor Baggy Shanker, Cabinet Member for Governance and Transformation open Rose Homes

Rose Homes naming competition winners

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Local children at the opening

By working in partnership with Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service we installed a full sprinkler system during the renovation, this was the first scheme of its kind in the City and the start of a commitment to install sprinkler systems as standard in our new build and, where feasible, in our refurbishment schemes.

Derwent Ward

In April 2014 we completed building 17 new one and two bedroom bungalows at Stratford Road and Max Road. These bungalows were all targeted at older people who were under occupying family homes in the area. In turn we have now been able to re-let the family homes to get more households off our waiting list.

Max Road

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Davies Close

Jane Davies opening Davies Close

Work is progressing well in Osmaston. Through a partnership with OSCAR and Derby City Council we are working to complete a large scale site which will deliver 40 homes through the community led bid. Derby Homes is working with OSCAR to manage the homes as they are completed and transferred to Derby Homes.

The first homes were handed over in August 2014 and are already occupied. In October 2014 the bungalows within the scheme were completed and at the request of OSCAR the formal naming ceremony of 'Davies Close' took place to commemorate the work and commitment of Phil Davies, former Chief Executive of Derby Homes, who died in 2012.

New homes in Osmaston

OSCAR members with Derby Homes staff

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Langwith Close and Clarion Court

Langwith Close and Clarion Court were both purchased in late 2013. These properties were purchased on the open market and have provided **29 new homes**.

Clarion Court

Langwith Close

More new homes

At the current time we are also on site at Thanet Drive, Hastings Street, Maryland Road and Chesapeake Road. Like Rose Homes these developments are Derby Homes led, working with local sub-contractors.

Our apprentices will be actively involved on Derby Homes led developments. This will provide them with skills needed for new build schemes and give them a good understanding of how homes are built.

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Listening to you... Learning from you

Over the course of this year we have been examining how we interact with our customers. We looked at the traditional methods of holding meetings with customers and this showed us that the Housing Focus Groups were no longer effective and we were failing to reach enough tenants and leaseholders through these means.

Our new approach is to be more visible, more flexible and mobile by taking our conversation out onto the estates. Our objective is to reach more people and therefore collect views which are more representative of the customers we serve. Our team vehicle is fully branded and the slogan 'Listening to you, learning from you' is at the forefront of our work.

Our Customer Engagement Van on site

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This year we have attended prominent events across the city and also held local door step consultation events. So far we have engaged with and sought the views of over 861 customers.

We have also created a central location where all customer engagement and community development operates from. The 'Network Hub' is based at our London Road headquarters and is a place where all staff, customers and volunteers can drop in to get the support they need.

Talking to residents

Our Customer Engagement Van at Derby's Big One

In January 2014 Derby Homes was announced as finalists in 3 categories of the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) Awards. Although none of the finalists won outright it was a great achievement to have 4 nominations shortlisted and highlights the work undertaken by us with our tenants and leaseholders to make a difference in the community. The nominations were:

OSCAR Derby Online Communication
Digital Engagement Award

Imari Park Travellers Site
Equality & Diversity Award

Mick Vernon | Tenant of the Year
Gillian Young | Tenant of the Year

Sadly Gillian Young passed away in April 2014. Her passion for supporting tenants and improving the service they receive made a real impression on everyone who knew her.

Mick Vernon

'OSCAR Tracks'

Alongside refreshing the ways in which we work with our tenants we have continued to deliver some exciting community projects. In February 2014 the OSCAR Tracks project saw the official opening of the Osmaston BMX track. Working in partnership with Derby City Council and Enthusiasm the provision of the track is part of a five year project costing just over £100,000 which includes weekly BMX coaching sessions, volunteering opportunities and training to get young people ready for employment.

'OSCAR Tracks'

The idea initially came from young people in August 2011 when they were asked what they would like to see to improve their neighbourhood. From their drawings and extensive consultation the project started to take shape and a successful bid to the Lottery fund for £40,000 helped to make the wish a reality.

Oriel Court

Children and youngsters living in and around Oriel Court have also benefited from a make-over of their current play area. An exciting Halloween themed opening was held to celebrate the new facilities which were based on the ideas that the children themselves had put forward.

This work which cost £50,000 was funded by Derby Homes and the Veolia Environmental Trust who have awarded a grant of £25,000 through the Landfill Communities Fund.

Opening of Oriel Court play area

Oriel Court play area

Oriel Court

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Supporting our tenants through tough times

Derby Homes has taken a pro-active approach in supporting tenants to maximise their household income and sustain their tenancy.

Knowing your money matters, we have been:

- Working with Derby City Council to offer free and confidential appointments with specialist Money Advisors
- Holding weekly surgeries across the city to help tenants with claiming benefits, household budgeting and debt advice
- Running benefit take up campaigns using the radio and other forms of social media
- Holding local financial inclusion campaigns in our Customer Engagement van during September and October this year
- Helping tenants who are under occupying their property to move to smaller accommodation

- Working with other landlords such as Derwent Living and Metropolitan to hold our successful DMEX events which assist tenants in exchanging homes
- Installing solar panels which has helped households to reduce their energy bills
- Working with Erewash Credit Union to help our tenants secure low cost affordable loans, savings schemes and ethical banking products
- Making it easier for you to pay your rent by offering different ways for you to do just this

Supporting our residents

Facts and Figures

DHP* Claims and value 2012/13	**£350,000** DHP for Derby Homes tenants
Number of tenants who downsized	**190**
Number tenants who exchanged	**103**
Number of Derby Homes tenants referred to Derby Advice	**2134**

* DHP - Discretionary Housing Payments

Talking to our residents

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New Services

The Review of Housing Services presented not just challenges but opportunities for Derby Homes to manage new services.

In December 2013 Derby Homes took over provision of the support service at Milestone House. Milestone House is on Green Lane in the city centre and provides support and temporary accommodation for single homeless people in 34 self-contained flats.

In February and March 2014 the management of Housing Options, Homelessness and Advice Services also transferred to Derby Homes. The teams are now working alongside Derby Homes Allocations Team and we are already looking at how we can streamline processes to improve the customer experience and maximise our resources at a time of unprecedented demand.

Milestone House

This change has also presented the opportunity to review services at Milestone House and we are currently working with the Council to further develop our work with vulnerable people.

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Derby Advice has been aligned with our Income Management Team. We will retain the independence of Derby Advice and continue to deliver a service across all tenures. Introducing a joint management structure will allow more customer facing resources.

We are also working alongside the Council on the development stage of the new Extra Care facility which is being built on the former site of the Bath Street Mills. Due for completion in January 2016, we are preparing for the future housing management responsibility.

During 2013-14 we introduced an Intensive Housing Management service, providing additional help for tenants struggling to maintain their tenancies. At the end of June we had 288 tenants being assisted through this scheme. Our Intensive Housing Management Team are also providing additional help for tenants with a range of Care and Support needs, strengthening relationships with Care Providers and the Council's Social Care teams.

Artist Impression of the new Extra Care facility on Bath Street

We are also working closely with colleagues within the Council to implement a Housing Pathway for people with complex disabilities. This is helping to support people who want to move out of residential care settings to live more independently in the community.

Investing in the next generation

The Derby Homes Apprenticeship Scheme is now 18 months old and we have 38 young people employed as either Repairs Apprentices or Customer Service Apprentices.

Some of the Repairs Apprentices are now in their second year progressing well both in the workplace and in their learning with Derby College.

Our Apprentices at work

Our Apprentices at work

As well as delivering the day job our team have also taken part in some community based projects.

In March 2014 as part of National Apprenticeship Week, Derby Homes apprentices worked alongside Derby College and some contractor partners and used their skills in a 'real' environment by renovating the kitchen at Sinfin Moor Community Church.

Not only was this a great opportunity to test out their new skills it was an important example of community collaboration for an excellent cause.

Our Apprentices at Sinfin Moor Church

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Our Apprentices at Sinfin Moor Church

Our Apprentices ready for the trip to France

In October 2014 another group of our apprentices were selected to join Derby College on a trip to France to work on an Eco-house project. This is another example of the trust and confidence Derby College has in our young people taking on the role of ambassadors for the City.

Our Customer Service Apprentices are also progressing well in their roles in various teams. The skills they are learning are helping them to secure permanent employment.

Our Apprentices in the community

Our Customer Service Apprentices

Value for money

During the year we have relocated our headquarters to the London Road depot. As well as the benefit of accommodating all of our management team on one site the move also delivers savings in excess of £100,000 a year.

The move of some of our support services to the Council was completed in December 2013. This has increased the resilience of these services and provides support and additional income for the Council at a time of unprecedented financial pressures.

Through a partnership approach we have also identified a further £350,000 of savings through service improvements.

Within our Repairs Team we have continued to increase productivity, following the introduction of electronic job tickets,

The Mill, London Road depot

improved stock control and the reduction in the use of agency staff and sub-contractors we have achieved an annual saving in the region of £250,000. This year we completed the programme to renew all of our repair vehicles, moving to purchase rather than fleet hire, this change saves £100,000 a year.

In October 2014 we entered into a 10 year partnership with Grafton GB Ltd (Buildbase) to supply our building materials. By combining a number of contracts we anticipate significant savings, further improvements to our productivity and a new discount scheme which our tenants and leaseholders can benefit from.

Buildbase, Parcel Terrace

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Governance

Our new governance arrangements have been operating for a year. In June 2014 the first meeting of the new Operational Board was held. Replacing the former City Board the focus is for tenants and leaseholders to hold responsibility for agreeing all matters which are service related.

The Operational Board comprises of 8 tenants and 1 leaseholder. The members have been selected through a recruitment process which does not focus on geographic representation but on selecting individuals with the skills, experience and commitment to ensure we deliver excellent services within a value for money framework. The Operational Board has already made decisions which include proposals to change the conditions of tenancy, management arrangements on partnership working and a review of customer access and service opening hours.

Operational Board

A Derby Homes Board meeting

Board expenses 2013/2014

The information in the table shows the full year's payments from April 2013 to March 2014, including any travel expenses claimed.

Board Member	Date Resigned	Travel	Payroll	Member's Total
M Ainsley		0	0	0
A Holme	28 November 2013	72	0	72
I MacDonald		0	3,200	3,200
M Menzies	24 September 2013	0	0	0
T Ndlovu	28 November 2013	0	0	0
A G S Osler		0	8,700	8,700
S Perry	23 December 2013	0	0	0
D Rees		0	4,000	4,000
F Walker		1,610	0	1,610
K Whitehead	25 July 2013	0	0	0
TOTAL		**1,682**	**15,900**	**17,582**

Payment is a fixed annual sum linked to carrying out specific duties, obligations and time commitment, as set out in the individual Board Member's Service Agreement. Councillor Board Members do not receive payments in respect of their Board Member duties as they already receive an allowance from the Council and have been excluded from the table opposite.

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Our performance

During 2013/14 the changes brought in through the Welfare Reform Act meant that we faced some significant challenges. The introduction of the under-occupation charges resulted in over 1200 of our tenants having their housing benefit reduced. This increased the rent we needed to collect by over £1M. Through working with our tenants we managed this impact and collected over 99% of the total rent due which improved on our already excellent performance. We also handled more empty homes during the year as tenants sought smaller accommodation, we choose to accept a slightly higher re-let time rather than increase our workforce, and costs, to deal with this increase*.

Overall, during a difficult period we have managed to maintain excellent performance and continue to deliver services in a cost effective way.

Relet times

Average time taken to relet local authority housing (days)

In 2013/14 we let **1323** properties in an average of **24.12** days*.

Year	Average Time taken to Relet	Target
2012/13	20.31	22.50
2013/14	24.12	23.00

Anti Social Behaviour

81%

of respondents were satisfied with the outcome of the ASB case

82%

of respondents were satisfied with the way their case was handled

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Income Management

We collected **99.12%** of the rent due in **2013/14**.

Year	Rent collected as a % of rent due (includes arrears brought forward)	Target
2012/13	98.25%	99.0%
2013/14	99.12%	96.5%

Gas safety

This once again is superb performance by the Gas Team and continues our 100% compliance with our legal obligations under the Gas Safety (Installation & Use) Regulations 1998.

100%

Year	% of properties with CP12 Gas Safety certificate	Target
2012/13	100%	100%
2013/14	100%	100%

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Satisfaction with the Customer Service Team

Year	% satisfied with the Customer Service Team	Target
2012/13	96.6%	94%
2013/14	97.5%	95%

97.5% of the **176,309** calls handled were **satisfied** with the Customer Service Team.

Repairs

99.4% of tenants were satisfied with the **34,172** repairs we completed in **2013/14**.

99.8% of the **12,782** emergency and urgent repairs were completed within timescale.

	% repairs completed within timescale
% of emergency repairs carried out (attend and make safe within 2 hours and complete in 24hrs)	100.0%
% of very urgent repair (complete within 24 hours)	99.7%
% of urgent repairs completed within 5 working days	99.8%

Over to you

This report should give you a good idea of how we've done over the last year. It's important that we're open and transparent about this and that we tell you when we haven't quite hit our targets or where we need to do more.

If you want more detail than we've given you here, you can access full board reports on our performance and services by going to **www.derbyhomes.org/derby-homes-board.**

This report is for you. If you have any comments or ways in which we can improve it please let us know by emailing, calling or through Facebook or Twitter.

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