

Company Number 05564649  
A Company Limited by Guarantee  
Registered in England

**St Leger Homes of Doncaster Limited**

**EAST AREA BOARD MEETING  
MONDAY 12 MAY 2008**

**Present**

Rodger Haldenby (Chair), Cllr Bill Mordue, James Parkin, Cllr Moira Hood, Robert Allen, Lesley Gilfedder, Mavis Pearson Cllr Ken Keegan, and Vic Lowe.

**In Attendance**

Paul Hopkinson (Director of Property Services), Linda Milan (Company Secretary), Dave Abbott (Assistant Director for Estate Management), Shauna Brady (Personal Assistant), Lynette Jenkins (Performance Analyst) and Margaret Butler (Performance Analyst)

	<b>ACTION</b>
<b>1. Apologies and Quorum</b>	
1.1 Apologies were received from Cllr Nigel Hodges.	
1.2 It was noted that a quorum was present. Rodger Haldenby chaired the meeting.	
<b>2. Declarations of Interest by Area Board Members</b>	
2.1 There were no declarations of interest.	
<b>3. Minutes of previous meeting held on 10 March 2008</b>	
3.1 The minutes of the East Area Board meeting held on 10 March 2008 were agreed as a correct record.	
<b>4. Matters arising from previous minutes held on 10 March 2008</b>	
<b>4.1 From item – 5.6 Performance Monitoring Information</b>	
PH reported that he will provide a presentation to the next Joint Area Board meeting with regards to accessing properties to carry out Gas Servicing.	<b>PH/SA</b>
<b>4.2 From item – 5.7 Performance Monitoring Information</b>	
PH reported that a report had been received from DMBC commenting that the intermittent fault with VIP was due to capacity issues, with the amount of lines not being adequate. No firm evidence had been provided to back this up, therefore the	

report author had been contacted and asked to provide a more evidence based solution.

**4.3 From item – 5.8 Performance Monitoring Information**

PH reported that 2 partners have been experiencing problems with delivery of the Programme. One of these contractors, working on the windows and doors programme is due to complete their contract in July and Paul Elliott is presently at an away day with the other to explore improved ways of working and lessons learned, he will provide a presentation to the next meeting.

PE

**4.4 From item – 10.1 Any other Business/Items for next meeting**

PH reported that a Member had queried if the installed warm air heating systems will be removed from the properties in Cantley 6 during the Decent Homes investment works which will include a new form of heating.

Our partner is carrying out an options appraisal with regards to the heating systems, as there are several options available. When this information is available the tenants will be consulted with as a group.

**5. Performance Monitoring Information**

5.1 This report was to present the East Area Board with performance information for February 2008 and March 2008.

5.2 Questions had been received from the Chair in advance of the meeting, the Performance Analyst read each question then went onto provide the answer.

*Page 1 – With regards to rent arrears what measures are in place to secure further improvements within the next financial year?*

It was reported that this query relates to rent recovery across the Borough and not just in the East Area.

A meeting has been held with all staff involved in the rent recovery process and different aspects of rent collection have been explored.

The key was to identify problems at an early stage to prevent rent arrears escalating.

The Assistant Director of Customer Services reported that he has been liaising with other ALMOS to see how they address rent arrears. One of the major issues was the inability to contact Customers through the usual door knocking practice so alternative methods are being investigated including using the call centre for

out of hours contact by telephone.

*Page 1 After the inclusion of 15 long term void properties back into the allocation process adding an extra 16,646 days, how many more long term voids are there, and when are they expected to be back into the allocation process?*

There are 26 long term voids at present in the East Area, these are all at Graham House, options for this type of sheltered housing are currently being considered by the Council.

5.3 *Page 2. As Performance has been better than target for the past 12 months with regards to time taken to complete Non-Urgent Repairs, should the target be revised and does this reflect the same in the West?*

Following consultation the target has been changed to 9 days from April 2008.

*Pages 2 & 3 Both areas have failed to achieve their targets in respect of Estate Management/Anti Social behaviour, yet looking at other figures there is a year on year improvement? How big is the team handling anti-social complaints/breaches of tenancy?*

It was reported that the figures depicted relate to all Estate Management issues and Anti-Social Behaviour breaches and these are identified by various methods including estate walks and tenancy verification checks.

The target was set upon information from 2006/2007 and the case load was initially high due to the initiatives that are in place and the more proactive approach that is now taken to identify issues on Estates.

Most of this information relates to low key breaches of tenancy, for example untidy gardens and communal area problem.

Currently 21/23 Estate Management Officers are employed together with 16 Estate Assistants and 15 Caretakers. These staff have now received comprehensive training on their role requirements.

A Member commented that since Estate walks have been carried out in her area a dramatic improvement has been seen and all staff in Estates Management should be thanked for this improvement.  
Estate Management.

DA

5.4 *Page 8 - What measures are in place to secure improvements with regards to the Evictions due to Rent arrears in 2008/2009?*

It was reported that this question had been addressed earlier within the questions relating to page 1.

*Page 20 - What positive steps have been taken to reduce the number of Outstanding Gas Servicing and are we facing legal problems coming into May and as there are still a number of gas servicing outstanding?*

It was reported that at present there are 51 outstanding Gas Safety Certificates (CP12's), this is being addressed, but the make up of the figure is constantly changing.

Where we are able to evidence continuing difficulties with particular tenants consideration is given to the fitting of gas limiting devices which can be calibrated to reduce the amount of gas available after the due date of the service. At present only 1 such device has been installed.

A Member highlighted an issue where he had had personal experience of being told that his connection would be cut due to failure to allow entry for servicing, despite having a received a valid Certificate from 3 months earlier.

Paul Hopkinson reported that he would investigate this issue and respond.

PH

The Chair commented that he was still concerned about the ongoing Gas Servicing issues. PH reported that a presentation with regards to the robust processes in place will be provided to the next joint meeting.

PH/SA

5.6 *Page 23 - Has any analysis been undertaken of why calls are being abandoned after 15 seconds, Is the message clear and uncomplicated?*

It was reported that Jackie Linacre from the contact centre has confirmed that the message is clear and uncomplicated.

PH reported that there could be several reasons for abandoned calls, it may be due to tenants not wanting to hang on for any length of time as they know that if they call back and a line is available they will only have a short wait before their call is answered.

5.7 *Page 24 -What Is the time delay on Capital Programmes with the number of properties not being completed on time? What is the target to get back on track?*

It was reported that there are 9 properties outstanding with a delay of 9 weeks. The delay is attributable to delays in gas connections and some properties requiring additional works. We are working with contractors to ensure that in future they ask for extensions when similar circumstances arise.

The target date for completion is June 2008.

5.8 *Page 25 & 26*

*As information contained in the Graph is not clear what were the reasons and areas of the complaints?*

It was reported that the graphs depict complaints regarding Estate Management, anti-social behaviour and rents and Estate Maintenance.

Page 28

*With regards to the % of Complaints responded to within Timescale. where is the March information?*

It was reported that because there are a fixed number of days available to answer a complaint the March figure cannot be calculated until late in the following month.

5.10 *Page 29 & 30 - Are Staff in the North East responding to compliments received in the same fashion as those in the South east?*

It was confirmed that all compliments are dealt with in exactly the same manner across the business.

5.11 **The Area Board noted the contents of the report.**

5.12 The Performance Analysts asked permission from the Chair and left the meeting.

**6. Monitor Allocations to DMBC Properties**

6.1 The Assistant Director for Estate Management introduced this report that provided the Area Board with allocations made by SLHD between 1 February 2008 to 31 March 2008.

6.2 It was reported that there had been a number of complaints following the implementation of CBL, however this had been expected and followed the experience of other ALMO's..

**6.3 The Area board noted the contents of the Report.**

**7. Receive Reports on Evictions**

7.1 The Assistant Director for Estate Management presented this report and gave an analysis of evictions between 1 April 2007 to 31 March 2008 and the total for 2007/8.

**7.2 Area Board Members noted the contents of the report**

**8. Estate Improvement Fund**

8.1 A slideshow depicting chosen suggestions from the previous year was viewed.

8.2 Linda Milan reported that forms for the Estate Improvement Fund will be circulated to all tenants with the next edition of Houseproud. The closing date for suggestions will be 18 July 2008.

8.3 Roger Haldenby reported that all Ideas are welcome and the Committee will consider all nominations.

**9. Any Other Business/Items for next meeting**

9.1 Linda Milan provided details of log in details for Internet access for Area Board members:

9.2 A Member reported that following a choice event that he attended in Cantley, tenants have now been informed that due to budget restraints that they cannot have their chosen fire.

Paul Hopkinson agreed to investigate this issue.

**PH**

**10. Date and Time of Next Meeting**

Monday 14 July 2008

The meeting ended at 8:00 pm.