

FAREHAM

BOROUGH COUNCIL

Report to Housing Tenancy Board

Date **28 October 2013**

Report of: **Director of Community**

Subject: **QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT FOR
TENANCY SERVICES**

SUMMARY

This report sets out Performance Monitoring data for Tenancy Services covering Rent Arrears and Repossessions, Void Property Management including Void Rent Loss, Estate Inspections and Satisfaction Levels for Estate Services, Anti-Social Behaviour, Tenant Consultation and Involvement.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board notes and scrutinises the information contained within the report.

INTRODUCTION

1. This report for Board members' information and review provides information across a range of housing management services, including rent arrears, empty homes, anti-social behaviour, estate management and tenant involvement.

CURRENT TENANT ARREARS

2. As at 6 October 2013 the level of current tenant arrears stood at £299,664.

Period	Arrears Total (£)	Arrears as % of Collectable Debit	Arrears compared to previous period	Arrears compared to similar period in previous year
Jul – Sept 2013	299,664	2.70	↑	↑

3. There has been an increase in current tenant arrears of £13,751 since the last quarter's report. This follows trends from previous years where during summer months there generally is an increase in arrears.
4. A breakdown of current tenant arrears by patch area is shown in the table below:

Arrears Banding (£)	Portchester & SW Fareham	North Fareham	Stubbington & SE Fareham	Western Wards
< 100	£2686.70 (62 cases)	£2437.74 (56 cases)	£1740.37 (42 cases)	£2700.31 (65 cases)
100 - 249	£8059.53 (49 cases)	£6820.35 (43 cases)	£6126.60 (38 cases)	£3048.78 (18 cases)
250 - 499	£8482.55 (24 cases)	£10834.18 (30 cases)	£10980.89 (32 cases)	£7799.58 (21 cases)
500 - 999	£12158.50 (16 cases)	£18466.22 (26 cases)	£16949.72 (23 cases)	£10018.70 (14 cases)
1000 - 1999	£25306.82 (18 cases)	£23492.18 (17 cases)	£20857.79 (15 cases)	£18863.08 (14 cases)
➤ 2000	£8679.14 (8 cases)	£23025.45 (7 cases)	£11495.65 (6 cases)	£23075.73 (8 cases)
Total	£77533.81 (177 cases)	£85076.12 (179 cases)	£71547.96 (156 cases)	£65506.18 (140 cases)

RENT ARREARS RECOVERY ACTION

5. The table below provides Board members with information about legal action taken to recover rent arrears

Period	Notices Seeking Possession / Notices to Quit Served	Comparison to previous period	No. of Possession hearings at court	Comparison to previous period
Jul – Sept 2013	30	↑	13	↔

6. The possession hearings at court resulted in 1 outright possession, 2 adjourned on terms, 2 adjourned for 28 days to allow claims for Housing Benefit to be investigated, and 8 suspended possession orders.
7. Since the last meeting of the Board there has been 1 eviction.

EMPTY HOMES – RELETTING TIMES AND RENT LOSS

8. The table below provides Board members with information on the average time taken to relet the Council's empty homes from April to September 2013. The target time to relet homes is less than 21 days.
9. Properties deemed "hard to let" have been excluded from the relet times shown below.

Period	Relet Times (Calendar Days)	Comparison to previous period	Comparison to similar period in previous year
April to Sept 2013			
General Purpose	25.09	↓	↑
Sheltered	27.74	↑	↓
General Purpose and Sheltered	25.75	↓	↓

10. At the end of September 2013, there were 26 empty properties – of which 11 were general needs and 15 were sheltered properties.
11. In terms of rent loss due to empty homes, the current level of rent loss as a percentage of the annual rent debit is 1.09%. In financial terms this is equivalent to £56,776.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

12. The table below provides Board members with incidents of anti-social behaviour (ASB). The main complaint of ASB was due to noise nuisance caused by tenants and/or their visitors whilst consuming alcohol. Currently there are 5 tenants on an Acceptable Behaviour Contract and 1 tenant subject to possession proceedings.

Period	Number of reported incidents	Comparison to previous quarter	No. of serious cases	Comparison to similar period in previous year
Jul – Sept 2013	8	↑	2	↔

ESTATE MANAGEMENT

13. In the period July to September 2013 inclusive, 15 estate inspections were carried out. Details of the sites visited, main issues identified and outcomes are shown below:

Areas Inspected	Issues Identified & Action Taken	Outcomes
Alexander Grove (12/07/2013)	Garages requiring repairs	Privately-owned garage has received advice for repairs.
Coniston Walk (26/07/2013)	No litter/dog waste bin	Bin ordered through Streetscene
Dolphin Court (09/08/2013)	Weeds growing through drying area	Email to Streetscene and work now complete
Northways & Westways (23/08/2013)	Blocked guttering to three properties in Northways	Reported to Responsive Repairs and an order for the clearance has been placed
Bishopsfield Road flats and maisonettes (12/07/2013)	Poor window cleaning to communal areas.	Reported to Monitoring Officer and clean has now taken place
Linden Lea / Robinson Court (16/08/2013)	No issues. Cleaning and Grounds Maintenance good	N/A
Garden Court and Newtown flats (12/09/2013)	Condition of rear boundary fence deteriorating	Building Services to inspect and repair
Frosthole Close (06/08/2013)	Blocked guttering and broken boundary fencing	Building Services have cleared the guttering and are due to inspect the fence
Gaza House, Arras House and Nashe Way (27/09/2013)	Uneven paved area outside Gaza House. Rubbish outside property in Arras House	Building Services to survey paved area. Rubbish removed outside Arras House property and tenant to be invoiced.

Nashe House, Hillson House, Hill Walk & Park Walk (27/09/2013)	Bins not put away by tenants at Nashe House and recycling bins contaminated	Letter to all residents stating bins must be put back in bin area and recycling leaflets sent to the whole block.
Lodge Road flats (15/07/2013)	No issues. Grassed areas all cut and tidy. All drying and refuse areas clean and tidy.	N/A
Ransome Close (27/08/2013)	Build-up of weeds and litter in the walkways off Ransome Close	Streetscene to carry out a one-off tidy to these areas
Bellfield (27/08/2013)	No issues. No fly-tipping and all grounds maintenance work carried out to a satisfactory standard.	N/A
Addison Road (03/09/2013)	Overgrown garden and poor line-marking in parking bays	Garden belongs to an abandoned property which is being repossessed in October 2013. Hampshire Highways advised of the line-marking and date for work awaited.
St Michael's Road (10/09/2013)	Overgrown conifers at rear of flats.	Quotes being obtained and trees to be reduced in height.

14. The communal areas of the Council's blocks of flats and maisonettes are cleaned on a weekly basis. Windows to the communal areas and individual units within sheltered housing blocks are cleaned on a 3-6 monthly basis. Feed-back is obtained from tenant and leaseholder representatives and housing staff and collated to give an overall satisfaction rate.

15. Quarterly performance meetings are held with the service provider and the last meeting was held on 7 August 2013.

16. The table below provides Board members with information on the level of satisfaction for the last quarter, together with information on how this compared with the previous quarter and the overall satisfaction for the year to date. The table also shows the percentage of all blocks where feed-back was obtained.

Period	Block Cleaning Satisfaction %	Comparison to previous quarter	Feed-Back Sample Size %	Overall % satisfaction for the year to date
Jul – Sept 2013	75	↑	69	73

17. The unsatisfactory responses were mainly regarding poor window cleaning and stairwells not cleaning properly. These issues have been a problem for a while but improvements have been seen in the past couple of months through liaison with the service provider.
18. The external areas around housing blocks and general needs amenity areas, including garage service areas are maintained by the Council's Streetscene team who provide the grounds maintenance service. The service includes grass-cutting, weed-treatment, litter-picking and sweeping of hard surfaces. Feedback is obtained from tenant and leaseholder representatives and housing staff and is collated to give an overall % satisfaction rate.
19. Quarterly performance meetings are held with the service provider and the last meeting was held on 12 September 2013.
20. The table below provides Board members with information on the level of satisfaction for the last quarter together with further information on how this compared with the previous quarter and the overall satisfaction rate for the year to date. The table also shows the percentage of all blocks where feedback was obtained.

Period	Grounds Maintenance Satisfaction %	Comparison to previous quarter	Feedback sample size %	Overall % Satisfaction for year to date
Jul – Sept 2013	72	↔	54	72

21. The unsatisfactory responses were generally about grass-cutting with comments that the grass is not blown or swept off paths. This issue have been brought to the attention of the service provider.

TENANT INVOLVEMENT

22. Tenant and leaseholder representatives have attended the following events since the last meeting of the Housing tenancy Board:

Date	Event	Purpose
July 2013	TSG meeting	To discuss and review the gas service provided
July 2013	MITIE meeting	To discuss and review the kitchen and bathroom modernisation work carried out
July 2013	Editorial Panel meeting	To help produce the newsletter and service user leaflets

August 2013	OCS meeting	To discuss and review the communal cleaning contract
August 2013	Tenant Forum meeting	To discuss general housing service issues To raise awareness of housing matters
August 2013	Leaseholder Forum	To discuss leaseholder issues To raise awareness of leaseholder matter
September 2013	Comserv meeting	To discuss and review the repairs service provided
September 2013	Sheltered Housing Forum	To discuss sheltered housing service issues

23. The main agenda items discussed at the last Tenants' Forum, Sheltered Housing Forum and Leaseholder Forum are outlined below:

TENANTS FORUM

- Presentation and discussion regarding the role of the Area Housing Estates Officer
- New Tenancy Agreement

SHELTERED HOUSING FORUM

- Sheltered Housing Review
- Support Services for Older Persons in the Community

LEASEHOLDER FORUM

- Estate Improvements
- Service charges

RISK ASSESSMENT

24. There are no significant risk considerations in relation to this report

CONCLUSION

25. This report has provided Board members with performance monitoring information relating to Tenancy Services. Board members are asked to note performance and put forward any suggestions that might improve the content and format of future performance monitoring reports.

Background Papers: None

Reference Papers: Minutes of Housing Tenancy Board 29 July 2013

Enquiries:

For further information on this report please contact Jane Cresdee. (Ext 4483)