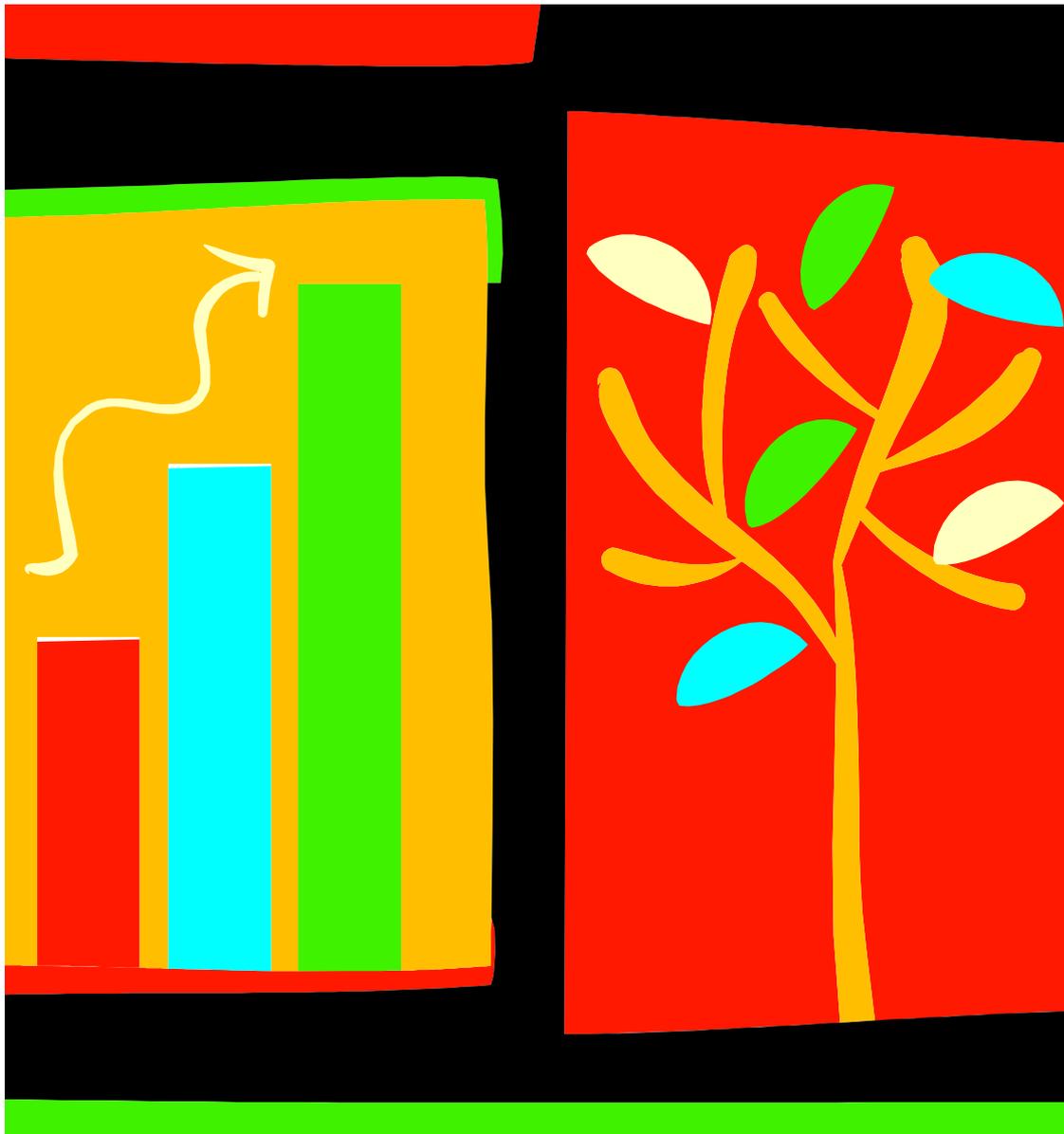


# East Kent Housing

## Annual Performance Report 2014-15



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### 1. Performance

East Kent Housing has now completed four full years of operation. Performance remains strong in most areas. Full details of the year end performance is set out in appendix one. Highlights in the key performance areas were as follows

**1.1 Rent Collection.** Across all four area outstanding rent arrears as a percentage of the total debit was 1.17% against a target of 1.29%. Arrears targets were met in Dover, Shepway and Thanet. In Canterbury the target was narrowly missed (1.06% compared with a target of 1.04%). Given the continued pressures from the Spare Room Subsidy and the high levels of Discretionary Housing Payments made in the previous year, this represents a good performance. However, there remain 1234 tenants still adversely affected by the withdrawal of benefit of which 552 are currently in rent arrears. This is not a sustainable position especially with the introduction of Universal Credit on the horizon. The loss of experienced staff during the year was clearly a contributory factor in narrowly missing the target in Canterbury. The lack of flexibility in our income team because of the IT systems constraints does not help and the introduction of a new single system at the end of 2016 will alleviate some of these pressures.

Although comparison figures with other housing organisations will not be available until later in the year, we anticipate as in previous years that our rent arrears will be in the top quartile in all areas except Thanet.

Targets for former tenant arrears were met in all four areas

**1.2 Relets.** Turnaround times for routine empty properties excluding sheltered housing were within target in all four areas and ranged between an average of 18 days in Shepway to 11.62 days in Thanet. This indicates effective and efficient working relationships between our team, the contractors and the Housing Options Teams in the four councils.

We were less successful when voids required major works and the target was narrowly missed in three of the four areas. The reasons for this vary but include delays in works being done by the contractor or targets in the contract that allow the contractor lengthy turnaround times and delays in some instances with the nomination of new tenants. The quarter four performance report sets out the remedial actions that we are proposing to address these shortfalls.

### 1.3 Day to day repairs

The legacy of storms in December 2014 had an adverse impact on the contractor's performance in the first quarter of the year and this distorted the performance for the whole year. Although tenant satisfaction with repairs remained high, the % of repairs completed on time was below target in Canterbury and Dover although the former

targets were achieved in the last three quarters. In Dover the system of recording jobs was found to be defective and this has now been rectified resulting in a better position. The number of appointments kept was below target in three of the areas, although the contractors system is unable to cope with jobs done before the appointed time and these are recorded as missed appointments. The lack of complaints about missed appointments seems to suggest this is not a problem.

## 1.4 Repairs budgets

### Revenue/Responsive Repairs

	Final approved Budget	Outturn	Variation	% variance
Canterbury	£5,723,845	£5,594,194	-£129,651	-2.27%
Dover	£3,546,000	£3,437,426	-£108,574	-3.06%
Shepway	£3,056,568	£3,190,189	£133,621	4.37%
Thanet	£3,300,700	£3,063,351	-£137,349	-1.56%

### Capital/Programmed Repairs and improvements

	Final approved Budget	Outturn	Variation	% variance
Canterbury	£4,590,353	£4,229,198	-£361,155	-7.87%
Dover	£4,822,350	£4,875,096	£52,746	1.09%
Shepway	£3,210,000	£3,217,246	£7,246	0.23%
Thanet	£3,196,920	£2,277,680	-£919,240	-28.75%

Our target is to achieve expenditure to within %5 of the budget. The main area of underspend in Canterbury relates to delays in a replacement windows and doors scheme on the London Road estate. Two contractors ceased training and problems were encountered in the re-procurement and in the consultations with tenants. This meant expenditure being deferred into the following year. Elsewhere a window replacement scheme at Notley Terrace was delayed by the requirement for planning approvals.

At Thanet we agreed with the Council to change the Environmental Improvement Programme to focus on a single, larger project Works (£230,000) and to defer works to replace lifts in one of the tower blocks, allowing us to assess whether replacement was a better option than replacement. These works will be carried forward in to 2015/16.

## 1.5 Summary of performance highlights in each area

### Canterbury - 6 out of 12 met target (no Former Tenant Arrears target included)

- Garage arrears have continued to fall and stand at £1144 against a £1500 target
- Average re-let times for voids including major works an improvement on last year of 2.3 days per property.
- Average re-let times for voids excluding major works an improvement
- Average re-let times for general needs voids excluding major works an improvement

- Satisfaction with day to day repairs 99.87%
- Emergency repairs completed in time (628 out of 628) 100%

#### **Dover - 8 out of 13 met target**

- Residential arrears met target at £242,571
- Garage arrears have continued to fall and stand at £403 against a £1000 target
- Former tenant arrears met target at £99,785
- Average re-let times on target for all excluding major works
- Average re-let times on target for general needs excluding major works
- Satisfaction with day to day repairs 100%
- Complaints answered in time (35 out of 36)
- Properties with a valid LGSR 100%

#### **Shepway – 10 out of 13 met target**

- Residential arrears met target at £143,499
- Garage arrears have continued to fall and stand at £406 against a £1000 target
- Former tenant arrears met target at £86,155
- Average re-let times on target for excluding major works
- Average re-let times on target for general needs excluding major works
- Satisfaction with day to day repairs
- Complaints answered in time (28 out of 30)
- Responsive repairs completed in time
- Emergency repairs completed in time
- Responsive repairs appointments kept

#### **Thanet – 8 out of 12 met target (no sheltered void target included)**

- Residential arrears met target at £205,028
- Garage arrears have continued to fall and stand at £280 against a £500 target
- Former tenant arrears met target at £234,981
- Average re-let times excluding major works
- Satisfaction with day to day repairs
- Satisfaction with ASB 100%
- Responsive repairs completed in time
- Emergency repairs completed in time

## **2. Service Improvement ( Delivery Plan)**

The summary of the Delivery Plan is appended to this report.

2.1 Of 68 tasks in the plan:

- 50 have been completed (74%)
- 8 have been partially completed (12%)
- 10 have not been done (15%)
- 84% of high priority tasks were completed

	Completed	Partial	Not completed
High	16	2	1
Medium	22	3	6
Low	14	1	3

2.2 Three main strands of work account for a majority of the tasks not done.

Developing a clearer standard for tenants' gardens and a package of support for tenants unable to maintain their gardens. (2.21 & 2.22). This was deemed a low priority and not progressed because of other pressures on the housing management service. A number of tenants were recruited at the Safari event to act as Gardening champions for their estate

Developing a Universal Credit Strategy (3.6, 3.8, 3.11). Work delayed while we sought clarification from the councils on resources required to develop the strategy. Also delays in the roll out of Universal Credit and lack of clarity over some aspects of the scheme. The outstanding issues from this year's plan will be reviewed and picked up in the new Welfare Reform Strategy

Delays in implementing the Tenant Participation review and establishing the Resident Engagement Team. This has delayed our work in developing our approach to Customer Insight (4.2, 4.4, 4.5)

The two other activities not tackled are developing a common approach to grounds maintenance. (1.13) and developing a balanced scorecard. (4.7).

Grounds maintenance is a complicated issue that is entwined in the way the councils commission their wider grounds maintenance requirements. With other pressures in the asset management team there has not been the time to explore these options with the councils.

### **3. Service Improvement (Service Reviews)**

During the year service reviews were carried out in:

- Tenant Involvement – conducted with tenant representatives carried over from the previous year
- Sheltered housing and enhanced care housing
- Maintenance processes (conducted by EKAP)
- Senior management arrangements
- Relationships with and governance by the four councils (conducted by HQN)
- Rent payment methods (Tenant scrutiny Review)
- Estate cleaning and caretaking (Tenant Scrutiny Review)
- Office accommodation
- Systems support

4. **Service Improvement for 2015/16** The main elements and themes in the Delivery Plan for 2015/16 include:

- Delivering the single IT system
- Renewing our promises to tenants
- Developing a consistent approach and policies to –
  - Re-chargeable works

- Disabled adaptations
- Debt write offs
- Storage of mobility scooters
- Tackling tenancy fraud.
- Reviewing and improving our asset management service
- Improving the performance of our leasehold service
- Preparing for Universal Credit

The plan can be found at

<http://www.eastkenthousing.org.uk/publication-scheme/who-we-are/>

## **5. Other achievements during the year**

During the course of the year we have undertaken a number of projects which benefited tenants or help develop EKH. During the year we:

- Made with our tenants short films with advice on condensation and gardening
- Launched a discounted home contents insurance scheme for tenants
- Ran fire safety campaigns on our estates
- Took on two unemployed graduates who both secured permanent employment after their time with EKH. Similarly two of our four apprentices managed to secure employment at the end of their time with EKH
- Undertaken successful award winning eco- retrofit schemes at Windsor House and in Aylesham to improve the energy efficiency of tenants' homes.
- Centralised our Stock Investment Team in Dover and our Income Team in Aylesham
- Moved in to a new head office
- Successfully implemented the sheltered housing and Tenant Participation Reviews
- Delivered a programme of environmental improvements on our estates
- Were invited to be involved in a Ministerial Challenge group to look at and promote the benefits to landlords of effective tenant engagement
- Launched Good Neighbourhood Agreements linked to environmental improvements
- Introduced new tenancy agreements in Dover & Thanet, allowing for the use of flexible and introductory tenancies and improved ability to manage tenancies.

## **6. Proposed performance targets for 2015/16**

Performance targets for the year were proposed to the councils in April 2015

## **7. Appendixes**

Year-end performance report

Quarter four analysis and actions report.

2014/15 Delivery Plan – year-end update

Proposed performance targets 2014/5