

**1. Report title: Your Moorlands- Legacy Agreement Update**

**2. Action:**

For information and noting

**3. Recommendation(s)**

It is recommended that the content of this report is discussed, and actions agreed at the meeting.

**4. Report of:**

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**5. Contact details of author:**

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**6. Confidential report:**

No

**7. Supporting documents**

Appendix 1

## **8. Introduction**

In 2017, Moorlands Housing Association transferred its engagements to Arena Housing Group (now Your Housing Limited). This means that governance is undertaken by those members of YHG Common Board who govern Your Housing Limited and now also have specific oversight and responsibility. A legacy agreement was developed by and for:

- Moorlands Housing Association
- Your Housing Group (YHG)
- Staffordshire Moorlands District Council (SMDC)

The legacy agreement is a goodwill agreement between Moorlands Housing Association, YHG and SMDC and sets out the condition for change to the legal structure.

This paper provides a performance and development update on YHG business areas identified in the legacy agreement and relates to business activity between April 2020 and March 2021 unless otherwise specified.

In addition to reporting to the Community Overview and Scrutiny Panel (COSP), the legacy agreement includes a requirement for a small tenant panel to be convened to join the COSP in reviewing the report. A customer panel has been recruited and attends the COSP meetings.

## **9. Your Housing Group Response to Covid 19**

During further lockdowns due to Covid 19 in November 2020 and January to March 2021 we moved temporarily to a reduced repairs service, offering emergencies and outdoor repairs only. However, we continued to let properties and carry out compliance activity and inspections.

A full repairs service is now back in place.

YHG continues to monitor local and national Covid 19 guidance and adapts how we deliver our services in line with Government advice and recommendations.

## **10. Housing Management**

YHG continues to recognise the need to enhance our delivery of services, improve customer satisfaction and our understanding of customers and neighbourhoods.

In order to do this, YHG are reviewing and realigning our housing management customer operating model. This will introduce an enhanced regional approach to tenancy and housing management, tenancy enforcement and allocations to provide a more collaborative approach, enabling colleagues to improve their relationship with customers and better understand the needs of local neighbourhoods.

As part of this review we are also increasing the number of front-line housing management colleagues to improve our services to customers in the following areas:-

- Tenancy Enforcement to improve our response to anti-social behaviour and other tenancy breaches.
- Keyworker Tenancy Support by re-introducing a dedicated Tenancy Support team to support new and existing customers that may need more intensive dedicated support to enable them to sustain their tenancies.

It is anticipated the new Regional Housing Management Teams will be in place from September 2021.

### **10.1 Neighbourhood inspection and Customer Engagement Events**

YHG will reintroduce our Customer Engagement events when it is safe to do so. We are currently carrying out neighbourhood inspections on an ad-hoc basis however the new customer operating model will see a more comprehensive scheduled programme of neighbourhood inspections introduced and communicated to customers by the Regional Housing Management Teams.

## **11. Lettings**

Lettings performance has been impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic during this period. Your Housing Group was only able to complete essential lettings, between April to June 2020. This resulted in voids being held vacant until lettings could recommence in June 2020. The suspension of lettings and the accumulated void time has impacted the overall relet time. Throughout the remainder of the year performance has continued to be impacted by the ongoing COVID pandemic, particularly in relation to applicant's reluctance to move home at this time. The target for average re-let days was 18 days, however, performance has continued to be impacted throughout the year.

## **12. Compliance**

YHG continue to be 100% compliant in terms of domestic gas servicing, asbestos checks, electrical safety, and legionella testing. Our Compliance and Facilities agents also do regular safety checks on all our communal areas and these were continued during all periods of lockdown.

## **13. Development**

**13.1 Well Street, Lightwood, Cheadle.** YHG are still exploring the option to deliver 21 new build units on this site, which is currently owned by the Group subject to Treasury and Board approval.

**13.2 Sunninghill Drive, Leek.** YHG continue working with Casey Development to unlock the development of the former Barnfield Hughes concrete plant on Sunninghill Road, Leek. The plan is to deliver a range of 2 bed, 3 bed and 4 bed housing for shared ownership and rent to buy. The local authority is linking the development with the creation of a marina on an adjacent site which may inhibit the Group's ability to deliver the scheme within the timescales required by Homes England and therefore, may lead to the Group having to consider options.

## **14. Repairs and Maintenance**

Performance and normal service delivery was affected by Covid 19 however, overall YHG successfully navigated the pandemic to minimise any negative lasting impact. This is demonstrated by the increase in customer satisfaction with our in-house repairs service, Fix360, from 67 % to 88% as at the end of March this year.

We also established a 'SWAT' team to ensure we could access properties where customers were isolating to carry out emergency repairs and utilised operatives to deliver food parcels, medicine, and even postal deliveries to assist local services during the most severe lockdown periods.

See Appendix 1 for Repairs and Maintenance Performance Information.

## **15. Asset**

See Appendix 1 for asset improvement delivered in the Moorlands in 2020/2021

## **16. Digital Engagement**

All tenancy sign ups to general needs housing in Moorlands area are now digital except where this poses specific challenges for the customer due to disability or vulnerability.

## **17. Community Regeneration**

YHG has supported Community Centres including Haregate Community Centre and Biddulph Youth Zone arranging £1000 worth of donations towards providing weekly food parcels, Christmas presents, and lunches.

**17.1** A Community Clean Up Day was arranged in Biddulph involving YHG colleagues, customer and contractors.

**17.2** Employment support has continued including the setting up of a Facebook Workclub Group to support customers when face to face meetings were suspended offering members weekly one to one phone calls and help with benefit claims.

**17.3** “Landlocked” Land

We are in discussions with a number of households over a piece of “landlocked” land, inaccessible due to the design of nearby buildings it has become a target for flytipping. We are reviewing options for this site, including offering residents a garden extension.

**18. Commercial**

The external Revolution Launderette Unit outside Mill Street, Leek was installed in January 2021 and is proving popular.

YHG are currently seeking planning permission to change the layout of the frontage of Mill Street to allow a one-way, short stay parking facility which will encourage more commercial customers and deter residential customers’ car parking throughout the day.

**19. Recommendation**

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