



## ONCHAN – A PLACE FOR EVERYONE



JUNE 2021

ANNUAL HOUSING REPORT



Onchan District Commissioners



# ONCHAN DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS

## ANNUAL HOUSING REPORT

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## INTRODUCTION

The First Housing Review Report was issued in December 2019. The report covers the financial year 2020/21 and gives an overview of our services.

The review has been undertaken in four key areas:-

- Finance
- Maintenance and Repairs
- Estate and Tenancy Management
- Customer Engagement

Increasing the supply of homes is a strategic national priority and the overarching vision, aims and objectives of the Authority should consider supporting the sustainability of developing communities by:-

- Meeting identified need in the area
- Improving the environmental and design standards/energy efficiency
- Reducing the Carbon Footprint
- Contributing to effective integration of health and social care addressing:-
  - Fuel Poverty
  - House Condition
  - Homelessness

## 1. IMPACT OF CORONAVIRUS COVID-19

The global Pandemic has had a major impact on everyone, and housing organisations and their customers have significantly been affected and as a landlord this has been a very unusual time. We have been focusing resources on maintaining essential services and keeping residents and staff safe and supported.

Many tenants have seen their incomes reduced as they have been furloughed or been made redundant, and many other vulnerable tenants have had to self-isolate for long periods of time.



### 1.1 LOCKDOWN

On Tuesday 16th March 2020 a proclamation by the Governor in Council was signed. This proclaims a state of emergency under Manx law by the Lieutenant Governor. The state of emergency proclamation is made under the Emergency Powers Act 1936, an Act of Tynwald.

The Isle of Man entered an all-island lockdown from 18<sup>th</sup> March until the 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 (10 weeks). The Isle of Man entered a stay safe phase, which was lifted once there were no cases recorded on the Island, which in turn allowed residents to go about their daily business.

Unfortunately a further lockdown was sanctioned as a “circuit-breaker lockdown” from 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021 to 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021, (3 weeks) along with a “firebreak lockdown” from 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2021 until 19<sup>th</sup> April 2021 (6 weeks).

### 1.2 IMPACT

During these periods businesses and employment were severely impacted which had an affect not just on residents’ finances but on their well-being.

Isle of Man Government have responded to the crisis with an array of measures aimed at supporting tenants and mortgage-holders. With moratorium<sup>1</sup> on evictions as well as rent and mortgage payment forbearance.

The Manx Earnings Replacement Allowance (“MERA”) provided an income of £200 a week to people who have either been laid off or made redundant from their employment, or have lost or been prevented from carrying out their self-employed work due to the Covid restrictions. With effect from 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021, the MERA figure was increased to £230 per week.

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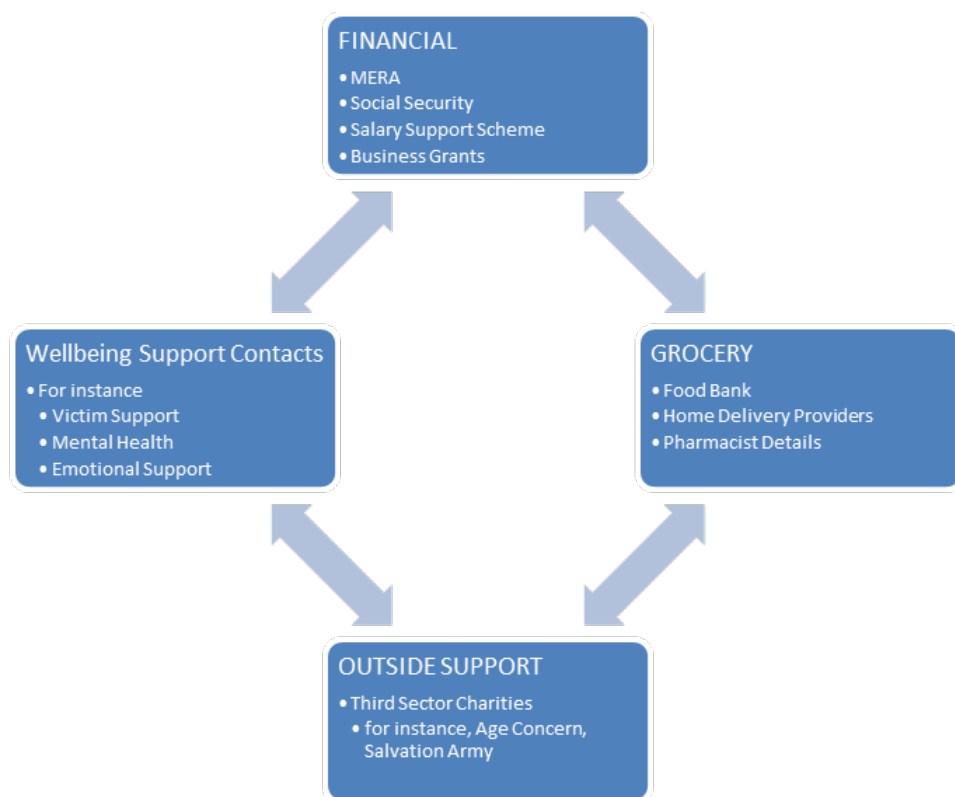
<sup>1</sup> a temporary prohibition of an activity

### 1.3 SUPPORT

The Housing Team have worked empathetically to the changing dynamics of the tenants circumstances. During this period the team signposted tenants to various services where further assistance and support was given.

Typical actions include:

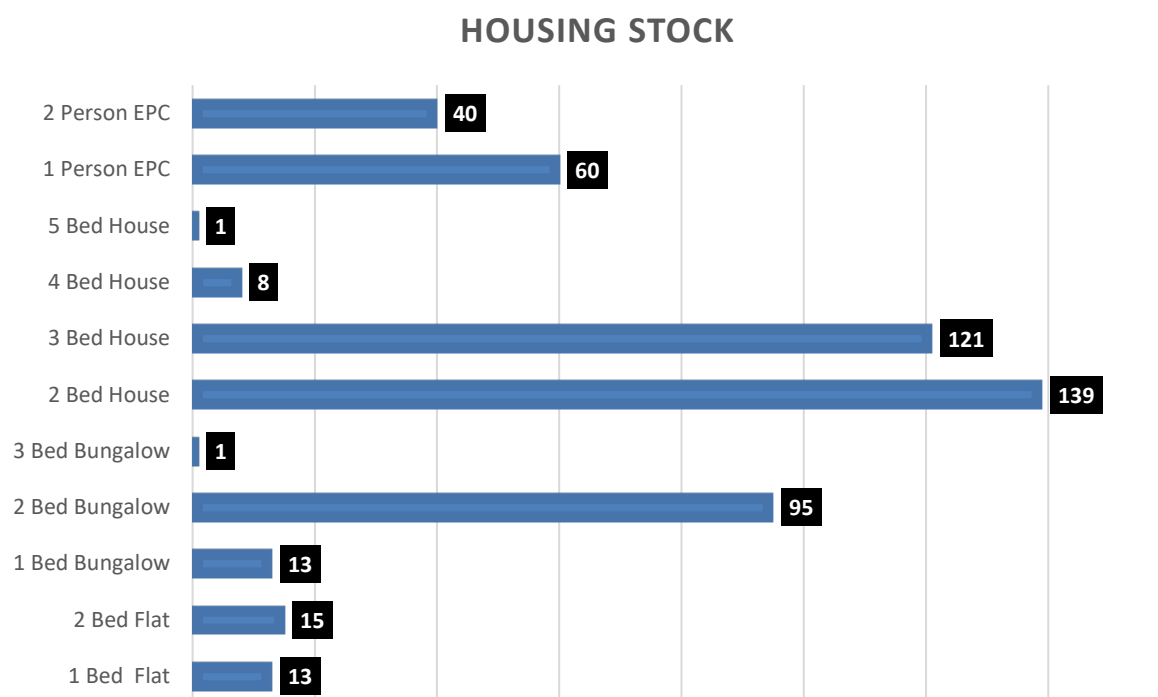
- Providing financial advice and support to those who have lost their jobs; for instance, pointing them to contact Social Security to assess their benefit entitlement and signposting towards employment support.
- Contacting older and vulnerable customers in order to ascertain the type of support needed, as well as trying to reduce loneliness and isolation.



## 2. HOUSING STOCK

Public housing was established to provide decent and safe rental housing for eligible low-income families, the elderly, and vulnerable persons. Public housing comes in all sizes and types and is referred to as social housing.

Residential properties owned by Onchan District Commissioners for social housing is referred to as 'housing stock'. There is a portfolio of 506 properties with a mix of general and sheltered housing as follows:-



There has been no increase or decrease in housing stock during the reporting period.

### 2.1 ASSET VALUE

Asset value of the Commissioners' social housing portfolio is  
£57,656,221 as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020

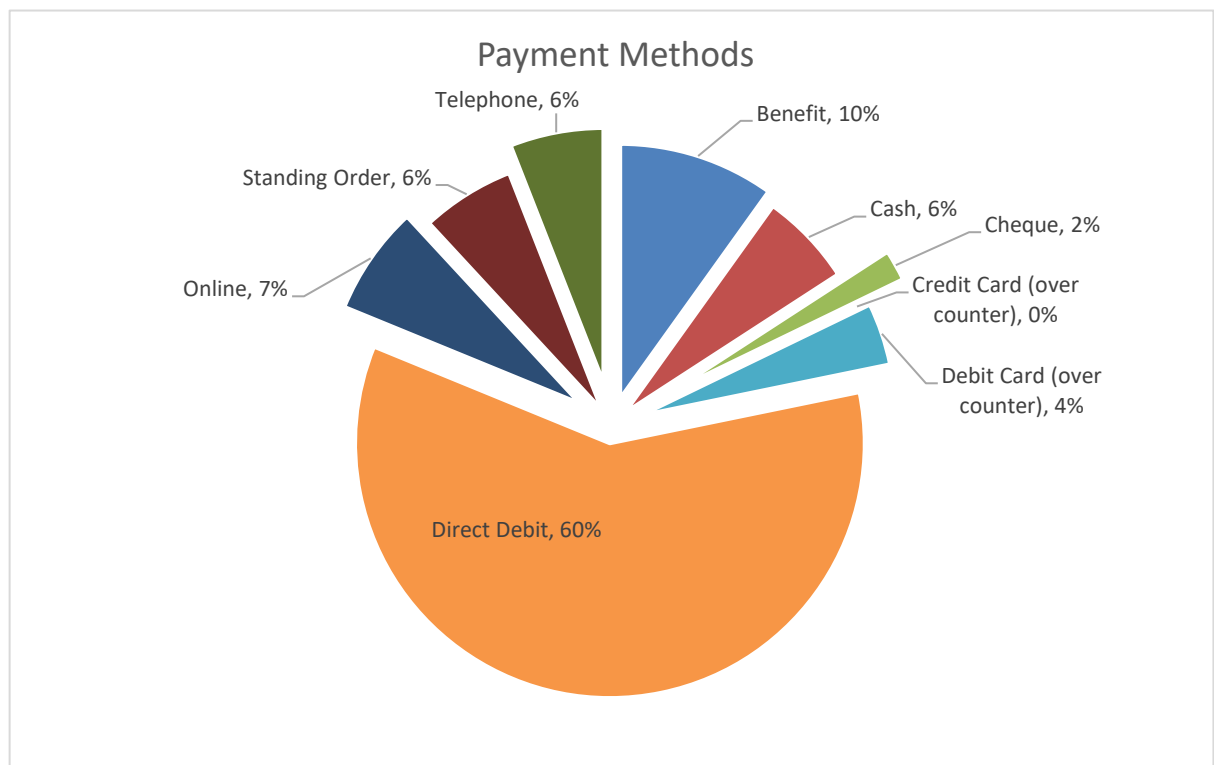


## 4. FINANCE

### 4.1 RENTAL INCOME

During the enforced lockdowns during the Coronavirus Pandemic no cash payments were being accepted during these periods. Officers engaged with tenants and encouraged them to pay through direct debit or via on-line payments.

For the financial year 2020/21 the split of the various methods of payments are shown below:



#### (a) Setting of Rent:

The rent set in public sector housing, is subsidised and is targeted at those on low to moderate incomes and have bespoke eligibility criteria.

The Department of Infrastructure and Council of Ministers set the public sector rents and allowances for each financial year.<sup>2</sup>

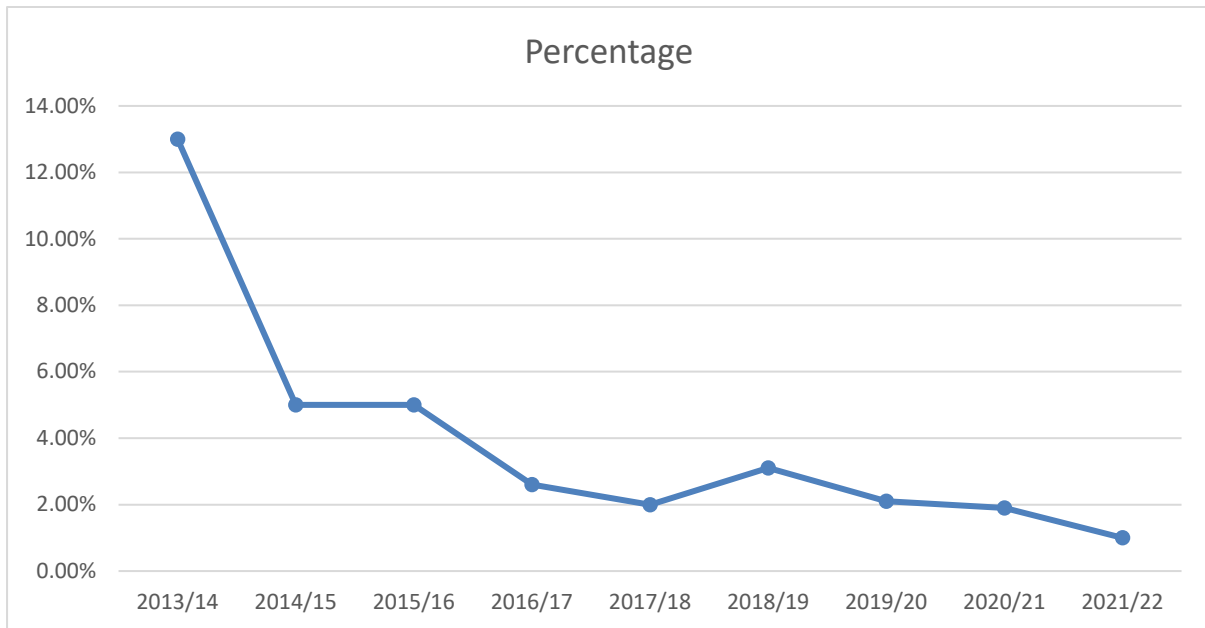
Rents are calculated by totalling the points applicable to that dwelling after applying the living area, bedroom and supplementary elements<sup>3</sup>. The Authority pay the rates and charges as owners of the property, and then recover the amount through the total rent payable by a tenant.

From 1st April 2021, the public sector rent element rose by 1% ring fenced to the maintenance budget. This equates to an average weekly increase of between £0.73p and £1.52, depending upon the size of the property. Those tenants who have their rental costs met by the Government as part of their income-assessed Social Security benefits are not be affected by the change.

<sup>2</sup> Housing Act 1955 Section 49(3)

<sup>3</sup> modern central heating, double glazing, private off-road parking and proximity to amenities

See below for overview of the rent increase by percentage per year.



*Figure 1 – Rent Increase by percentage*



**Income from rent as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021**  
**£2,293,187**

(b) Rent Reinvestment

The rent income received is re-invested in social housing to improve the asset and assist with running costs. The housing maintenance reserve is running at a deficit of £233,848 (as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020) and is programmed to reduce each year.

Capital schemes are approved by the Board and the Department of Infrastructure and funded from loans.

... Allowances are approved by the Department of Infrastructure as a percentage of rental income received, and these are used to fund repairs, refurbishments, and administration costs for the provision of the housing service. A snap shot over the years of the voids is shown at Appendix 2.

For 2020/21 the allowances is set by the Department of Infrastructure as follows:-

	Admin Allowance	Maintenance Allowance	Community
Percentage	5.5%	25.1%	8.4%
TOTAL	<b>£126,191.00</b>	<b>£598,834.00</b>	<b>£30,382.00</b>

Figure 2 – 2021/22 Allowances

The 1% increase for 2021/22 is to be ring-fenced to the maintenance budget in the amount of £22,943

Please note that any funding for disabled adaptations is taken from within the maintenance allowance of 5%, which equates to a total of £29,944.20.

The Authority no longer receive deficiency payments as the Department of Infrastructure assess general housing and sheltered housing together. Effectively general housing subsidises sheltered housing as it runs at a deficit.

(c) Rent Arrears

Rent arrears is showing an upward trend as illustrated below:-

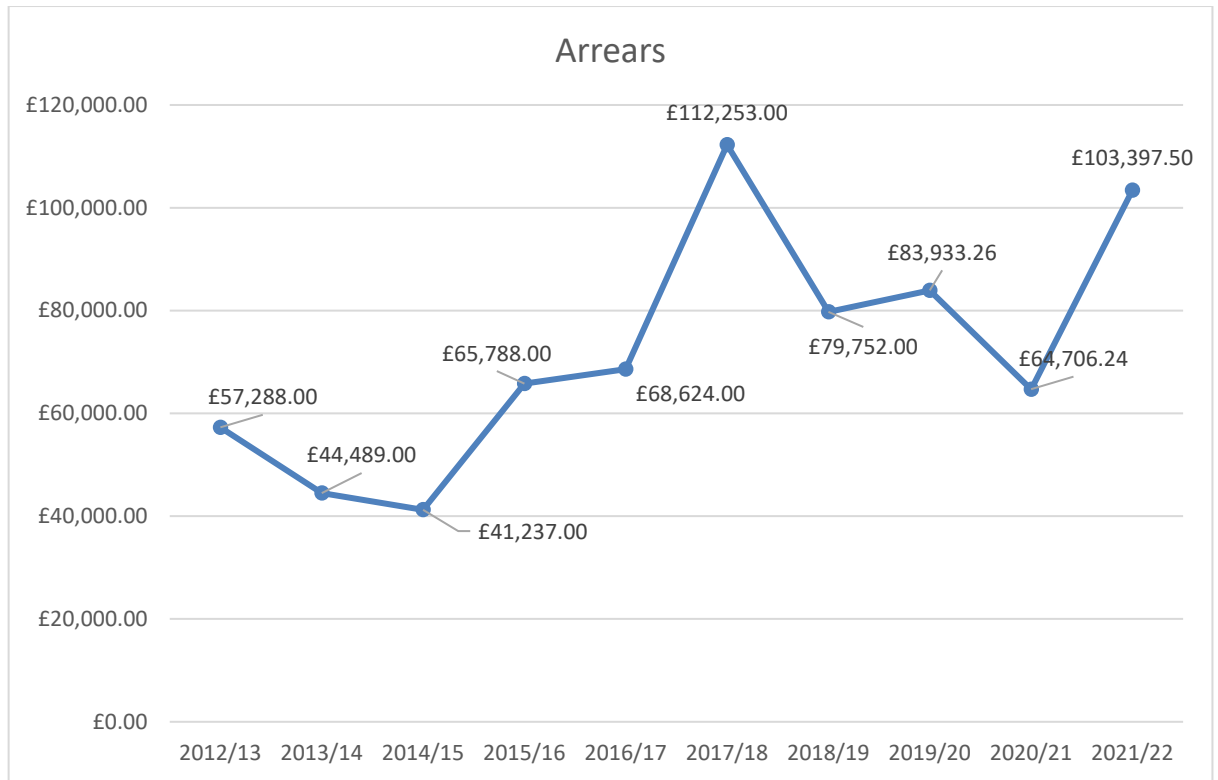


Figure 3 – Arrears Balance Chart

The total current rent arrears for the Authority stands at 4.5% at Quarter 4, in comparison with 2.3% in 2020.<sup>4</sup>

Of the 222 tenants who are in arrears, 96 pay by cash/card, 35 are paid by Benefits, and 83 pay by direct debit.

The rent arrears process is operated in line with the Public Sector Housing Eviction and Operational Practice and Procedures Guidelines adopted by the Board in May 2019. In consultation with Local Authorities, a review of the policy is being undertaken in 2021.

It is noted that there is an increase in arrears since the previous financial year. This is mostly due to the effects of the pandemic on peoples' financial position.

A greater emphasis on engagement with the tenants has been ongoing, this has assisted in building trust and to build a profile of their current situation. The interaction has identified information and support gaps and although the housing team are signposting people to resources available, we have noticed a significant shift in providing support directly or through partnership stakeholders to sustain tenancies.

The interaction has encouraged the occupants of our properties to be proactive regarding their arrears balance.

<sup>4</sup> N.B. Sudden increase due to timing of direct debit payments.

#### (d) Void Rent Loss

Housing stock not allocated for rent is a cost pressure to the Authority. The longer a property remains empty, leads to a reduced income stream. The void rent loss is the rent element only and does not include rates or service charges. The total void rent loss for 2020/21 equates to 1% of the total gross income of rent collected. There is an improvement in the trend due to timely release of voids and turnaround times.

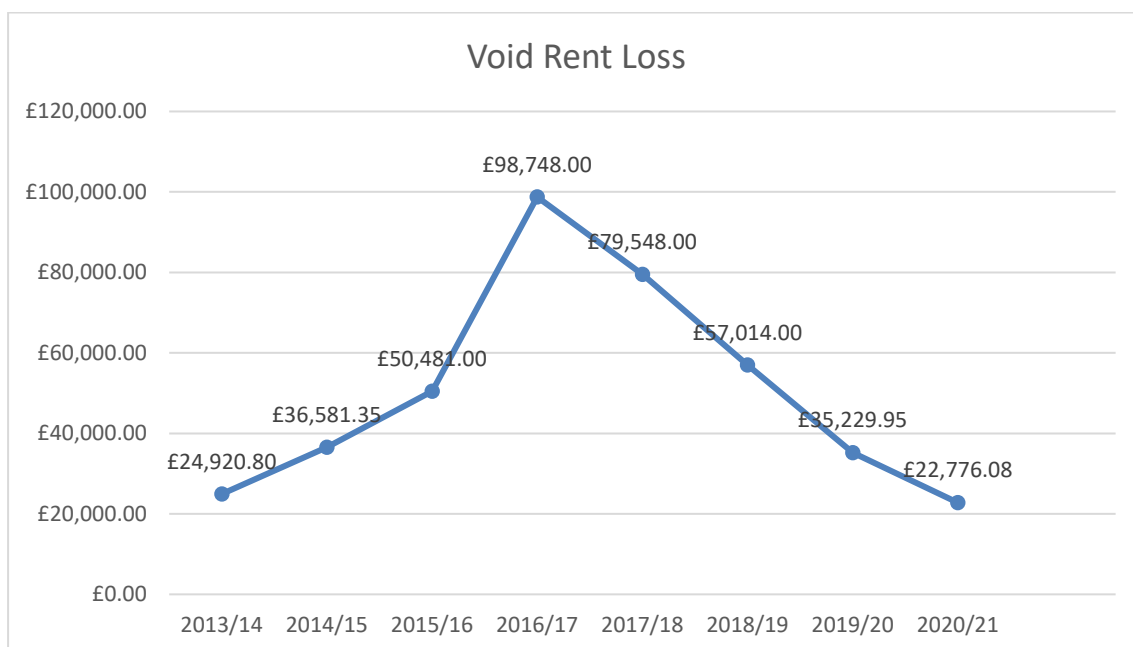


Figure 4 – Void Rent Loss

## 4.2 EXPENDITURE

The Government set the allowance percentages for housing expenditure, and it is challenging to keep within the allocated parameters. The amounts are explained in 3.1(b) above.

Day to day maintenance/repairs are funded through our income and expenditure account for housing.

The housing expenditure is funded via:-

- Allowances granted (maintenance including disabled adaptations, administration and community allowances)
- Capital Funding/Loans
- Deficiency Payments (not currently received)

(a) **Staffing Expenditure**

The Authority employs several staff with diverse skills and tap into their wealth of experience. As a result, this has encouraged changes in practices which assisted in driving down costs and maximising efficiency:

- Team managing responsive repairs and maintenance programs.
- Team dealing with rent arrears management.
- Funding models have changed in financing planned maintenance.
- Business Process Mapping undertaken to create a more streamlined business focused strategy and be SMART<sup>5</sup>
- Continuous education and training for officers
- To encourage community cohesion, applying for grants to fund community events

Other specialist qualified consultants and contractors are appointed with approval from the Board as and when required for specific purposes (please see 4.1 Procurement for further information).

#### 4.3 CAPITAL INVESTMENT

Capital Schemes are programmes which allow for long term investment in to the housing need and demand for the District to meet present day requirements.

Funding for schemes such as new builds, internal and external regeneration of properties and estates should be met by applying for loans through Central Government.

***Schemes in progress:***

1.	First Avenue – Stage I3 Report``	Details for the loan have been submitted. Once the finance has been secured the scheme has commenced.	Waiting on Treasury approval
2.	Capital Scheme	Springfield Court Refurbishment, project to be completed by 2023/24	Approved - Stage D1
3.	Capital scheme	Kitchen Framework Agreement	Stage I4 Underway
4.	Capital Scheme	Window & Door Replacement Schemes 6, 7, 14	Stage I3
5.	Capital Scheme	The Park Houses External Refurbishment Scheme 4	Stage I4 Underway

***Planned Schemes:***

6.	Capital Scheme	Re-Rendering and New Roofs – Barrule Drive Scheme 10	Business case submitted
7.	Capital Scheme	Window & Door Replacement – Nursery Avenue Schemes 1 and 2 due start on site 2022/23	Business case submitted

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<sup>5</sup> Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-Bound

Getting good value from capital investments, rents and service charges will assist to ensure that efficient and effective management of services are maintained.

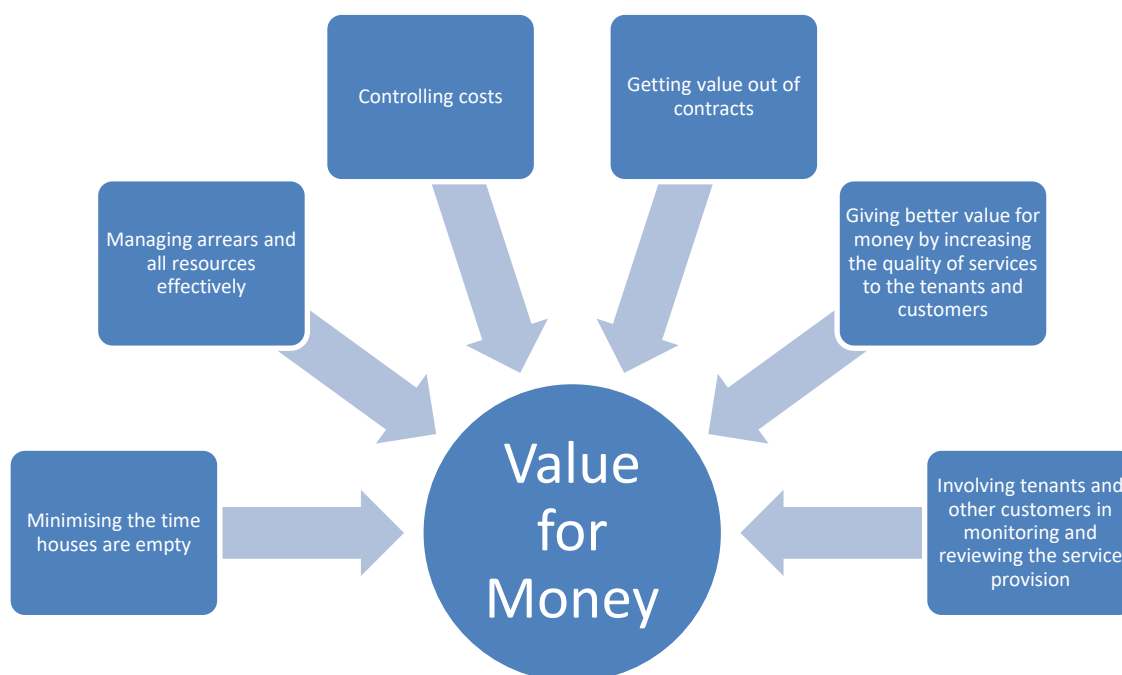


Figure 5 – Value for Money

## 5. MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS

In considering the maintenance and repairs programmes the Authority has to consider the age, condition, construction method, and inherent defects of the property portfolio. This dictates the priority of the maintenance works.

... To allow for forward planning, the Surveyor's Department produce an Annual Review of Housing Planned Maintenance Programme and Update, which is attached at *Appendix 3*. This gives timeline guidance for larger works schemes affecting the fabric of the buildings.

The Surveyor's Team plan ahead and deliver various activities, as detailed below:-

- (a) **Surveys** - This gives an up-to-date position of the condition of the housing stock. Property inspections are carried out on a planned basis.
- (b) **Responsive Maintenance** – Generally day to day repairs are required inside the property and are usually event driven by Tenants reporting issues and are to be completed within the following time scales:-

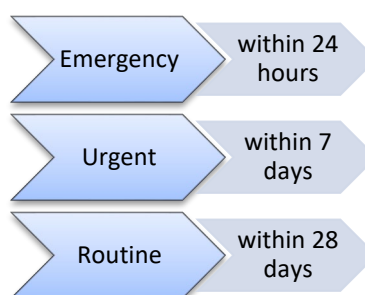


Figure 5 – Responsive Repairs –Key Performance Indicator

- (c) **Planned Maintenance** – These are time driven activities which are normally carried out at set or periodic time intervals, such as gutter cleaning and electrical testing.
- (d) **Cyclical Maintenance** – Annual servicing items, for example, the annual servicing of heating systems, fire alarms, lifts.
- (e) **Voids** – Where an empty property has been returned to stock, following cessation of tenancy. Any works identified will be completed and funded through the housing maintenance budget prior to reallocation.
- (f) **Programmed Works** – works which are set out as a program to improve the property or estate such as capital schemes.

## 5.1 PROCUREMENT OF SERVICES

Procuring and mobilising the services required for the maintenance and repair of the housing stock is undertaken in line with the Authority's Standing Orders on the Making of Contracts and the Petitions' Procedures, with contracts established through:



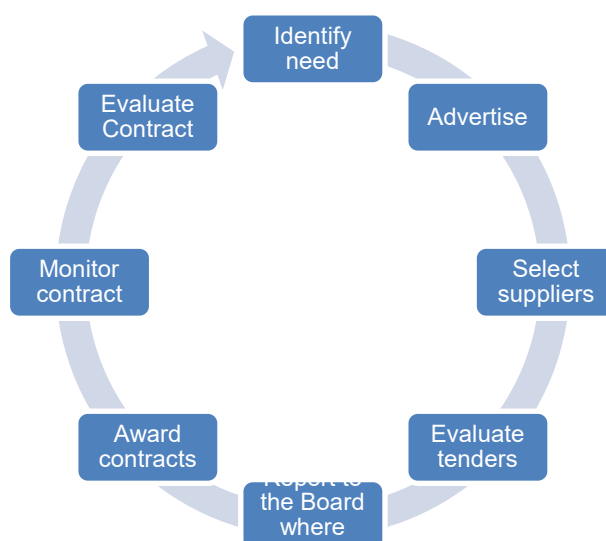
**Competitive (open) tendering** - Where an advertisement is placed which potential contractors who submit bids in response to, which are then evaluated according to set criteria

**Selective tendering** - Where a limited number of selected contractors are invited to submit bids which are then evaluated

**Request for quotations** - A less formal process used for lower value services, where a limited number of suppliers are asked to submit quotations

**Direct purchasing** - A chosen supplier may be used in some circumstances, for instance for usually lower value services, or if there is a specific requirement which only a particular supplier can fulfil, or an emergency requires a swift response.

When establishing the requirement for the procurement of goods, works and services, officers follow the process:-





With tight budgets and the pressure to continue to make savings, each case is considered to maximise its resources:

Ensure Best Value for Money

Fairness, integrity and transparency through competition

Reduce expenditure so as to achieve savings

Ensure legal and regulatory compliance

Help to promote an ethical approach, for instance by promoting suppliers who demonstrate a commitment to social value

Minimises risk by appointing suitably qualified and experienced suppliers

Encourages innovation through collaborative working relationships



## 5.2 MAINTENANCE EXPENDITURE

Maintenance expenses are the costs incurred to keep the property in good condition or good working order. Comparison charts are detailed below showing the budget vs actual expenditure by financial years for general and sheltered housing submitted to the Department of Infrastructure on a quarterly basis.

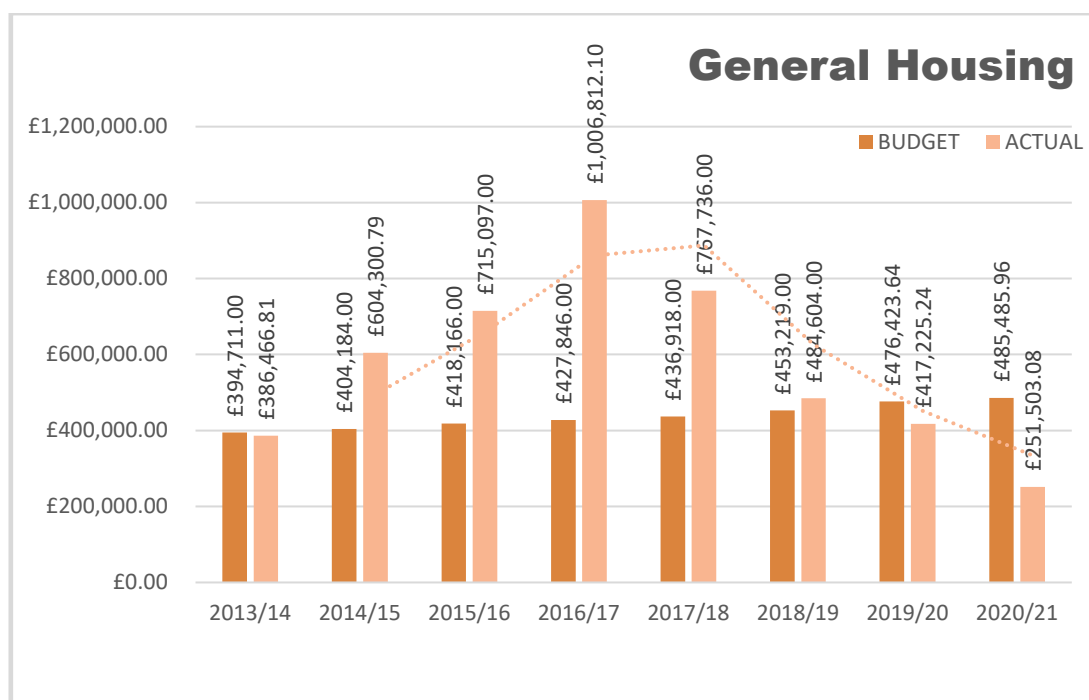


Figure 6– Maintenance Expenditure – General Housing

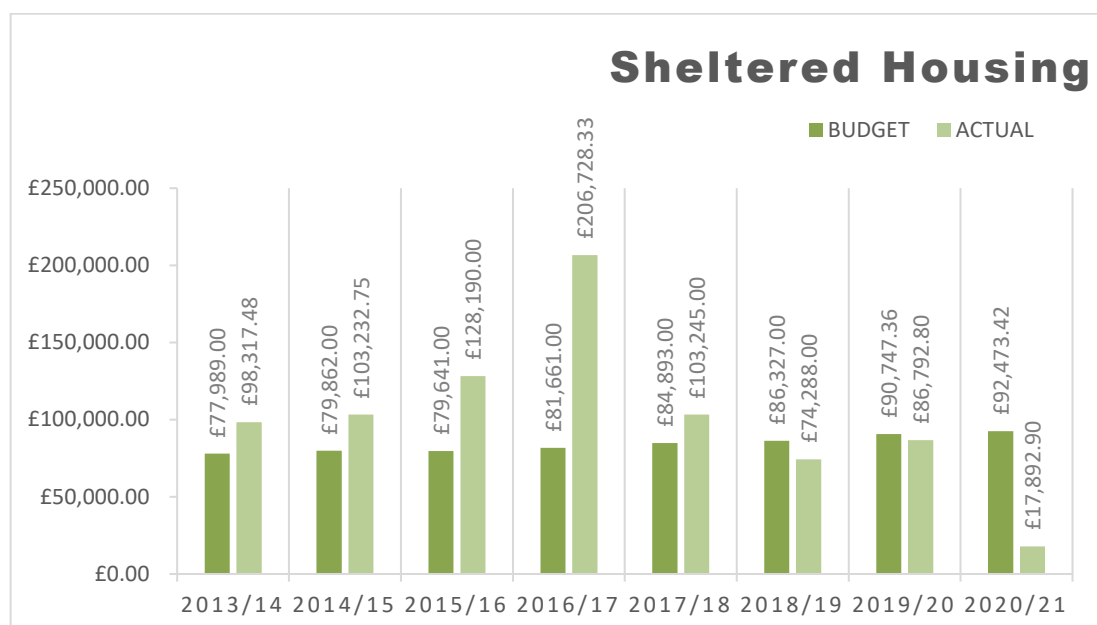


Figure 7 – Maintenance Expenditure – Sheltered Housing

### 5.3 VOID MAINTENANCE

Empty properties are called 'voids', and are handed to the Property Maintenance Team to inspect for any maintenance works required before they are re-let. As at the time of the report there are 4 empty properties.

The void re-let times and void maintenance categories are detailed below:-



Figure 8 –Void Categories

There have been 268 voids over the last seven years, and the total void maintenance cost for the period 2012/13 to 2018/19 is as follows:

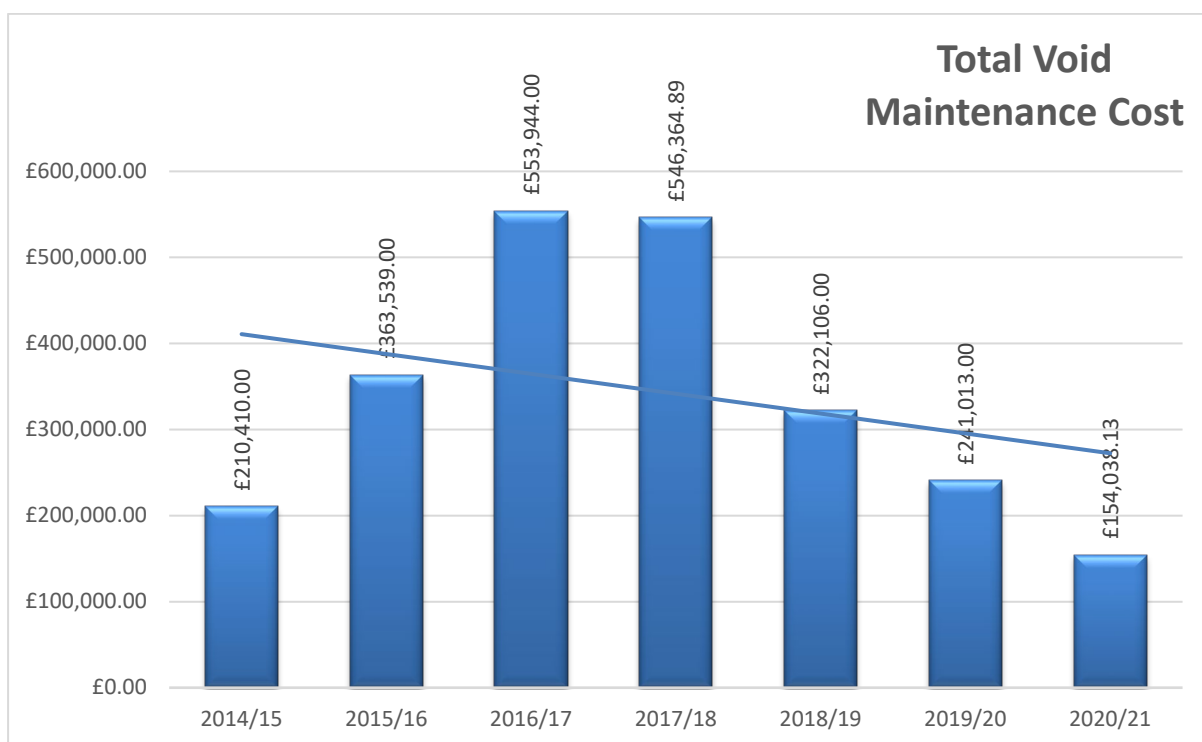


Figure 9 –Void Cost

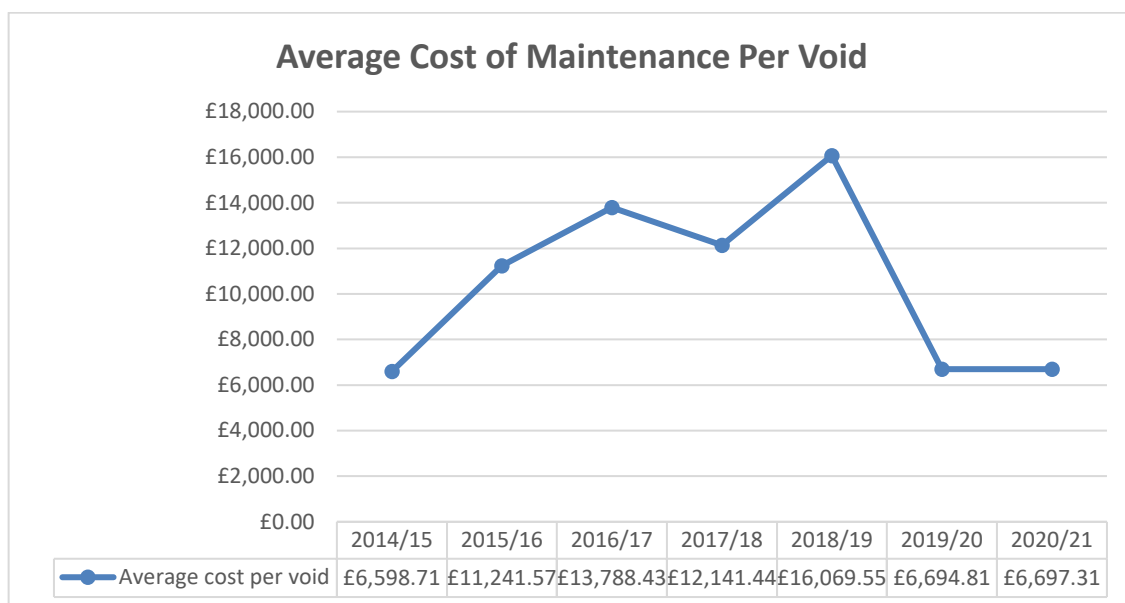


Figure 10 –Void - Average cost per void for maintenance

There has been a total of 6047 responsive repair orders raised over the last seven years, and are detailed below:

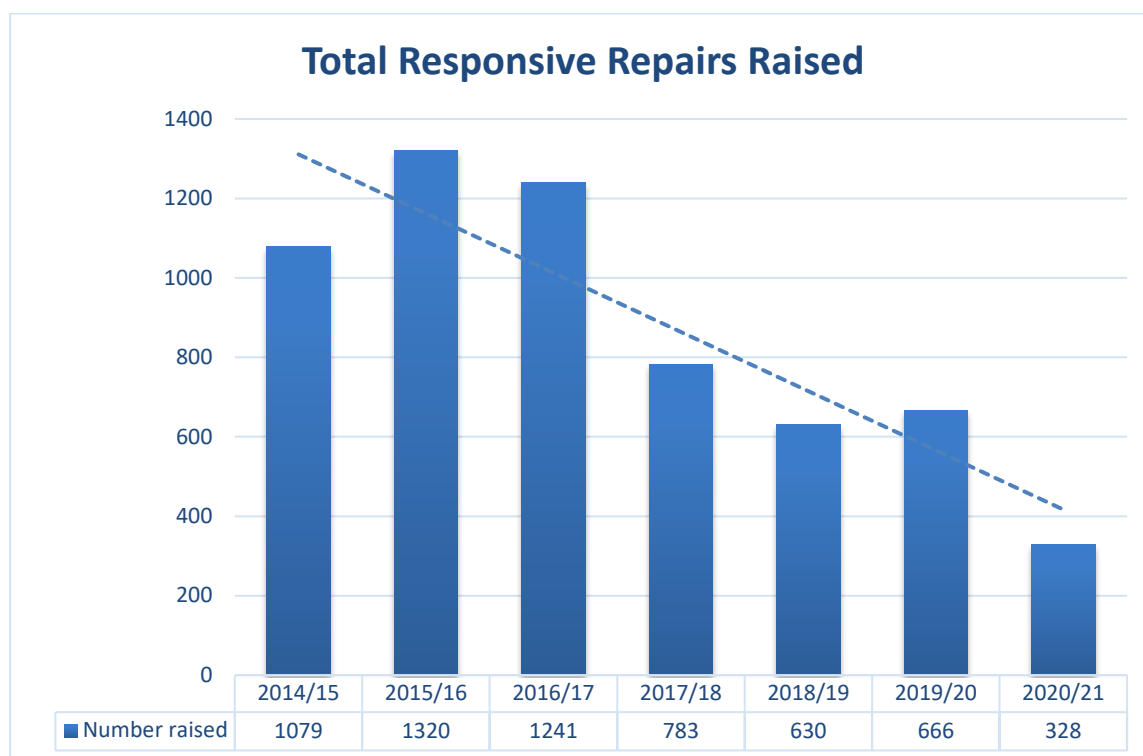


Figure 11 – Responsive Repairs Raised

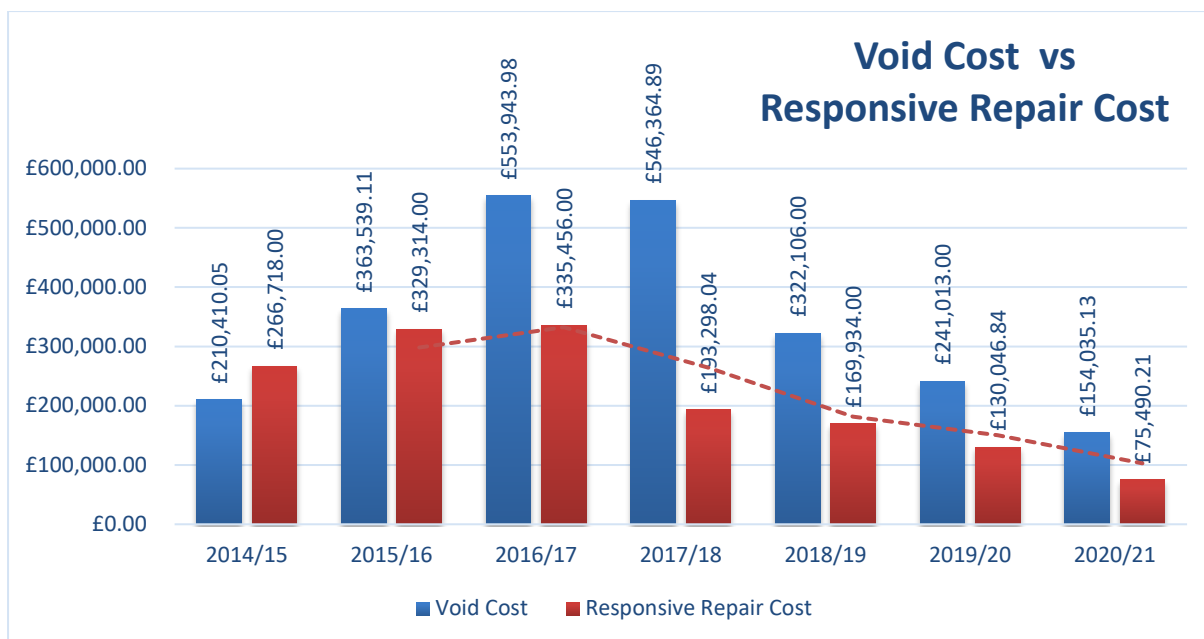


Figure 12 Void Cost vs Responsive Repair Costs

For 2020/21 the average cost of a responsive repair is £230.15

It is depicted that the downward trend shown above will continue.

The voids undertaken are to a high standard and are compliant with the Housing (Standards) Regulations 2017, and has resulted in fewer responsive repair issues being reported, and a reduction in the call-outs to general housing.

## 6 . ESTATE AND TENANCY MANAGEMENT

### 6.1 HOUSING ALLOCATIONS

The Authority must ensure that the ways of accessing the social housing waiting list and allocating the Commissioners' social housing make the most effective use of the housing stock in identifying and meeting housing need.

A separate transfer list is operated, encouraging movement in the housing stock and enables existing tenants to deal with under/over occupation. This creates sound estate management to ensure that the housing conditions and social factors of the individuals are met.

Allocating properties in this way provides a vacancy chain which allows the Authority to solve the housing needs of several households through one initial transfer led allocation.

The Department of Infrastructure's guidelines suggest that 50% of allocations should be from the transfer waiting list if a need is identified.

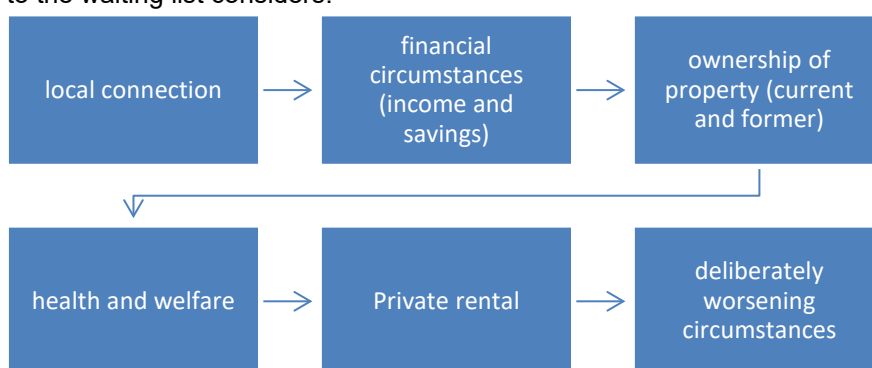
## 6.2 HOUSING APPLICATIONS

It is the Authority's duty to provide information to the public who may be looking for housing and issue advice and also to those who are at risk of becoming homeless. This ensures that the information to hand helps them make informed choices and decisions about the housing options available to them.

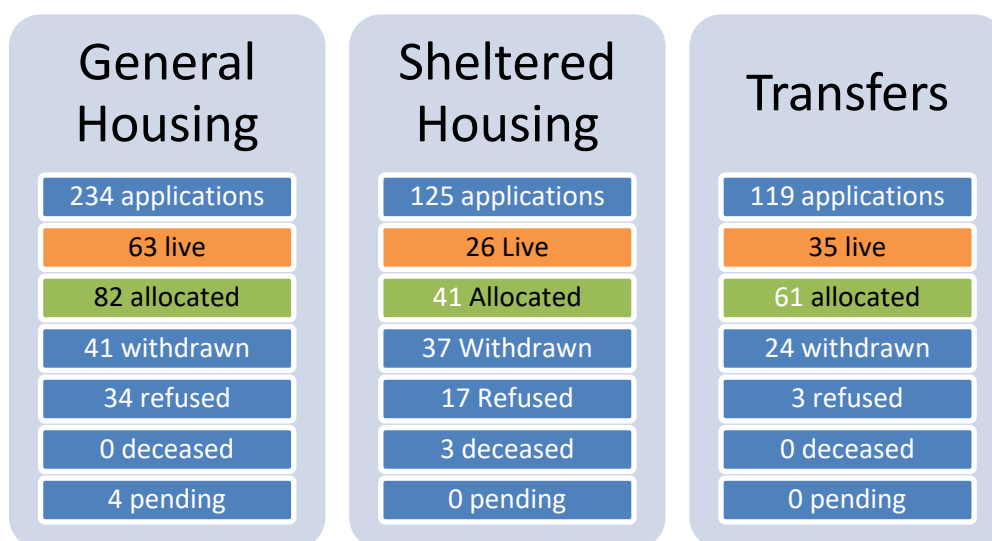
All Housing Authorities on the Island operate under a strict Uniform Acceptance Criteria and Allocations Policy which is approved by Tynwald. This points system captures the true need of each applicant and prioritises accordingly.

The Uniform Criteria<sup>6</sup> is applicable irrespective of whether it is as a stand-alone Authority such as Onchan and Douglas or those operating the shared waiting lists.

Access to the waiting list considers:-



From the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 to current to current date, the housing team have processed 478 housing applications:-



N.B. Refusals due to applicants being over the financial criteria to meet allocation. Transfers refusals due to tenant in current rent arrears.

<sup>6</sup> As required by Paragraph 1A of Schedule 3 of the Housing (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 2011 – approved by Tynwald March 2019

The breakdown is as follows:-

Housing Waiting List – as at 05/05/2021					
	1 bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	Total
General Housing	29	32	2		63
EPC	23	7			30
Transfer Waiting List as at 05/05/21					
	1 bed	2 Bed	3 Bed	4 Bed	Total
Transfer General	5	8	10	4	27
Transfer EPC	0				0
Transfer Inter-Authority	2	2	4		8

Figure 13 – Housing Waiting List Breakdown

#### (a) Shared Housing Waiting Lists

Onchan is not part of the shared housing waiting lists, but the needs of applicants is always considered prior to allocation.

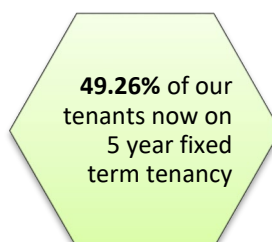
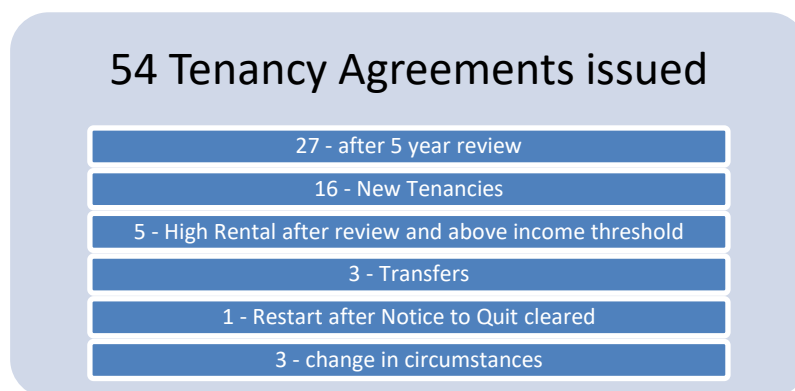
Onchan has a good relationship with all Housing Authorities on the Island and share working practices and documents. The welfare of all applicants is considered. For example where adapted housing is required, a joint working approach is used to ensure the most in need are allocated.

### 6.3 TENANCY

Tenancies are issued on a weekly tenancy irrespective of whether there is an open time period, or whether the tenancy would expire through effluxion of time.

#### (b) General Housing

From the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 tenancies are granted on a 5 year fixed term. With the tenancy expiring on a fixed date as indicated within the Tenancy Agreement. Since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2020:-



(c) **Elderly Persons Housing**

No fixed term tenancy applies to the provision of sheltered housing. However at the recent Local Authority Sheltered Housing Manager's meeting it was agreed that the tenancy agreement was overdue a review, and consultation has commenced in this regard.

Sustainment of tenancies may also require the Authority to work in partnership with others to ensure that those who require extra support know how to access the information. This includes those who are at risk of falling into or are in arrears with their rent, and tenants who may need their home adapted to cope with age, disability or caring responsibilities.

6.4 **OCCUPANCY**

It is important to analyse housing stock occupancy to drive profiling for future need along with the demand from the Housing Application list.

An occupancy audit is issued in January of each year, and this ascertains who is living in the property, and gives indication as to any changes to circumstances. 76% occupancy form returns.

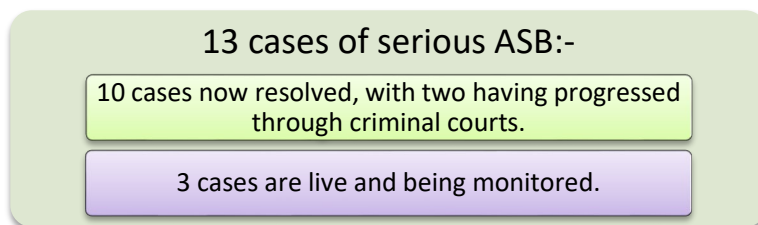
6.5 **ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)**

Anti-social behaviours are actions that harm or lack consideration for the well-being of others. It has also been defined as any type of conduct that violates the basic rights of another person and any behaviour that is considered to be disruptive to others in society.

As to what constitutes ASB can be subjective. The burden of proof is on the Authority and any partner agencies to provide valid and robust evidence to substantiate the case. If the evidence is regarded as subject to interpretation by the Court the legal process can take some considerable time as the case may be dismissed or adjourned a number of times.

Each matter is considered on a case by case basis, and in line with the Department of Infrastructure's Public Sector Eviction Operational Practice and Procedures previously adopted by the Board.

Over the last 12 months:-



Due process was followed in each instance with involvement from other stakeholders where required.



## 6.6 SHELTERED HOUSING

### 1. Independent Living

The flats are self-contained with their own front door. Residents are required to be capable of independent living, albeit this may be with support agencies which are independent from the Authority.

### 2. Warden

Following a review of Warden services post Covid-19 held on 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2020 with both Wardens, the Housing Manager, Lead Member for Housing, the Chief Executive/Clerk and the Housing Manager, it was decided to adjust the service delivery model.

In addition, the Authority is on a repayment plan with the Department of Infrastructure to achieve a neutral housing financial balance over the next 5 years.

The provision of elderly persons housing is of a great cost to the Authority and subsidised by general housing.

The Board resolved at their meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020 that the Warden will relocate to the offices of the Housing Team. This is to ensure there is no single point of failure in the Authority. The Authority is responsible for the welfare of its staff and the Warden post is a very isolated position.

The good neighbour service continues from a wider team of individuals within the Housing Team.

### 3. Tenancy Agreement

Daily calls are made to tenants to enquire about their well-being. Many tenants over the last 18 months have requested not to be called. There is no legal obligation within the sheltered housing tenancy agreement to undertake a daily call to tenants. Pendants are provided and tenants have the option of wearing these to call for assistance should it be required.

Looking to best practice elsewhere, Local Authorities have tailored their service to promote independence and the level of calls are adjusted to meet the requirements of the residents.

During the Workshop, it became clear that the levels of independence vary, from those with:-

- No need for support – weekly call
- A short-term need for support and advice – daily call for a few weeks.
- Those with long-term care needs requiring a high level of support on going daily call.

New residents are welcomed by the Warden. This will confirm what signposting, if any, to other agencies has been undertaken and flag up any issues which may require addressing.

The Warden's knowledge of the tenants helps them quickly spot any changes, due to a change in their circumstances/wellbeing and will identify if they require a step up in their support. This will involve liaising with family members and external agencies to ensure that the appropriate care and support is provided.

It is understood that floating support may be required for those residents who may require further interaction when they are vulnerable through return to their home after convalescence. However, a care and support plan would detail the type of support needed and how this support would be given in liaison with the support care team.

#### **4. Continuance of Service**

The Wardens' duties are to signpost residents to the support services that they may require.

Out of hours and bank holidays, monitoring will continue to be operated by the 24-hour monitoring care line provider.

When the Warden is absent from work, the extended Housing Team provide support.

There is 24-hour care line monitoring for both complexes to summon assistance when required.

#### **5. Telecare Monitoring**

The provider for the telecare monitoring service is live 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

#### **6. Day to Day Administration**

Responsibility for the day to day administration, maintenance of the property and security of the building is managed by the staff of the Authority, including site visits by the Property Maintenance Team, with no detriment to the residents to continue their independent living.

Residents are encouraged to contact the Property Maintenance Team direct to report any issues within their own individual flats, and any other maintenance issues of concern. The weekly checks are also carried out by staff and there will be no changes in this function.

Any personal data is kept in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations and access to such residents' data has not changed.

#### **7. Elderly Persons Provision**

Sheltered housing providers are investigating reduction of the on-site Warden. The main driver being a need to reduce costs for the provision of sheltered housing and decrease ongoing deficit. The points system for sheltered housing has not been reviewed for 18 years, and although in progress now, will not make the material difference required.

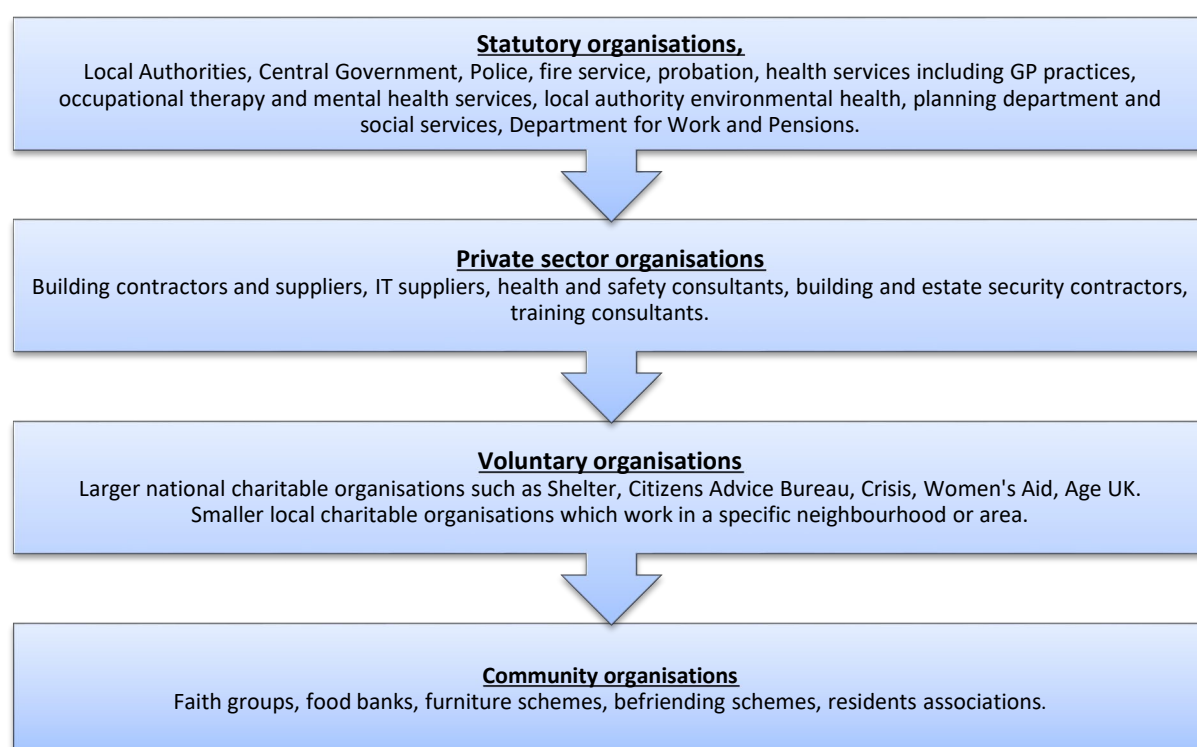
#### **8. Telephone Contact**

There is a mobile phone number for the Warden. It was deemed appropriate to give put the Authority's telephone numbers, along with the direct dial numbers to relevant officers to all tenants.

## 6.7 PARTNERSHIP WORKING

Acknowledging that the community can be diverse, partnership working can bring together the knowledge, skills and experience to deliver services for the needs of our residents. These can be informal and formal working arrangements interlinking the strategy and delivery of the service and opening up access to funding and resources that would not otherwise be available.

Officers liaise with Partners in four key areas as detailed below:



CIH 2021

When working with any partner there must be open communication, which creates professional trust. Through regular communication shared goals and values can be agreed upon to assist with the needs of the customer, whether they are social, welfare or housing need.

## 7. CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

The Authority wishes to engage with its customers to build insight as to how its service may be shaped for its current and future services. It is important to build a two-way exchange of information which will help feed into the policy and strategy environment.

An effective mode of communication is social media. Using Facebook as an example, updates regarding the provision of services over the pandemic were hitting a target audience average of 3.9k per month. These were also shared with local community Facebook groups. However, using this forum also encouraged wider spread by word of mouth, which resulted in a drop in telephone queries.

The communication strategy is being reviewed and expanded to encourage the adoption of a customer focussed approach and to allow the customers to 'have a voice'. This will start with questionnaires to the tenants at the Elderly Persons Complexes.

The occurrence of the Coronavirus Covid-19 pandemic has affected the relationship between the customers and the officers both of whom are facing many financial challenges. This has resulted in the Authority reviewing how the process is operated and updating the information held on its tenants and improving the professional relationship between the tenant and officers. In doing so, it assists in identifying gaps, an example is as follows:-

*It was identified that engagement with customers regarding rent arrears was a major issue. A change in practice, strengthening customer engagement building up trust, finding out about their current circumstances, setting up repayment plans, and signposting to support services.*



The pandemic has had an impact on social care needs both physically and mentally across the demographic. The Housing Team's roles are diverse and during this time they noticed a significant shift in providing support directly or through partnership stakeholders to sustain tenancies.

## 7.2 SAFEGUARDING

Everybody in the community has a role to play; safeguarding is everybody's business. All members of the community can actively contribute to ensure children, young people and vulnerable adults are kept safe.

As a result of the Learning from a Serious Case Management Review, the Evictions guidance document is in the process of being updated to incorporate recommendations from the 2020 Safeguarding Board's Improvement Plan. The review and newly renamed draft Guidance on the Prevention and Management of Evictions document is under consultation.

The new guidance document puts more focus upon the prevention of eviction and the additional steps that public sector housing providers should attempt to make before taking more formal or legal action. Key changes of note are:

- ❖ The addition of the traffic light system and welfare checkpoints
- ❖ Removal of information about re-applying for public housing after eviction, which will be published separately
- ❖ The emphasis upon care and referral to other government support agencies.

The Department will be offering training and best practice to housing professionals involved with the support of vulnerable tenants.

## 7.3 TENANT SATISFACTION

Tenants do not have a great deal of input into how they would like to see the estates and their homes improved. Although through the Kitchen Framework Agreement, they were able to have some input with regard to tiling and worktops, and contractors worked with them to ensure the appliances were in the best position for the tenant.

Customer Satisfaction Surveys are being introduced with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021, this will give the Authority qualitative data for analysis and an opportunity for residents to have their say.

## 7.4 QUARTLERY STATISTICS

The Authority are required to submit quarterly Standards of Performance statistics to the Department of Infrastructure.

... Housing Authorities on the Island are now measured against Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) See *Appendix 3*.

## 8. FUTURE HOUSING

Housing is crucial for the health and well-being of residents. Affordability in social housing has worsened as a result of Covid-19 for many households due to financial constraints. It is now more than ever, imperative that residents feel secure in their affordable housing options.

New development needs to address identified housing needs to address the key challenges such as:

- an ageing population
- affordability
- mismatch in demand and supply of local authority stock
- the stock profile currently does not match residents' needs and aspirations.

As evidenced through the annual occupancy audit, the Commissioners housing stock portfolio is currently under occupied:-

Property Type	Under Occupied	Over-Occupied
3 Bed House	22.76%	5.7%
2 Bed House	42%	0.86%

With a further 46% of the housing waiting list being of single persons.

### 8.1 MANX DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

In November 2020, Tynwald resolved to establish a Development Corporation in the Isle of Man, focus on the development of unoccupied or previously developed urban and brownfield sites, as a priority. In March 2021 the Manx Development Corporation which was formed, with IOM Treasury as a share-holder.

The Minister for Enterprise commented:

*'Establishing Manx Development Corporation is an important first step for the repurposing of Government owned brownfield sites. Furthermore, it is a catalyst to realising the potential that can be achieved by unlocking a range of public and private development opportunities to enhance the appearance of our towns and contribute towards economic prosperity, alongside social and public realm benefits.'*

### 8.2 LAND FOR HOUSING

An element of the future housing need may be addressed under the Isle of Man Strategic Plan, Chapter 8, Housing Policy 5, any new build schemes planned within the District are required to provide 25% for affordable housing, which could be public sector units, mid-rent schemes or first time buyers.

However, Onchan is landlocked and there are very few opportunities to acquire land for building purposes. Consideration needs to be given for redevelopment opportunities to maximise the use of the land and unused buildings, along with any land that may become available and it is hoped that the Manx Development Corporation will identify sites for development within Onchan District.

## 9. ADMINISTRATION

Administration undertaken is an important factor to meet the business need and align with the aims of the Authority.

### 9.1 SERVICE TECHNOLOGIES

Customers expect to have information available to hand immediately from anywhere. Effective communication is essential in providing easy to understand information to the customers in a timely manner using a range of media channels, such as facebook and the website. The Authority is undertaking work to improve the digital innovation.

The Authority is in support of the introduction of a new housing management solution which focuses on the customer experience, connecting the customer and property data which is easily accessed through an 'App' feature and simplifies engagement and answering surveys. This would also give data for benchmarking services and highlight gaps in the service. This will improve tenant engagement and the health and safety of employees, and make for a better customer experience. The consideration of this solution has been delayed due to the Coronavirus Pandemic.

The Authority does not wish to force people down the digital route but can actively highlight the benefits gained for both tenants and the organisation to drive efficiencies, target resources, reduce costs, improve service delivery, and increase tenant satisfaction.

### 9.1 TRAINING

The skills of the Authority's personnel is crucial to the customer experience and to meet the organisational business needs. The Authority is supportive in developing their team for academic and technical skills and for personnel to reach their full potential.

Training has been undertaken for the Housing Teams during 2020/21 detailed in the table below. Please note that this list is not exhaustive as training has been undertaken covering in-house policies and procedures.

TRAINING		
1.	General Data Protection Regulation Training	Completed
2.	Equality and Diversity Training	Completed
3.	Risk Assessment	Completed
4.	Chartered Institute of Housing Level 3	Completed
5.	Chartered Institute of Housing Level 5	Commenced
6.	Domestic Abuse Awareness	Completed
7.	Public Health and Social Care Work Shop	Completed
8.	Sharps Training	Completed
9.	Construction Industry Training Board Site Manage Safety Training Scheme	Completed
10.	Vulcan – Management of Fire Safety and Fire Risk Assessor	Completed

A training matrix has been developed and will be implemented in consultation with other Housing Authorities to make sessions cost effective by sharing knowledge.

## 9.2 SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT<sup>7</sup> analysis was conducted by team members and can be viewed below:



Figure 14 – SWOT analysis

<sup>7</sup> Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities and Threats.



## 10. RECOMMENDATIONS

In conclusion, the report has given an overview of the provision of the housing service. The recommendations below are submitted for Members consideration:-

<b>FINANCE - RENTAL INCOME</b>		<b>2021 update</b>
1.	Reduce the rental payments "arrears" from 4.5% to less than 2.5%.	In progress
2.	Establish measures for tighter controls on the levels of rent arrears.	Following Public Sector Eviction Operational Practice and Procedures 2019
3.	Initiating first contact with the tenant a lot earlier in the process	Ongoing
4.	Investigate writing off historic arrears before the end of this financial year.	Finance Manager to consider
5.	Direct Debits to be signed upon new tenancy hand over.	Included in new welcome packs
6.	Move to tenants paying in advance as per their tenancy agreement	
7.	Investigate sharing agreement to create a bad debtors register across the housing authorities	Unable to achieve with the current GDPR legislation.
<b>FINANCE - STAFFING</b>		
8.	Increase to full capacity to ensure effectiveness of the provision of the housing service and its management	Completed
9.	Ensure adequate training is provided to meet any knowledge gaps in providing an efficient housing service	Ongoing
<b>MAINTENANCE AND REPAIRS</b>		
10.	Instigate rolling inspections of 100 individual properties per annum, to ascertain the stock condition, which will assist in giving an overall picture for future maintenance programmes	Inspections delayed due to Covid-19. Program now commenced.
11.	Investigate re-charge policy.	Drafted
12.	Procurement - Investigations are underway as to what work schemes can be carried out under capital arrangements rather than direct from the Housing Maintenance Funding	Under review.
13.	Refurbishment scheme for Springfield Court Phase 1 and Phase 2.	Business case approved by the Department of Infrastructure and Treasury. Now at Design and Tender Stage
14.	Investigate what framework agreements are available, e.g. replacement kitchens	KFA commenced, completion delayed due to Covid-19 interruption
<b>VOIDS</b>		
15.	Quicker turnaround of empty properties to comply with the KPI set by the Department of Infrastructure. (DOI)	Now meeting KPI's set by DOI
16.	A Review is being undertaken through business process mapping to continue to improve policy and procedures to reduce void cost.	Completed

<b>Estate and Tenancy Management:</b>		
17.	That all 60% of general housing tenancies be moved over to the five year fixed term tenancy within the next 5 years.	<b>49% achieved.</b>
18.	Tenancies are transferred to five year fixed term tenancies as and when opportunities arise, such as change in name, addition of partner, or there is reason to investigate the tenancy further which highlights changes in circumstances.	<b>Ongoing.</b>
19.	Work with the Department of Infrastructure for the review of the Tenancy Agreement for Sheltered Housing.	<b>Consultation commenced</b>
<b>SHELTERED HOUSING – COMMUNITY ALLOWANCES</b>		
20.	Review of community allowances	<b>Consultation commenced</b>
<b>FUTURE HOUSING</b>		
21.	Ensure that all new build schemes have 25% new build for affordable housing	<b>No new schemes planned at present.</b>
22.	Actively source land for housing.	<b>Liaise with Manx Development Corporation</b>
<b>DOCUMENTATION</b>		
23.	Review of the suite of documentation throughout the Housing Department, to ensure more user friendly so that it can be easily understood.	<b>Ongoing</b>
<b>INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY</b>		
24.	Board support to move to the Civica Housing Management Solution which will assist in tenant engagement and health and safety of employees.	
<b>TENANT SATISFACTION</b>		
25.	Guidelines for the completion and submission of Public Sector Housing Quarterly Standards of Performance in relation to responsive repairs and housing management.	<b>Received from DOI</b>
26.	Issue KPIs for responsive repairs and housing management	<b>To be issued w.e.f 01/04/2021</b>
27.	Visit new tenants within 3 months of allocation	<b>Delayed due to Coronavirus. Due to recommence</b>
28.	Record number of formal complaints received and resolved in the quarter. (Definitions need to be agreed, as this could be just reporting a repair in the property)	

## Appendix 1 - Total Void Cost

Year						
2020/21	2019/20	2018/19	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15
↓						
Total Properties Void						
23	36	34	45	43	33	33
↓						
Total Void Cost						
£176,814.21	£241,013.00	£546,364.89	£546,364.89	£592,902.81	£370,972.00	£217,757.71

**Appendix 2 – Housing Planned Maintenance Programme, Annual Review and Update  
2021**

Document attached.

## Appendix 3 – KPI Summary Report 2020/21

06/05/2021

<b>QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE FIGURES</b> <b>Onchan District Commissioners</b>									
INDICATOR	Quarter 1		Quarter 2		Quarter 3		Quarter 4		Year End
Anticipated rental income collected (Target >95%)	107.2%	✓	99.6%	✓	91.9%	✗	99.6%	✓	99.6% ✓
Overdue rental payments "arrears" (Target <2.5%)	15.1%	✗	14.9%	✗	17.2%	✗	18.0%	✗	16.3% ✗
Rental loss from empty properties (Target <2%)	1.6%	✓	0.9%	✓	0.7%	✓	0.9%	✓	1.0% ✓
Proportion of stock vacant (Target <2%)	1.2%	✓	0.8%	✓	0.6%	✓	0.6%	✓	
Proportion of emergency repairs completed within target time of 24 hours (Target >100%)	100.0%	✓	100.0%	✓	100.0%	✓	100.0%	✓	100.0% ✓
Proportion of urgent repairs completed within target time of 7 working days (Target >95%)	100.0%	✓	100.0%	✓	100.0%	✓	100.0%	✓	100.0% ✓
Proportion of routine repairs completed within target time within 28 days (Target >90%)	100.0%	✓	96.1%	✓	92.1%	!	97.2%	✓	95.5% ✓
Proportion of immediate voids completed within 7 days (Target >95%)									#DIV/0! ##
Proportion of standard voids completed within 5 weeks (Target >90%)			66.7%	✗	80.0%	✗			75.0% ✗
Proportion of major voids completed within 12 weeks (Target >90%)	80.0%	✗	0.0%	✗	100.0%	✓	66.7%	✗	66.7% ✗
Proportion of anticipated maintenance spend in quarter (Trend data only)	33.33%		60.27%		71.11%		28.83%		48.39%
Total number of new housing allocations transferees and off waiting list (Trend data only)	3		2		6		2		
Average time for relet from maintenance sign-off (Trend data only)	0		0		0		0		
Total on housing waiting list (Trend data only for those providers not within shared list environment)	79		93		91		92		
Proportion of surveyed tenants who were satisfied with their repairs service (Target 100%)									
Proportion of surveyed tenants who were satisfied with their management service (Target 100%)									

## Appendix 4 – AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

