

**CITY OF GLOUCESTER**

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT**

**Meeting: Monday, 24th November 2008 at 18:30**  
**North Warehouse, The Docks, Gloucester**

**Membership:** Cllrs. Haigh (Chair), Hanman, Lawlor, Noakes, Crawford, Heath (Vice-Chair), Whittaker, Dee and J. McLellan

**1. APOLOGIES**

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members and Officers are reminded that at the start of the meeting they should declare any known interest in any matter to be considered, and also during the meeting if it becomes apparent that they have an interest in the matters being discussed.

**3. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 6)**

Minutes of the meeting 25 September 2008

**4. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

**5. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS**

**6. CABINET MEMBERS QUESTION TIME (MAX. 45 MINS)**

Cabinet Members' Work Commitments

Report by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture ('to follow')

Report by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Health ('to follow')

**7. PARKING AND PARKING ENFORCEMENT IN BARTON AND TREDWORTH - PRESENTATION BY COUNTY COUNCIL**

Philip Williams, Passenger Transport and Parking Manager, Integrated Transport Unit, Gloucestershire County Council.

**8. UPDATE TO HOUSING GREEN PAPER (Pages 7 - 16)**

Report by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Health.

**9. GCH PERFORMANCE QUARTER 2 2008/09 (Pages 17 - 38)**

Report by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Health

**10. REGENERATION UPDATES AND PROJECTS (OCTOBER 2008) (Pages 39 - 46)**

Update Report by the Corporate Director of Regeneration

**11. SCRUTINY BUILT ENVIRONMENT WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 47 - 50)**

The attached Work Programme is for information only and will be considered by the Scrutiny Panel (comprising Chairs and Vice Chairs of scrutiny committees) along with the Work Programmes of the two other scrutiny committees. Members are invited to refer any comments on the Work Programme to the Scrutiny Panel.

**12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 26 January 2009 at 18.30 hrs.

## SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

**MEETING** : Thursday, 25th September 2008

**PRESENT** : Cllrs. Haigh (Chair), Heath (Vice-Chair), Hanman (Sheriff & Deputy Mayor), Lawlor, Noakes, Whittaker and J. McLellan

**Also in attendance**

Councillor Paul James, Leader of the Council, Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture

Councillor Andrew Gravells, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Housing and Health

Councillor Debbie Llewellyn, Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources

Julian Wain, Chief Executive

Phil Staddon, Corporate Director of Regeneration

Trea Connon, Housing Services Client Manager

Mary Hopper, Housing Options Service Manager

Mr R. Wharton, Finance Manager, Gloucester City Homes

**APOLOGIES** : Cllr. Crawford  
Peter Gillett, Corporate Director of Resources  
Amanda Wadsley, Corporate Director of Strategy and Development

### 117. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 118. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2008 were taken as read and signed by the Chair.

### 119. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME (MAX 15 MINS)

Kay Powell asked the Committee who owned Tanner Hall and enquired why there had been no progress in its restoration in the last year?

The Director of Regeneration commented that Tanner Hall was in private ownership and that discussions had taken place with the owner. Solutions took time to come to fruition and Tanner Hall was listed in the Buildings at Risk register.

### 120. PETITIONS AND DEPUTATIONS (MAX 10 MINS)

There were no petitions and deputations.

### 121. CABINET MEMBERS QUESTION TIME (MAX. 45 MINS)

(a) Report by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Health

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT  
25.09.08**

The Scrutiny Committee considered a report by the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Culture setting out work undertaken since the last meeting.

Councillor Heath asked if a Cinema was being planned for the Kings Quarter area. The Leader of the Council informed Members it was early to say but a city centre Cinema would be a positive step. The Corporate Director of Regeneration felt that the idea of having a Cinema in the Kings Quarter would anchor nicely within the retail scheme which would make for a vibrant area. These opportunities would be explored in more detail at a later time.

A Member asked if Enterprise were meeting their contractual obligations in relation to the grot spot areas. The Leader of the Council advised that monitoring of Enterprise contract was now under the Environmental portfolio. Officers would exercise their powers under the Environmental Protection Act where appropriate.

A Member expressed disappointment that the County Cricket Club were not holding any matches in Gloucester in 2009. The Leader of the Council advised Members that discussions with the Executive of the Cricket Club had taken place and he had expressed disappointment that no matches would be held in Gloucester.

A Member asked for an update on Gloucester City FC. The Leader of the Council advised that discussions were taking place with the Club.

A Member enquired about the possibility of a large screen to be erected to screen events such as rugby. The Leader of the Council informed Members that it was still a possibility and that a design team were putting together a specification but no design had yet been agreed.

A Member asked what was being done to attract more traders to Hempstead meadows Market especially on a Saturday? The Leader of the Council informed Members that it was early days for the Market as it had not been operating on the new site for very long. Charges from £30 had been reduced to £10 to bolster Saturday trading.

(b) Cabinet Member for Housing and Health

The Scrutiny Committee considered a report by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Health on work commitments since the last meeting.

A Member enquired as to why there was no reference to the housing review and the future of the City Council's housing stock and the delivery of decent homes. In response, it was reported that this matter was included in the Cabinet Forward Plan.

**RESOLVED**

That the Cabinet Members' reports be noted.

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT  
25.09.08**

**122. HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY**

The report by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Health presented the draft reviewed Homelessness Strategy and Action Plan.

The Homelessness Act 2002 made it a statutory requirement for all Councils to carry out a review of homelessness in their area and develop a homelessness strategy and review it at least every five years.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Health informed Members with regard to emergency accommodation. An extra 14 places where people would have otherwise ended up in B&B accommodation. Work was being done to prevent homelessness in compliance with CLG would be available. A Member asked to review this again in six months time to see how effective the plans had been and also to see if the 'credit crunch' had had any effect. The Cabinet Member advised that an update would be produced in six months' time. A Member advised that he would like to see monthly updates examining statistics of homelessness and single people, looking at month by month to see what trends emerged. The Housing Options Service Manager reported that an Action Plan could be produced in six months time or on a monthly basis if this was more helpful.

In answer to a question from a Member, the Cabinet Member advised that Environmental Health staff regularly checked accommodation in the private sector to ensure it was of an acceptable standard.

The Chair asked if street-sleeping was on the increase. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Health reported that officers were alerted to any street sleepers and responded accordingly. The Housing Options Service Manager advised that the Council funded outreach workers who were fully aware of all the rough sleepers and they offered help and advice to them.

**RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

**123. COUNCIL TARGETS FOR BUILDING A BETTER GLOUCESTER - CORPORATE PLAN 2008-2011**

The Leader of the Council presented the updated measures and targets used in 'Building a Better Gloucester' the corporate plan for 2008-2011. The Leader of the Council presented the attached performance report in Appendix 2, showing performance of the high level measures up to July 2008. Baseline standards would be set using the half year data available after 30 September.

The Cabinet Member for Performance and Resources informed Members that the report reflected 'work in progress'. The Chair commented that it would also be helpful to have an historical trend data incorporated in the Appendix.

**RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT  
25.09.08**

**124. REGENERATION UPDATES AND PROJECTS**

Members received regeneration updates and projects for August 2008.

The Chair asked if the developers of the Kwik-Save site were taking the scheme forward. The Corporate Director of Regeneration informed Members that discussions with planning officers and developers would be taking place.

A Member asked if funding was available for the railway station on the Railway Triangle. The Chief Executive informed Members that the GHURC had set up a Steering Panel to examine the feasibility of a station on this site. It would be very costly to implement and Network Rail would not support the Railway Triangle site for operational use. A further report on this issue would be brought before Members.

A Member asked if there was to be a Theatre sited at Blackfriars. The Corporate Director of Regeneration reported that the masterplan was still to be firmed up but there would be a strong cultural content in the Blackfriars area and opportunities through the University Campus. There would also be funding for the Priory to make it fit for modern use so that a variety of events could then be staged there.

**RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

**125. BUILDINGS AT RISK REGISTER**

The Corporate Director of Regeneration updated Members on the buildings at risk register, particularly highlighting the following matters:-

- 66 Westgate Street - progressing
- Llanthony Priory - next week the Trustees were meeting to consider plans to update the Priory and make fit for modern day use.

A Member advised that he had been approached by two concerned citizens about 333 Stroud Road with regards to the badly dilapidated state of the property. The Corporate Director of Regeneration advised that it would be timely to look at this property to assess its condition.

The Chair commented on the appearance of Oxford Street and asked if there were any plans to improve the look of the street for example by planting more trees, improving bins and street furniture. The Corporate Director of Regeneration advised that Oxford Street would be examined to see what improvements could be made.

**RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

**126. PERFORMANCE MONITORING OF GLOUCESTER CITY HOMES**

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT  
25.09.08**

The report by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Health provided members with information on the performance of Gloucester City Homes (GCH) and in comparison to the top quartile performance of District Councils and ALMO's.

Members noted areas of good performance particularly the increased percentage of emergency repairs completed within target (page 4 of the attached appendix), customer satisfaction with the delivery of the Decent Homes work (page 6) and the void turnaround time (page 8) which remained well above top quartile performance for District Councils as well as for ALMO's.

The Committee noted that whilst overall performance was good, there were a number of areas where there was still room for improvement.

**RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

**127. SCRUTINY INFORMATION REQUESTS**

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Health reported that the proposal for Supporting People Scrutiny jointly with County Council was a very worthwhile piece of work and that he would consult with the Corporate Director of Services and Neighbourhoods on progressing this piece of work through the County.

The Leader of the Council reported on the Eastgate Street Crime figures for Gloucester drawing attention to the fact that crime was going down in the area.

**RESOLVED**

That the item be noted.

**128. OUTCOME FROM GCH DELIVERY PLAN**

The report by the Housing Services Client Manager advised Members of the key objectives in GCH's Delivery Plan for 2008-09.

The Chair asked if Equalities monitoring was reflected in the report. The Finance Manager of Gloucester City Homes advised that quarterly monitoring was taking place on equality issues within GCH.

**RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

**129. GCH YEAR END PERFORMANCE 2008**

The report by the Cabinet Member for Housing and Health provided Members with information on the performance of Gloucester City Homes (GCH) in comparison to top quartile performance of other District Councils and ALMOs, and to scrutinise performance over time. Quarter 4 ended on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2008.

**SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT  
25.09.08**

**RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

**130. GCH DELIVERY PLAN 2008/09 REPORT**

The report by the Housing Services Client Manager advised Members of the key objectives in GCH Delivery Plan for 2008-09.

**RESOLVED**

That the report be noted.

**131. SCRUTINY BUILT ENVIRONMENT WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chair reported that a revised programme for the Tree Task and Finish Group had been reported to Scrutiny Committee No. 2.

The Chair reported that the Housing Green Paper should be on the agenda for the next meeting.

The Chief Executive advised that a Scrutiny Consultant had been assigned to look at how the scrutiny process worked within the Council.

**RESOLVED**

That the work programme be noted.

**132. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 24 November 2008 at 18.30 pm.

**Time of commencement: 18:30 hours**

**Time of conclusion: 20:40 hours**

**Chair**



# Gloucester City Council

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	<b>: SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>: 24<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2008</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	<b>: UPDATE TO HOUSING GREEN PAPER</b>
<b>DECISION TYPE</b>	<b>: -</b>
<b>WARD</b>	<b>: ALL</b>
<b>REPORT BY</b>	<b>: CABINET MEMBER FOR HOUSING &amp; HEALTH</b>
<b>NO. OF APPENDICES</b>	<b>: 1 – RESPONSE TO GREEN PAPER – OCT 2007</b>
<b>REFERENCE NO.</b>	<b>: PT24118A</b>

## 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on the City Council's progress in relation to the Housing Green Paper – "Homes for the future: More affordable more sustainable".

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 For members to note progress on the Green Paper.

## 3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The 'Green Paper' was published by the Government in July 2007. A City Council response to this report was put together in October 2007 (Appendix 1).
- 3.2 The 'Green Paper' was the Government's response to the problem that the supply of homes was not keeping pace with demand and, as a consequence, house prices were rising excluding many on lower incomes from market entry.
- 3.3 The paper sets out the Government's plans for delivering homes, with increased building targets; additional investment; new ways of identifying and using land for development.
- 3.4 The aim was also to produce "more social housing – ensuring that a decent home at an affordable price is for the many, not the few. Building homes more quickly – by unblocking the planning system and releasing land for development. More affordable homes - by increasing the options for low cost home ownership and more long term and affordable mortgage products. And greener homes – with high environmental standards and flagship developments leading the way."

## 4.0 PROGRESS

- 4.1 **Increasing Housing supply:** The Council's response was positive in relation to the proposals. However, we expressed concerns that sufficient funding must be put in place to provide the resources on the ground to respond to major planning applications, and, where appropriate, ensure sound master-planning of developments.

The council has received approximately £440,000 in the first award of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant. The grant was calculated on criteria relating to progress on the 'Local Development Framework' (LDF); number of housing completions in the previous year, the five year housing land supply calculation and the current position on the 'Strategic Housing Market Assessment' and also the 'Strategic Housing Land Assessment'. The achievement against 'Development Control' targets does not now mean additional grant is secured, but failure to meet the targets does result in a reduction in the grant.

- 4.2 The funding previously received has been used on a variety of projects that contribute to the 'LDF' process, including developing the evidence base. A 'Flood Risk Assessment' has already been funded and a contribution is likely to be made toward a 'Surface Water Management Plan' later this year. The allocation of the current years grant was approved by Cabinet on 12<sup>th</sup> November and includes substantial allocations to support the new Joint Core Strategy work and contingency funding, with potential for specialist support for the Development Control function in relation to land with contamination. The criteria for achieving grant are likely to change and these will be monitored to enable the City to seek to maximise future grant. This may include targets on affordable housing provided and bringing long-term empty properties back into use.
- 4.3 **Special Purpose Vehicles:** The Council had welcomed this proposal; however local authorities are now able to apply for grant to build on their own land, although the matter of securing additional lending still remains different to that of RSLs in that it is considered to be public funding debt.
- 4.4 **Mini-Reviews of Regional Plans:** The Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West is currently progressing towards adoption, expected at the end of 2008 or early 2009. It has been stated that the housing numbers will be subject to an early review.
- 4.5 **Housing Land Availability Assessments:** The use of Housing Land Availability Assessments in determining planning applications where a Core Strategy has not been adopted was objected to by this Council. HLAAs are regularly being tested at Planning Inquiries as part of the consideration of the five year 'Housing Land Supply' that each Council must demonstrate it has under the requirements of Planning Policy Statement 3 (Housing). Achieving an adequate 'HLS' appears in some instances to be proving more important than development plan policy. It was, for example, a key factor at the Tewkesbury Longford Public Inquiry (570 dwellings granted on appeal earlier this year). In terms of Core Strategies, the Government now accepts that key strategic housing allocations can be included in these documents.
- 4.6 **Speeding Up Delivery:** The Council supported the proposals for speeding up the implementation of a planning permission and the period within which a outline planning permission must be implemented has now been reduced from five to three years. In addition, the definition of commencement of development was to be amended, although this has so far not taken place.
- 4.7 **More Affordable Homes:** The national target was for an increase from 45,000 homes a year by 2010-11 rising to 50,000 within the next spending review. This received qualified support from the City Council, in that provision needs to be

carefully planned to ensure it remains sustainable. The Housing Corporation has made £66 million available to Gloucestershire over a three-year period. The Corporation will determine funding based on the value for money and whether strategic objectives are being met in relation to each bid submitted. To date Gloucester has been allocated £7.9m in addition to the £15.8m allocated 06/07.

- 4.8 Other options included Councils building on their own land. Gloucester City Homes were successful in participating in a 'qualification' process to enable them to bid for Corporation funding; this may have enabled GCH to develop on Council held land. For the reasons given in 4.4 above, and more recently on independent advice following a desk-top options appraisal; it was considered that without the benefit of additional council borrowing, currently RSLs might still offer better value for money when securing units on these sites. In addition, the Government are reviewing the way housing subsidy is delivered. Therefore, until proposals are available regarding the new regime, the above study indicates that it might be premature to develop proposals further at this time.
- 4.9 **Increased grants for High Performing Councils:** So far this matter has not progressed.
- 4.10 **Greener, Better Designed Homes:** These proposals were supported. In relation to properties receiving public funding via the Housing Corporation, they are now required to meet Level 3 of the Code for Sustainable Homes, which requires the incorporation of many sustainable construction or utility components. In time this level will rise upward and aspires to reach Level 6 where new-build properties are carbon-neutral. The Government has since introduced 'Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods – National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society' which set out the Government's vision for all public housing to be delivered to 'Lifetime Home Standards' by 2011 and a view to bringing regulations forward for all housing by 2013. In addition, these matters along with those relating to improved 'design and access statements' will also be addressed through the RSS and Joint Core Strategy.
- 4.11 **More Family Homes:** Currently this is encouraged through the prioritisation of bids received by the Housing Corporation where they provide family housing. In addition, planning policies shaped by the SHMA will provide the evidence base against which to secure appropriate levels, as far as is possible.
- 4.12 **Housing for the Elderly:** the aspirations of the policies set out in 'Lifetime Homes, Lifetime Neighbourhoods – National Strategy for Housing in an Ageing Society' will be considered and incorporated as far as possible as Core Strategy policies and Supplementary Planning Documents are developed, particularly in relation to the provision of Lifetime Homes. Currently the Council has a requirement for 15% LTH properties to be provided. However, this figure will require amendment to meet the pace of the national drive.
- 4.13 **Infrastructure Provision:** This included a 'test of soundness' in relation to infrastructure provision and was supported in principle. Planning Policy Statement 12 has now been revised and includes new 'tests of soundness', one of which is that Core Strategies must be 'justified' i.e. founded on a robust and credible evidence base'. PPS12 goes on to state that 'the core strategy should be supported by evidence of what physical, social and green infrastructure is needed to enable

the amount of development proposed for the area, taking account of its type and distribution. This evidence should cover who will provide the infrastructure and when it will be provided'. In other words the issue of infrastructure provision has been given increased importance as set out in the green paper.

## **5.0 FUTURE WORK**

- 5.1 To respond to any new proposals regarding subsidy provided to the Council for its housing stock and keep all options under review for the delivery of affordable housing offering best value for money.
- 5.2 To incorporate more recent Government directives associated with the Green Paper into policies reflecting the changing emphasis of provision for older persons; families; sustainability.
- 5.3 To continue to monitor delivery and ensure an adequate supply of land for housing delivery. Endeavour to meet targets to maximise level of 'HPDG'.
- 5.4 To lead and enable RSLs to deliver suitable schemes and maximise the levels of social housing grant.
- 5.5 A members seminar relating to the Regional Spatial Strategy housing figures, growth options and the forthcoming partial review of the RSS will be held in the near future.

## **6.0 CONCLUSIONS**

- 6.1 Housing Supply needs to be increased and the council has been awarded £440,000 Housing and Planning Delivery Grant based on its progress on the LDF; the number of housing completions, and its projections for a five year housing land supply. The grant has, and will be used on a variety of work to support the Joint Core Strategy process and ensure the Development Control system remains effective in achieving targets.
- 6.2 The option to set up Special Purpose Vehicles or to approve GCH developing on Council land will be considered once the Government has reviewed the way housing subsidy will be delivered in the future.
- 6.3 The Regional Spatial Strategy for the South West is now moving towards adoption and a partial review on the housing supply issue will then follow.
- 6.4 Key strategic housing allocations may now be included in LDF Core Strategies.
- 6.5 To help speed up delivery the period within which an outline planning permission must be implemented has reduced from five to three years.
- 6.6 To assist with the Government's overall target of delivering 45,000-50,000 more affordable homes p.a. the Housing Corporation has made £66 million available to Gloucestershire over a three-year period.

6.7 The government have introduced proposals to secure Greener, Better Designed Homes including a Level 3 Code for Sustainable Homes increasing to Level 6, requiring sustainable construction or utility components aspiring to new-build properties being carbon-neutral.

6.8 In order to deliver more family homes the Housing Corporation are prioritising bids that provide family housing.

**7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Not applicable due to advisory nature of the report.

**8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 Not applicable due to advisory nature of the report.

**9.0 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS** – Not assessed at this time, given advisory nature of report.

**10.0 PREDICTIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (EQUALITIES)** – Not assessed at this time, given advisory nature of report.

**11.0 OTHER CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

Not assessed at this time, given advisory nature of report.

1. Community Safety (Author to complete)

None.

2. Environmental (Author to complete)

None.

3. Staffing

None.

4. Trade Union

None.

**Background Papers** :

**Published Papers** :

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**APPENDIX 1**

**Homes for the future: more affordable, more sustainable**

**Gloucester City Council's response to the green paper – October 2007**

**Increasing Housing Supply**

- We welcome the new incentives and guidance for councils to ensure they build the homes their communities need.

Whilst it is accepted that housing numbers will have to increase to meet forecast projections of need and demand it must be recognised that for growth to be accommodated in the most sustainable manner, additional resources will be required to ensure that appropriate infrastructure is provided and to ensure that local authorities have the skills and resources to ensure the proper planning of major new developments including urban extensions and new settlements for example through the commissioning of master-planning exercises. This should be more fully recognised in the green paper.

**More information would be helpful on how the new Housing and Planning Delivery Grant is to be calculated and how much funding it will offer**

However it is welcomed and could provide the council with resources to carryout land viability studies enabling well researched challenges to developers in Sec 106 negotiations and the possibility of increased numbers of affordable homes

We support the view that councils will need to do more to bring long-term empty homes back into use. The Housing and Planning Delivery Grant is a possible route for channelling resources into this type of work.

The ability for councils to form special purpose vehicles that will be able to bid for Housing Corporation grant for new homes is welcomed. Any qualifying criteria for Housing Corporation Grant should be equivalent to those for RSLs.

We welcome new measures to discourage private sector builders from 'land banking'. Private developers have held onto sites in Gloucester for investment purposes for several years.

We agree it is important to revisit past estimates to ensure targets are appropriate so we support mini-reviews of regional plans for housing to increase regional and local targets across the country.

Objection is however raised to the statement set out in the green paper that, 'where a Core Strategy has not been adopted Housing Land Availability **Assessments will be a material consideration in determining housing applications and appeals**'.

Whilst it is accepted that local authorities should aim to get their Core Strategies adopted as soon as possible, it is evident that many local authorities are struggling to adapt to the new style of document required under the 2004 Act. As such, it may take longer than desirable to achieve an adopted Core Strategy.

Housing land availability assessments are intended to be a detailed catalogue of potential housing sites with a view expressed about the deliverability of each site. Because a site has been included in the HLAA does not mean that the local authority wishes to, or indeed needs to, allocate it for development.

The suggestion in the green paper that housing land availability assessments will be a material consideration in planning applications and appeals where a Core Strategy has not been adopted is likely to lead to increased pressure for development on housing sites that may not be needed.

Furthermore, the role of the Core Strategy is to identify broad locations for development not to allocate individual development sites.

To suggest that the housing land availability assessment will be a material consideration in the absence of an adopted core strategy is inappropriate.

### **Speeding Up Delivery**

The proposals to speed up the implementation of planning permission are strongly supported, as they will ensure that the private sector contributes more fully towards the overall aim of increasing the speed of delivery of new housing.

The principle of amending the definition of commencement of development is supported and other measures should also be introduced alongside to ensure that planning permission is implemented as soon as is reasonably possible.

### **More Affordable Homes**

We welcome the increased target of 45,000 new social homes a year by 2010-11, with a goal of 50,000 social homes a year in the next spending review, and with increased delivery by housing associations and the private sector. However this needs to be carefully planned to ensure sustainability

Gloucester has a 2\* ALMO (Gloucester City Homes Ltd) so we welcome the proposal to extend bidding for Housing Corporation (HC) funding to build new homes to councils with Arms Length Management companies of 2\* plus or a local authority company.

We support the proposed introduction of new ways for councils and ALMOs to build on council owned land, including keeping the rents and capital receipts from the new homes. However some councils like Gloucester have very tight boundaries and very little suitable land within their area.

More detail is needed on further new bid rounds for new ALMOs and how new funding will be distributed.

The relaxation to allow councils building new affordable housing to retain 100% of the rent income is welcomed. New build housing would not be viable without the ability to use the rent income to meet costs of management, maintenance and to help service loans for

capital costs of construction. To provide wider opportunities and options for the council we suggest that this option is extended to LAs who have formed an ALMO.

We welcome the ability for councils and ALMOs to build on council owned land – including keeping the rents and capital receipts from the new homes Also retaining capital receipt from shared ownership schemes for use in the provision of additional affordable housing.

However both these relaxations, whilst leaving council housing within PSBR, will have only limited benefits because:

- It restricts the provider to initiatives on council owned land.
- The council has limited land holdings. There are some areas of existing housing where initial appraisals show redevelopment is possible but these are very limited in number.
- It discourages initiatives to sell council land/property to enable the introduction of private ownership on to the estates hindering aspirations to create mixed communities on the councils larger estates.
- It prevents the use of receipts from sale of council land/property to build Affordable Housing in parts of the city where it is currently lacking.

The council is unsure if it will be practical to expand council housing provision if the remainder of the existing council housing stock remains within a government negative housing subsidy system. The housing subsidy system appears to be impeding the government's objectives.

Reference to the continuation of the Decent Homes programme makes no reference to additional new resources being made available via the housing subsidy system to meet the cost.

We note the consideration of allowing some councils to buy themselves out of the HRA subsidy system, enabling them to retain their rent income.

We suggest the Government should bring forward urgent reform of the housing subsidy system and not for councils to have to bear the costs of ending the system. At times when the viability of the Housing Revenue Account is already in question is this may provide an answer to the current unsustainable and unfair treatment of council tenants.

We note the proposed review of the rules governing the treatment of housing capital receipts, to incentivise local authority shared equity schemes. Consideration is being given to allowing local authorities to retain housing capital receipts generated by the disposal of equity shares in local authority dwellings if those retained receipts are used for the provision of affordable housing.

Due to the low values of council properties it may be necessary to sell shares in 3 or even 4 properties in order to build one additional new house. This will reduce the overall numbers within the pool of social housing.

We note that councils assessed by the Government as high performers will get increased access to housing grants to boost supply. High performing councils may not be located in the areas of greatest housing need.



Any proposals such as creating Community Land Trusts that increase council's options for financing affordable housing are very welcome.

Will the equity loans that are proposed be sufficient compared with Homebuy for first time buyers to help people to get their first foot on the property ladder in high value areas or is more required? The current Open market Home Buy scheme offers a 25% government loan and this is of far greater help than the 17.5% equity loan that is currently being proposed in the Green Paper.

### **Greener, Better Designed Homes**

We support the proposals on improving the design of housing but wonder whether they go far enough. Should the government-endorsed benchmark for housing design (the Building for Life Standard) be made part of the performance data that local planning authorities report?

Strong support is expressed for the proposal to make the Code for Sustainable Homes mandatory. The green paper could perhaps make more reference to the issue of waste minimization and recycling in new development also.

In terms of design, the principle of a new 'quality assurance scheme' is supported in principle, as it would provide greater certainty and transparency in terms of what will and will not be acceptable in design terms. Most local authorities already produce some form of local design guidance and the proposal would help to formalise that process.

Further detail on how the scheme would work in practice would be beneficial i.e. would it be voluntary or compulsory? To what type and scale of development would it apply (would it include minor household applications?) and also what weight such a scheme would have in planning terms. What for example would be the outcome if an applicant refused to enter into a quality assurance scheme?

The paper should also recognise the forecast shortage of urban designers within the planning profession and should set out a commitment towards addressing this shortfall.

There is a real danger that the emphasis on increasing the speed of delivery of new housing is achieved at the expense of good quality, innovative design and this must be avoided at all costs.

The green paper could also make stronger reference to the use of design and access statements. Other measures such as the establishment of 'design review panels' or similar amongst local authorities and other relevant organisations should also be mentioned.

### **More Family Homes**

The emphasis on the provision of more family homes is welcomed. It would appear that the large number of high-density flats and apartments coming forward in major urban areas is leading to an imbalance in the type and mix of accommodation in some areas.

In the interests of creating a more balanced and sustainable mix, it is essential that more family homes are provided and not just through urban extensions and new settlements but also through the re-use of previously developed land in town and city centres.

### **Housing for the Elderly**

The recognition in the green paper of providing housing designed to meet the needs of the elderly is strongly supported including in particular the provision of new homes to lifetime homes standards.

It would be beneficial if the green paper and any subsequent policy and legislation could strengthen the ability of local planning authorities to secure lifetime home provision for example through the use of a national threshold above which provision will be required.

### **Infrastructure Provision**

The proposal to include a new 'test of soundness' relating to infrastructure provision within the Local Development Framework is supported in principle, as it will help to ensure that this issue is fully addressed in the plan-making process from the earliest possible stage.

It must be recognised however that fully determining likely infrastructure requirements requires the full co-operation and input of relevant agencies and stakeholders and that this is not always forthcoming.

Further detail about the potential wording of the new 'test' is however needed before further comment can be made.

# Gloucester City Council

<b>COMMITTEE</b>	: <b>GLT 11<sup>th</sup> November 2008 Scrutiny of the Built Environment 24<sup>th</sup> November 2008</b>
<b>DATE</b>	: <b>24<sup>th</sup> November 2008</b>
<b>SUBJECT</b>	: <b>GCH performance Quarter 2 2008/09</b>
<b>DECISION TYPE</b>	: <b>For information only</b>
<b>WARD</b>	: <b>All</b>
<b>REPORT BY</b>	: <b>Cabinet Member for Housing and Health</b>
<b>NO. OF APPENDICES</b>	: <b>1 –Quarterly report on key performance indicators</b>
<b>REFERENCE NO.</b>	: <b>041108</b>

## 1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide members with information on the performance of Gloucester City Homes (GCH) over time and in comparison to the top quartile performance of District Council's and ALMO's.

## 2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the areas of good performance such as the average time to relet (BVPI 212), which remains well above average top quartile performance although there has been a slight dip in performance during the summer months. Other areas of good performance include the percentage of notices served (BVPI 66c) and the number of tenancy ends due to abandonment and eviction (local indicator).
- 2.2 The percentage of non-decent homes has reduced significantly to just under 54% (NI 158) and GCH will be in a position shortly to provide clearer projections towards achievement of the Decent Homes standard throughout the stock.
- 2.3 Members should note improving performance in the completion of urgent & routine repairs within target, the percentage of rent collected (BVPI 66a) and the proportion of new tenants not in arrears after three months (local indicator).
- 2.4 Gas servicing remains an area of concern although there has been improvement over the last quarter such that 98.5% of services due in September were carried out within the anniversary timescale.

## 3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 GCH have a number of key performance indicators that enable the organisation and the Council to compare the company's performance over time and with similar organisations. The indicators also reflect the Council's requirement that GCH support corporate strategies.

3.2 Among GCH's key objectives there is a commitment to meet 'performance improvement targets so as to satisfy and exceed the expectations of the Council's tenants.'

3.3 GCH is also committed to achieving top quartile performance and an 'excellent' rating at its next inspection, having achieved a 'good' rating at the inspection in June 2007.

3.4 Reporting on overall satisfaction levels and anti-social behaviour will be available in the Q3 report.

#### **4.0 PROGRESS**

4.1 Notably, progress is being made on improving the number of Council homes that meet the Decent Homes Standard. Reported customer satisfaction levels are high and have been maintained despite the size of the programme.

4.2 The performance of the repairs service is improving although it is unlikely that many of the performance targets will be achieved at year- end. Regular meetings are tackling areas of underperformance with Morrison, who has also strengthened their management team to achieve better performance.

#### **5.0 FUTURE WORK**

5.1 The full suite of performance indicators, some of which are annual figures only, will be available by year-end to enhance understanding of the outcomes achieved by GCH.

5.2 Benchmarking figures for comparative purposes will be updated when they become available.

#### **6.0 CONCLUSIONS**

6.1 Performance in many areas is improving and this improvement needs to be sustained over time.

6.2 The client team will continue to work with GCH to improve performance, particularly through analysis and more effectively targeted action plans.

#### **7.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 Decent Homes spend continues to be approximately in line with budgets. This expenditure is monitored regularly and variations are discussed and explained.

7.2 The planned improvements in arrears collection and void turnaround would impact positively on the finances.

7.3 Overall financial performance is within acceptable variances from budget

7.2 **Name of the Officer: Steve Phelps**

#### **8.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

8.1 GCH are the Councils ALMO which has responsibility for the management of the

Councils housing stock, and as such have to produce monitoring information to GCC to show their performance is within the contracted parameters.

8.2 As indicated in the report Gas Servicing is an important measure as there is a statutory duty to inspect properties every year and ensure the safety of the premises and equipment. It is necessary to take all, reasonable steps to ensure all properties are appropriately certificated, otherwise if a death occurs through either parties failure the provisions of the Corporate Manslaughter Act may apply. Work is currently proceeding to try and ensure all gas servicing is carried out within the appropriate timescales.

8.3 **Name of the Officer: Gary Spencer**

**9.0 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS** *(Authors to complete) Identify all key risks (scoring 8 and above) for the recommendation including the impact and likelihood of the risk occurring and what measures will be taken to mitigate the risk.*

9.1

Risk	Impact (1-4) 1= Low 4= High	Likelihood (1-4) 1= Low 4= High	Score (Impact * likelihood)	Statement of Risk  16 – Very High 8 –12 High <8 Low risk	Actions to mitigate risk
Loss of experienced staff	4	2	8	High	Prioritise workloads & succession planning
Contract management problems	3	2	9	High	Structured approach to contract management

**10.0 PREDICTIVE IMPACT ASSESSMENTS (EQUALITIES)** *(Authors to complete) Identify all risks for customers and staff, in the areas of gender, disability, age, race, religion, sexual orientation etc.*

10.1

**11.0 OTHER CORPORATE IMPLICATIONS**

1. Community Safety (Author to complete)
2. Environmental (Author to complete)
3. Staffing (Personnel to complete) (Provided by P. Tsakpo)
4. Trade Union (TU to complete)

**Background Papers** :




**Published Papers** :

**Person to Contact** : Trea Connon  
Tel: 396573  
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# QUARTERLY REPORT ON KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR CLIENT JUNE 2008

Please note that all performance indicators are accurate at the time of calculation – subsequent data entry may change the performance indicator and so adjusted figures will be reported retrospectively.

Status Key					
	Above target tolerance		Within tolerance of target		Below target

## ASSET MANAGEMENT

### RESPONSE REPAIRS

Morrison reports two performance indicators for each priority for response repairs. The first is for completions disregarding delays caused by either the tenant, the client (GCH), or by contractors. The second allows for delays or excluded jobs. The GCH board has agreed that both of these indicators should be reported with information about the cause of delays. Future reports will contain both indicators.

#### Current position:

- Morrison provides data in a new suite of reports, designed in a joint project with GCH, which can be reconciled and validated.
- Performance for Emergency repairs remains fairly constant in the first quarter at an average of 98.63%, just below the target of 99.00%. If excluded jobs are allowed, then performance reaches 99.18%, above target.
- Performance for Routine repairs has increased in the first quarter to an average of 94.81%, without exclusions. This increases to 98.06% if excluded jobs are allowed.
- Similarly, performance for Urgent repairs has increased in the first quarter at an average of 93.86%, without exclusions. This increases to 98.59% if excluded jobs are allowed.
- The improvement in recent performance slowly increases the cumulative performance for the year, and it should be possible to meet targets by year - end. Morrison have given assurance that performance will meet target in 2008/09
- The time taken to complete a non urgent repair is 8.31 days, below the target of 8.5 days
- Unfortunately, the proportion of appointments made and kept has reduced to 91.92% from 92.68 at year end%, against a target of 97.00%
- 98.22% of repairs were completed at the first visit, above the target of 98.00%
- A satisfaction survey for the first quarter is underway and results will be reported when they are received and validated
- In the last survey, most notably:
  - 89.19% of respondents rated the service as satisfactory – score of 7 – 10, compared with 73.97% in May 2007
  - The conduct of the tradespersons continues to score highly, 97.33%
  - 81.69% said that the repair was done in the timescales advised
  - The most notable improvement was in the overall score where satisfaction has increased by **20% proportionately, from 74% to 89%**
- Morrison's action plan is reviewed monthly, by the Director of Asset Management, to ensure that continuous improvement is maintained during 2008/09



## **Operational Improvement Plan**

- Morrison has submitted this action plan to GCH and it will now be implemented.

In summary, the plan addresses issues raised in 10 separate areas, all of which are considered to be causing contract related problems. A number of issues have already been addressed and have solutions either implemented or pending. We have attempted to identify appropriate actions that would lead to a service delivery improvement.

Working together, Morrison and Gloucester City Homes must significantly improve the communication channels and implement a much closer working relationship. To this end, a number of proposed actions require additional operational meetings for issues to be addressed with minimum delay.

### **The 10 areas to be addressed are:**

#### **Voids Management**

- Accuracy of schedules
- Invoicing
- Performance

#### **Response Repairs**

- Budgetary control
- Non standard codes
- Performance
- No access

#### **Call Centre**

- Duplicate jobs
- Staff turnover
- Staff awareness

#### **Non Standard Jobs**

- Use of non standard codes
- Full contract uplift

#### **Data Accuracy**

- Job ticket completions
- Client invoicing

#### **Medical Adaptations**

- Use of SOR codes
- Use of non standard codes
- Process control

#### **Relationship with GCH**

- Joint working arrangements
- Meeting schedules

#### **Performance Monitoring**

- Performance to KPIs

#### **Resident Liaison**

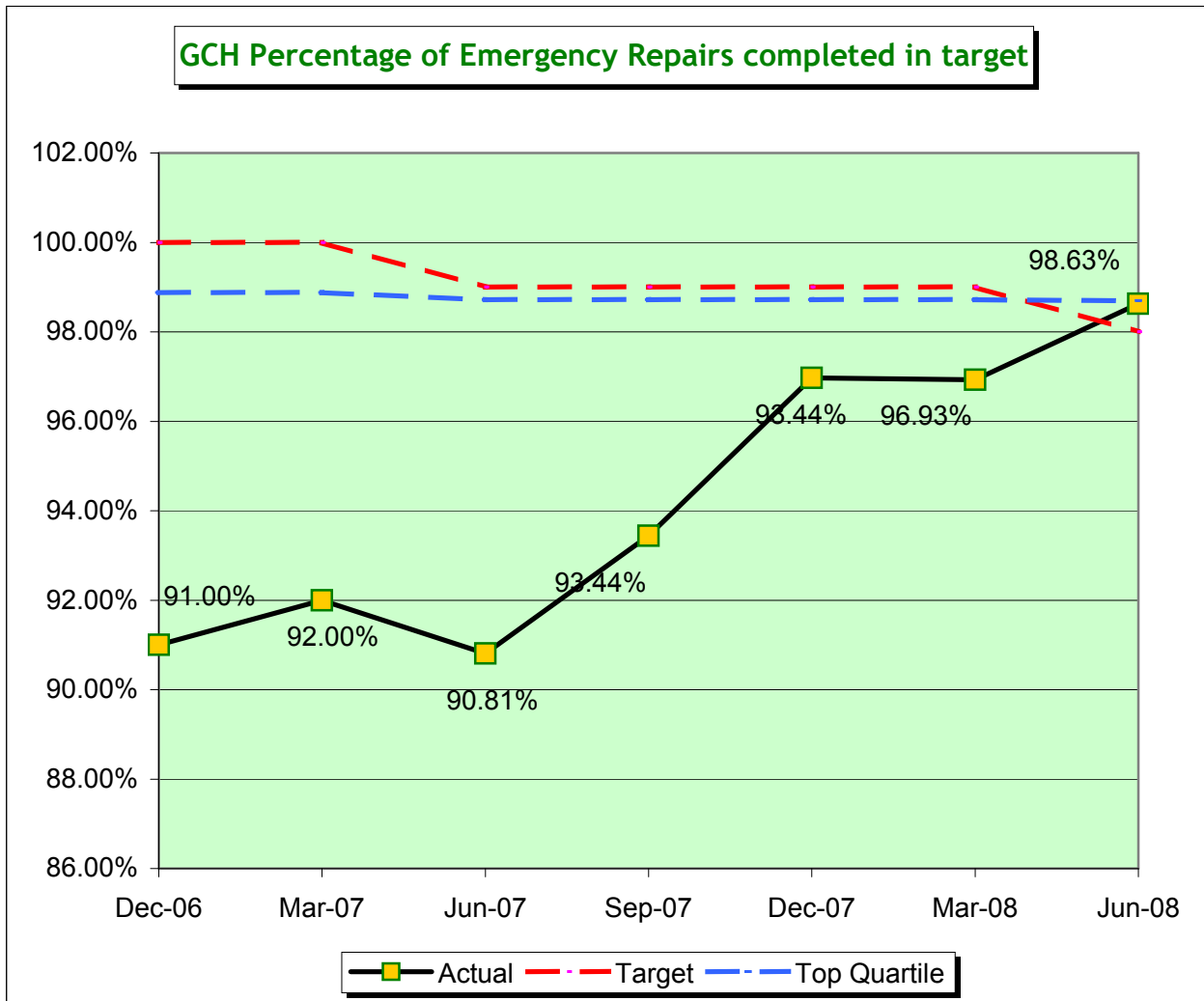
- Resolution of tenancy issues

#### **Community Development**

- Raise Morrison profile

**Responsibility – John Mann - Director of Asset Management & Regeneration**

Indicator	Mar 07	June 07	Mar 08	June 08	Target	H/mark Top Quartile	Status
GCH % of emergency repairs completed in target	92.0%	90.81%	96.93%	<b>98.63%</b>	99.0%	98.70%	●
GCH % of urgent repairs completed in target	93.13%	87.62%	90.84%	<b>93.86%</b>	98.0%	97.93%	▲
GCH % of routine repairs completed in target	95.60%	89.49%	91.68%	<b>94.81%</b>	98.0%	97.90%	▲
Overall Satisfaction with Response Repairs Service	78.10%	76.00%	89.19%	Survey awaited	Continuous Improvement		
Response Repairs resolved at first visit	-	97.79%	98.12%	<b>98.22%</b>	Continuous improvement		



## ASSET MANAGEMENT

### DECENT HOMES

#### Achieving the Decent Homes standard

As at April 1<sup>st</sup> 2008 the number of non-decent properties was 3,248 (70.84%). Progress against this target is reported on a quarterly basis and the return for the Department of Community and Local Government is compiled and will be reported in the August Members Information Sheet.

#### Customer satisfaction

Customer satisfaction is measured against a number of Key Performance Indicators with the two main measurements being as follows (for all three partners): -

Key Performance Indicator	Target	Apr	May	June
Overall level of customer satisfaction with the finished works	95%	100%	100%	98%
Overall level of customer satisfaction with the service received from the Partner	95%	100%	100%	98%

#### Element and property completions

The partners are measured for their performance of projected numbers of element completions (kitchens, bathrooms, heating etc)/property completions against the actual numbers of elements and property completed. Details of the partner's performance for the first quarter are shown on the attached appendix, which highlights a number of variances within the different elements across the programme. The original forecasts of numbers of elements to be completed for the current year were based on estimates using works identified through the sample scoping surveys, and then adjusted to take account of the actual works undertaken during Year 1 on similar properties. The actual works undertaken in this year are based on those works carried out within individual properties and reflect the condition of that property e.g. more rewires/upgrades have been required.

#### Expenditure

The partners are measured against their performance of projected expenditure against the actual expenditure incurred. The figures below have been amended from previous information provided as a result of reconciliation between the first and second years works undertaken. The programme is slightly ahead of target spend for Quarter 1, and the summary is as follows: -

	Total planned spend	Total actual spend	Variance to planned
<b>April</b>	£1,058,000	£896,000	-£162,000
<b>May</b>	£1,201,000	£1,349,000	£148,000
<b>June</b>	£1,484,000	£1,601,000	£117,000
<b>Quarter 1</b>	<b>£3,743,000</b>	<b>£3,846,000</b>	<b>£103,000</b>

The overall aim of the strategy now is to achieve the Decent Homes target for all the stock by the end of 2012 based on CLG requirements and it was recognised that in undertaking this approach there would not necessarily be large reductions in the numbers of non-decent homes in the early years of the investment programme. This would be due to a number of factors including the high numbers of “potentially non decent properties” (i.e. they were decent at April 2007 but would become non decent before 2012 primarily due to the age of the kitchens/bathrooms) and properties with multiple failures whereby completing works in accordance with tenant priorities (i.e. internal improvements) meant that there would still be works outstanding which made them non decent.

The table below details the total number of improvements (kitchens, bathrooms, heating etc) undertaken by the partners for the year to date.

Medical adaptations are not part of the decent homes definition, however some works will apply to upgrading bathrooms, which will meet the Decent Homes standard. GCC will know that it is very important that tenants who are disabled are provided with the facilities to allow independent living.

### Achieving the Decent Homes Standard

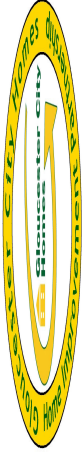
Number of Non- Decent Homes as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2007:	3,617 (78.51%)
Number of Non- Decent Homes as at 31 <sup>st</sup> March 2008:	2,970 (64.78%)
Number of Non- Decent Homes as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2008	3,248 (70.84%)
Number of Non –Decent Homes as at 30 <sup>th</sup> June 2008	3,195 (69.68%)

### Responsibility – John Mann - Director of Asset Management & Regeneration

Indicator	1 Apr 07	31 Mar 08	1 April 08	June 08	Target	Top Quartile DCLG	Status
BV184a Proportion LA homes were non decent at 1 <sup>st</sup> April	78.51%	64.76%	<b>70.84%</b>	<b>69.68%</b>	51.20%	10.00%	-
BV184b % change non-decent LA homes	+7.56%	-17.88%	-	-	- 21.0%	- 32.80%	-
BVPI63 Average SAP rating of LA dwellings	70.80(01) 64.64(05)	TBA		<b>71.7(01)</b> <b>65.2(05)</b>	69.05	72.00	-
GCH Satisfaction with delivery of planned maintenance / Decent Homes contracts	-	94.44%		<b>98.00%</b>	98.00%	-	-

**MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT**

Jun-08



Target for year	Month	Planned completions	Actual completions	Variance to planned	Refusals
1,427	April	114	98	-16	0
	May	139	147	8	27
	June	156	153	-3	7
Quarter 1		409	398	-11	34
1,122	April	93	57	-36	
	May	127	136	9	
	June	121	193	72	
Quarter 1		341	386	45	
1,304	April	88	60	-28	
	May	116	145	29	
	June	153	184	31	
Quarter 1		357	389	32	
1,257	April	66	74	8	
	May	106	165	59	
	June	133	208	75	
Quarter 1		305	447	142	
808	April	50	78	28	
	May	77	55	-22	
	June	85	71	-14	
Quarter 1		212	204	8	
271	April	0	0	0	
	May	24	43	19	
	June	30	11	-19	
Quarter 1		54	54	0	
205	April	25	16	-9	
	May	20	17	-3	
	June	20	11	-9	
Quarter 1		65	44	-21	

1. Individual properties may have one or more of the above improvements carried out.
2. Expenditure is on target for the period.
3. Average costs are across the partnership

## ASSET MANAGEMENT

### VOID MANAGEMENT




#### Current position:

The Audit Commission have revised their definition for this indicator and, therefore, the tenancy start date no longer needs to be included in the calculation.

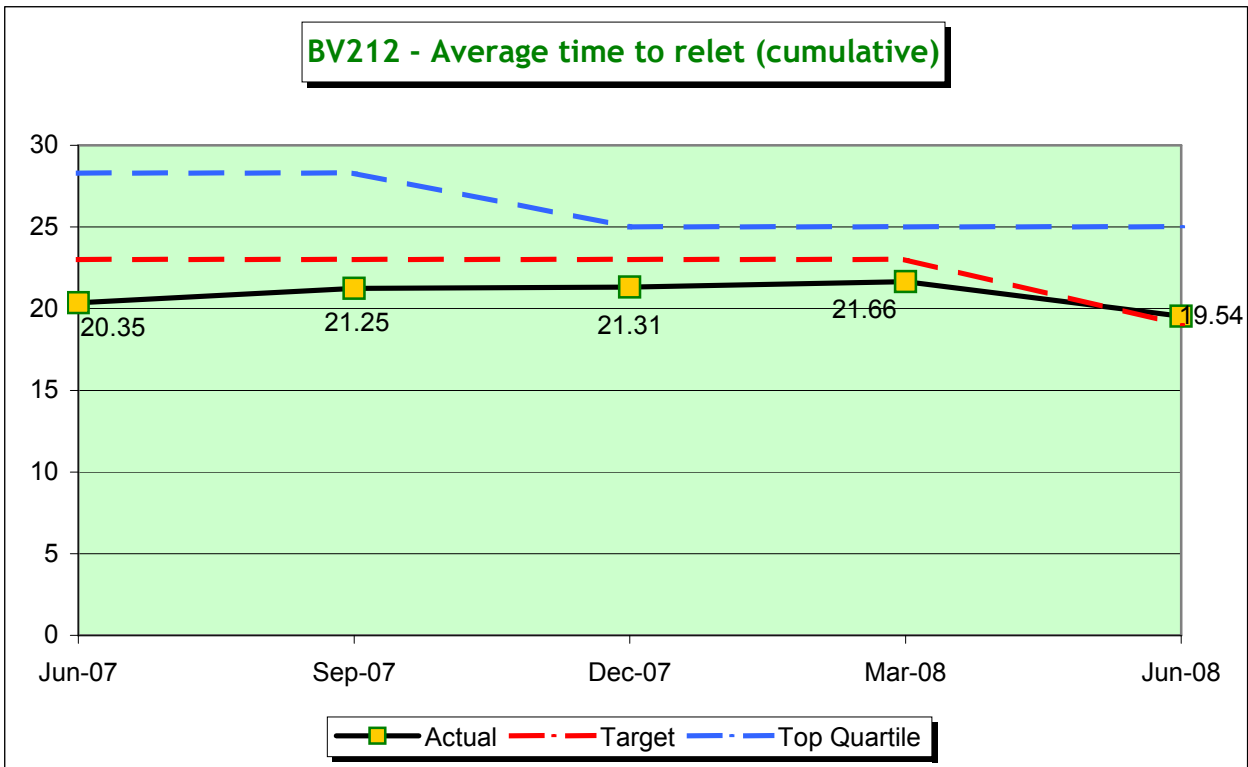
Further advice has now been received from the Audit Commission and GCC Internal Audit. If GCH determines that if simultaneous Decent Homes works would necessitate the decanting of a current tenant in a let property, then these works may be excluded from the calculation of average times to re-let.

- Voids performance, at 19.54 days, remains below the performance target and well below the top quartile of 25.00 days
- GCH has full control of voids management, in partnership with Morrison
- Rent loss for void properties is **0.67%** at the end of June – well below the House-mark top quartile of 1.31%. This is above the target of 0.55%. The average void loss per re-let property year to date is £217.50, 20% above the estimate of £179.84 per property, based on average rents. This accounts for performance below target – 0.55% +20% = 0.67%
- BVPI212 was audited by GCC Internal Audit in June 2008 – Internal Audit confirm that this indicator is calculated in compliance with the Audit Commission definition.
- From the results of the testing reasonable assurance can be provided that the performance indicator is fairly reported.

#### Responsibility – John Mann - Director of Asset Management & Regeneration

Indicator	Mar 07	June 07	Mar 08	June 08	Target	Top Quartile	Status
BV212 Average time to re-let	36.10	20.35 days	21.66 days	<b>19.54 days</b>	19 days	25.00 DCLG	
GCH rent loss due to empty properties as % of rent due	0.99%	0.56%	0.52%	<b>0.67%</b>	0.55%	1.31% H/mark	
% of Void Refusals by Reason <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Do not want area</li> <li>○ Property too small</li> <li>○ Do not want property</li> <li>○ No response to offer</li> <li>○ Do not want block</li> </ul>				30.08% 12.78% 12.03% 10.53% 6.77%	NA		
Number of Combined gas services and safety checks completed	100.0%	100.0%	100%	<b>100.0%</b>	100%		

Cumulative figures



## ASSET MANAGEMENT

### GAS SERVICING

**Current Position** – Two measures will be reported on gas servicing. A cumulative figure showing the percentage of services completed before the anniversary and the number of properties without a valid CP12 at the relevant period end

At the end of June, validated statistics show that the number of properties with an out of date CP12 certificate is 18 and the number of properties without a valid CP12 certificate is 4.

This means that **99.51%** of all properties on the database have a valid CP12 certificate


- 127 properties were removed from Morrison for failure to perform. Modern Heating Services have managed to complete 115 with the remaining 12 having recorded special measures to contact and gain access. These are included in the 18 above.
- 7 properties are currently in the process of legal action to gain access
- 3 properties had recent appointments, but the outcome is unknown today

A validated base data position has been established at 6<sup>th</sup> November 2007. This baseline will be used for statistics from January 2008.

- **Future action plans:**

- Morrison are introducing an entirely new management arrangement for Gas Servicing and this is currently under review.

### Responsibility – John Mann - Director of Asset Management & Regeneration

Indicator	Mar 07	June 07	Mar 08	June 08	Target	DCLG Top Quartile	Status
GCH % of gas services completed	99.98	92.17	83.23	<b>91.85%</b>	100%	100%	
GCH properties without a valid CP12	NA	96	50 1.11%	<b>22</b> <b>0.49%</b>	0	0	



## INCOME MANAGEMENT

### Current Position

- Arrears are above the predicted target at the end of June - £232,148 against a target of £ 208,152
- The level of arrears is £ 108,331 lower than at the end of June 2007.
- Arrears as a proportion of rent due have reduced from 1.79% to 1.51%, which is above the target for June of 1.38%. Top quartile performance from House-mark is 1.74%
- Arrears collected as a proportion of rent due excluding arrears is just 0.60% below target at **99.62%**
- A new Housing benefit recovery protocol became effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April. Further analysis needs to be undertaken between the different claim types to identify the impact of the change in deductions, particularly on Income Support claims
- Ongoing Blitz days continue to have a positive response with an additional £7,000 paid or promised by tenants in June
- An action plan has been developed to undertake an audit of performance within the team and review process with regard to month end closedown. This will be reviewed through the Monday project board review.

### Action Plan in Place June to September 2008

- Income Manager to carry out audit of arrears and identify any performance weaknesses and ensure consistency and quality.
- Produce summer arrears campaign.
- Letter to be sent with Improvement News to raise awareness of arrears.
- Target resources onto estates where arrears have increased most, utilise support from Customer Services.
- Analyse the payments actually made, as a result will be able to accurately measure effectiveness of Blitz Days. Use members of the team to track-back on promised payments.
- Post-let Visits income team have taken over the management to ensure that the number of new tenants in arrears decreases.

### Commentary

An internal review of the rent collection function will be taking place to improve the process.

Complimentary measures will operate to the arrears recovery function to ensure that financial inclusion is central to the process

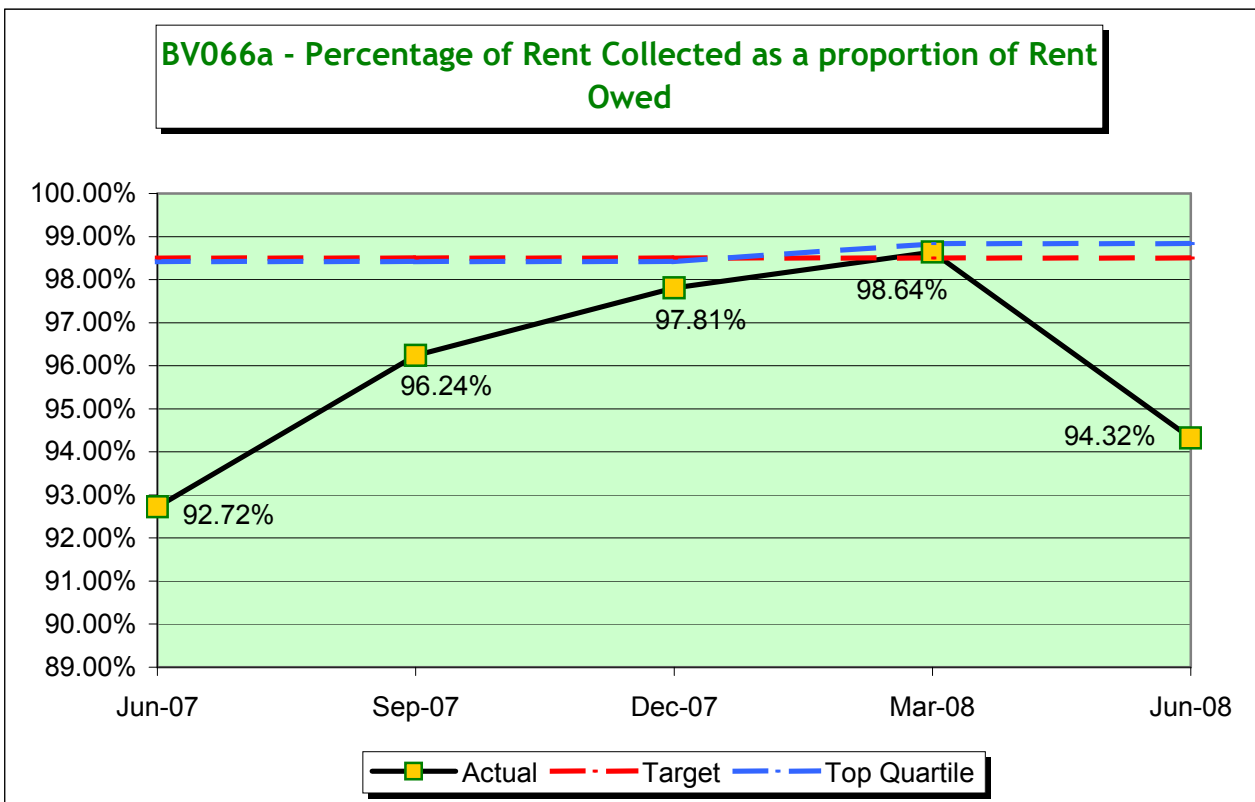
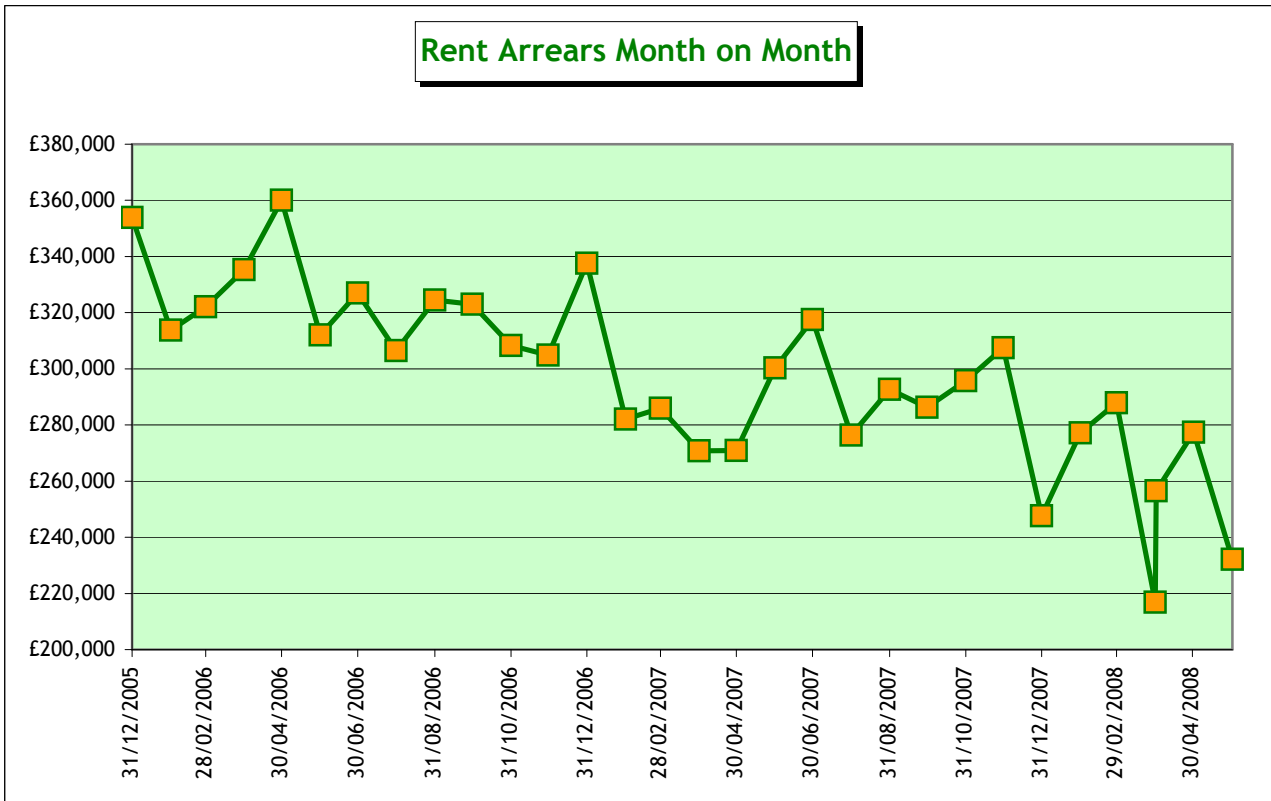
### Responsibility – Sam Chambers - Income Management Manager

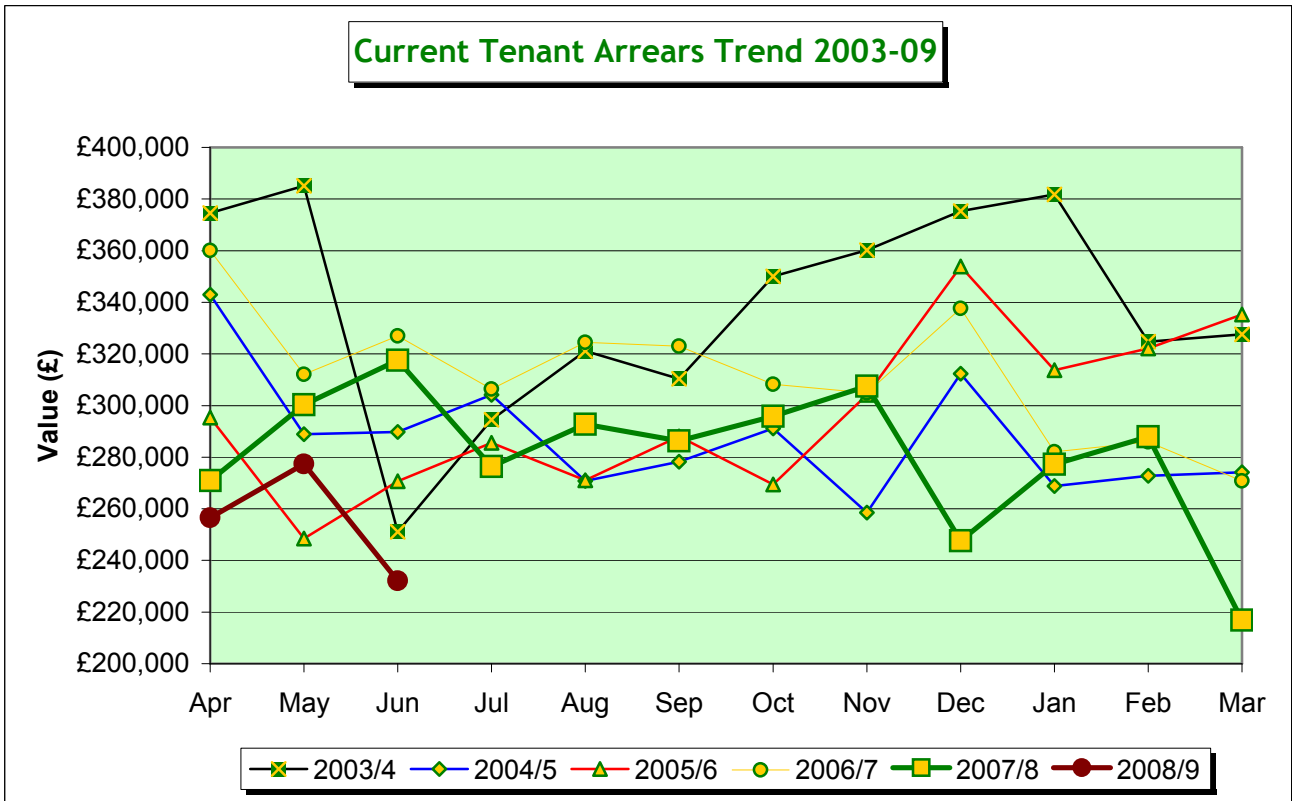
Indicator	Mar 07	Jun 07	Mar 08	June 08	Target	Top Quartile	Status
BVPI66a.05 % rent collected/rent owed	97.84%	92.72%	98.64%	<b>94.32%</b>	98.84%	98.83% DCLG	
BVPI66b.05 % tenants > 7wks gross arrears	4.63%	4.60% 207 / 4494	4.60% 197 / 4488	<b>3.85%</b> <b>172 /</b> <b>4470</b>	4.00%	3.46% DCLG	
BVPI66c.05 % possession notices served	17.27% 232/1343	3.51% 63 / 1795	9.51% 16 / 1754	<b>1.94%</b> <b>29 / 1493</b>	10.50%	13.61% DCLG	
BVPI66d.05 % tenants evicted for arrears	0.40% (18)	0.067% 4 / 4494	0.29% 13 / 4488	<b>0.089%</b> <b>4 / 4470</b>	0.14%	0.17% DCLG	
GCH SPO's obtained as % of those in arrears year to date	4.91% 66/1343	0.72% 13 / 1765	2.56% 45 / 1754	<b>1.54%</b> <b>23 / 1493</b>	2.00%	-	
GCH no. new accounts with no debt at 3 months	230/492 46.75%	57 / 118 48.31%	190 / 408 46.57%	<b>56 / 95</b> <b>58.95%</b>	66.00%	-	
GCH current tenant rent arrears as % of rent due	1.94%	2.09%	1.44%	<b>1.51%</b>	1.18%	1.74% H/mark	
GCH proportion of rent collected excl. arrears brought forward	100.18%	98.94%	100.40%	<b>99.62%</b>	100.22%	100.34% H/mark	
Former Tenant Arrears		£171,691	£ 159,600 1.06%	<b>£155,952</b> <b>4.05%</b>	1.00%	1.17% H/mark	-
Total arrears written off as % of debit	£94,704	£8,013	0.47% £71,529	<b>0.62%</b> <b>£23,706</b>	0.45%	0.32% H/mark	

Percentages of debit based on estimated year-end debit of £15.2M

### Current Rent Arrears by month

	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
2006/07	357,069	310,066	335,495	303,949	321,676	318,644	308,258	304,878	337,604	282,111	285,899	270,759
2007/08	315,204	332,349	340,479	305,904	321,245	308,687	340,912	354,603	267,018	277,222	287,880	216,867
<b>2008/09</b>	<b>256,507</b>	<b>277,362</b>	<b>232,148</b>									
Target 2008/09	213,962	211,057	208,152									





## TENANCY & ESTATE MANAGEMENT

### ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

#### Current position:

- **82.61%** of respondents to the in-house closed action satisfaction survey indicated that they were very or fairly satisfied with both the action plan and outcomes of their complaints and the service provided by the ASB team
- Further action has been taken on 100.00% of domestic abuse cases
- No further action had been taken on incidents of hate crime by the end of June since the complainant in the one open case had specifically asked that no further action be taken
- GCH focuses on building relationships with partner agencies and doing more preventative work within communities. GCH aims to act swiftly to tailor support to those people experiencing ASB.



#### Building relationships:

- Agreements and partnership working with:
- Mental Health Services
- Adult Protection Team
- Gloucestershire Domestic Violence Support and Advocacy Project

#### Gloucestershire Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership:

- A recent survey gave the following results;
  - **89.3% of respondents from Gloucester feel safe or fairly safe walking alone during the day**
  - **38.5% feel safe or fairly safe walking alone after dark**
  - **87.60% feel safe or fairly safe in their own homes at night**

#### Responsibility – Pat Andrade - Housing Services Manager

Indicator	Mar 07	Sep 07	Mar 08	June 08	Target	GCRP Results 2008	Status
GCH % of residents satisfied with the local area they live in	76%	-	70.67%	<b>70.67%</b>	-	-	-
GCH % of residents who feel safe – day	78%	-	78.77%	<b>78.77%</b>	78.0%	89.30%	
GCH % of residents who feel safe – after dark	54%	-	51.37%	<b>51.37%</b>	-	38.50%	-
GCH % of reported hate crimes resulting in further action	60.0%	100% 3 / 3	100% 4 / 4	<b>0% 1 open case</b>	100%	None	-
GCH % of reported domestic abuse resulting in further action	61.54%	100% 8 / 8	100% 11 / 11	<b>100% 3 / 3 cases</b>	100%	None	

n.b. \* racist incidents and hate crime figures have been adjusted to account for a duplicate entry in focus

## TENANCY & ESTATE MANAGEMENT

### TENANCY MANAGEMENT

#### Current position:

- Un-sustained and abandoned tenancies are reviewed regularly and jointly with the Housing Options team of the City Council in order to track tenants who may be vulnerable and thus have difficulties in sustaining a tenancy.

#### Responsibility – Pat Andrade - Housing Services Manager

**N.B – figures exclude properties in Moor Street used a short - term accommodation for homeless applicants**

Indicator	Mar 07	Sep 07	Mar 08	June 08	Target	Top Quartile	Status
GCH tenancies ending within six months of start date	33 6.71%	10 / 194 5.15%	15 / 385 3.90%	<b>4 / 128</b> <b>3.12%</b>	5.00%	-	★
GCH abandoned tenancies and evictions	8 2.02%	5 / 194 2.57%	14 / 385 3.63%	<b>4 / 128</b> <b>3.12%</b>	6.00%	-	★

Tenancies ending within six months is based upon all tenancies ending within the quarter, which have tenancy start dates within six months.

Figures are shown both numerically and proportionately at the request of the Client.




## HOME OWNERSHIP SERVICES

### Home Ownership Services

#### Leaseholders

- There are currently 255 leasehold properties, this represents approximately 5.27% of stock managed by Gloucester City Homes.
- The collection of current service charge arrears is above target at 3.43% arrears against a target of 5% arrears.
- \*The leaseholders financial year ends on 30th September each year. This is because all invoices for the previous period (1st April to 31st March next) are issued each September. This timescale was formally agreed with Leaseholders Forum in June 2007.
- The leasehold satisfaction survey is has recently been conducted and shows a rise in satisfaction from 80% to 84.5%.
- However previous years arrears, (which include, unpaid service charge and any contributions towards major works, such as door entry installation or roof replacement) are below the predicted target of 95% at 77.75%. This is due to the Council buying back a leasehold property, where the lessees arrears will be settled on completion.

#### Responsibility – Jasmine Ellicott – Leasehold and Home Ownership Manager

Indicator	Mar 06	Sep 07	Mar 08	June 08	Target	Top Quartile	Status
GCH Percentage of RTB Applications processed within timeframe	New	100.0%	100.0%	<b>100.0%</b>	100.0%	-	
GCH leaseholder service charges collected as % of charges due, including arrears brought forward	92.75%	100.0%	63.73%	<b>77.75%</b>	95.0%	-	
GCH leaseholder service charge arrears as % of charges due	1.90%	1.09%	11.28%	<b>3.43%</b>	5.0%	-	

Report Ends.

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**GLOUCESTER CITY COUNCIL****REGENERATION UPDATES AND PROJECTS – OCTOBER  
2008****SECTION 1 - REGENERATION UPDATES****Gloucester Docks**

Revised designs for the Merchants Quay proposals are awaited.

Applications for Conservation Area Consent and Listed Building Consent to demolish the *existing* building were both withdrawn in early September.

**Kings Way (RAF Quedgeley)**

*Progress on site has slowed due to economic conditions.*

Information to discharge numerous conditions *is being assessed and worked through with the developers agents.*

**Gloucester Quays**

The application for the new Factory Outlet Centre was granted reserved matters approval by the Planning Committee in 2007. Additionally applications for Conservation Area Consent for demolition and a new full application for a maximum 106 bed 3 star hotel within the Bakers Quay part of the site were also granted. Construction work is currently underway on site and the new canal bridge and connection to Hempsted Lane is approaching completion and expected to be open before the end of the year. Further applications to re-arrange the location of the approved leisure and retail floorspace and for a new building for food and drink uses at the canalside have been approved and this building is under construction. A range of works associated with the conversion or upgrading of listed buildings on site have also been approved. Gloucester Quays LLP are still targeting a Spring 2009 opening for the FOC. *An enlarged 'kiosk' building in Pillar and Lucy Square to provide a café has recently been granted planning permission.*

Reserved matters approval has been given for the foodstore on the Monk Meadow side of the canal, to be occupied by Sainsburys. *A revised version of this scheme is expected to be submitted imminently.* A new road junction at Hempsted Lane/Secunda Way providing a secondary access to the Monk Meadow part of the site was approved by the 1<sup>st</sup> July Planning Committee, and is likely to replace the junction originally envisaged at this location. Preliminary discussions have been held with the developers regarding the new hotel adjacent to Llanthony Priory, *and the re-arrangement of this part of the masterplan (Phase E).*

Applications have recently been received for the following:

The re-arrangement of the Gloucester Quays masterplan within 'Phase E' – at Llanthony Wharf.

Varying the maximum parameters of the development to allow an increase in the height and number of bedrooms (80 to 120) of the Llanthony Wharf hotel, and re-distributing the parking within Phase E.

Varying conditions restricting the type and price of goods to be sold, which would specifically allow Thorntons and Cadburys to occupy units and sell an amount of full price goods (from 40sq.m of the centre).

The insertion of a new floor to provide additional food and drink floorspace in 'Block Q', the new building under construction at the canalside just south of Llanthony Road.

Internal and external alterations to the listed Sudbrooke House in association with the consented retail and residential uses.

### **Waterwells Business Park**

An outline planning application for a site for Class B1 (office/light industrial) development on land east of Waterwells Business Park was considered at Planning Committee on 6<sup>th</sup> November 2007. The application was delegated to officers to agree appropriate financial contributions towards the access to the allocated site and a Section 106 agreement for £150k towards public transport and £200k towards improvements to Junction 12 of the M5.

The Heads of Terms have now been agreed following a meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> March with the applicants but the S106 agreement itself has still yet to be completed. *The City Council have agreed the wording of the agreement.* County Solicitors are dealing with the completion of the agreement. It is expected to be completed shortly.

### **Bristol Road Employment Sites**

One owner has now submitted two outline planning applications which together combine to cover the whole site. One application is in respect of the two factory sites which it owns and the second covers the adjoining site. Together they form the masterplan which has been the subject of discussion for some time.

Given the complex viability appraisal that has been submitted with the application, the City Council has appointed DTZ to scrutinise the figures and associated values that currently offer low S106 contributions. An initial report has been submitted which raises a number of issues that might enhance these contributions, particularly for affordable housing. The Council's consultants have met with the applicant's valuers to seek further clarification of several accounting issues. The applicant has now provided the requested information which has been the subject of further discussions. The consultant has ironed out a number of issues and is satisfied with the "quantum" proposed by the applicant. Detailed negotiations are now continuing on the

details of the S.106 Agreement. Subject to further discussions it is *hoped* to submit a report and recommendation to Planning Committee in *January*.

There is also a separate mediation process underway between the landowners with a view to resolving longstanding difficulties. This has been put on hold as the owner of the Contract Chemicals site is awaiting a planning decision which he hopes will crystallise land values and aid the mediation process.

**West Midland Farmers Listed Buildings, Bakers Quay NO CHANGE**

A sketch proposal appeared on the front page of the 'Citizen' earlier this year, however no plans had been submitted to the Local Planning Authority. A number of meetings later took place between Officers, the landowners and the GHURC to seek to bring a planning application forward. After being provided with a masterplanning scheme for the site, produced for the landowners, Officers provided a detailed planning appraisal and advice about bringing forward an application. The landowners committed to attending a subsequent meeting at the GHURC in July with appointed architects, etc so that matters could be taken forward. However this was cancelled at the last minute by the owners. It is understood that the landowners have now decided to 'mothball' the site for a couple of years. Given this situation, Officers from the Building Control, Conservation and Development Control departments are liaising as to any required works to address the structural safety, conservation and visual appearance of this land/buildings.

**Kwik Save NO CHANGE**

A revised planning application from Newland Homes, which takes a more traditional approach to the design (than the earlier scheme) and increased numbers to 98 has now been approved by the Planning Committee on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July. An invalid planning application was submitted by Newland Homes for 113 flats on 15 February. The applicants have been advised in writing of the reasons for it being invalid (incorrect fee, incorrect information and lack of financial appraisal). A meeting was held with the applicants to discuss the best way forward on 17<sup>th</sup> April where they stated that in order to make the scheme financially viable they need to increase further the number of units to 154. They also said that they would be writing to the Leader of the Council to set out their position as they were aware of the political sensitivity of the proposal.

Since this meeting amended plans have been submitted for informal comment. These show two options, one increasing the number of floors by one and the other increasing the number of floors by two (the number of additional units was not specified). Officers have concerns that the increase in units proposed is excessive and would result in a development out of scale with the character of the surrounding area. The developer has been advised of this.

### **Railway Triangle**

The GHURC have established a steering group for the Railway Triangle site and this group will seek to facilitate the development of this difficult site. This process will include a masterplanning exercise carried out by consultants GVA Grimley, appointed by the GHURC. It is understood that the masterplanning exercise detailing a number of options for the masterplanning of the site and the wider 'Railway Corridor' area was presented to the GHURC Board in early summer. Further work is being undertaken on this and Officers recently attended a 'Peer Review' workshop, from which an independent masterplanner will be critiquing the draft masterplan. *This peer review will be presented to the steering group on the 16<sup>th</sup> October 2008.* A crucial landholding within the Railway Corridor area, owned by the British Rail Board (Residuary) has recently come to the market.

The Council's LDF policy on the site has been refined in light of consultation responses received in August 2006 and the work of the GHURC, and a revised Planning Brief for the Railway Corridor including the Railway Triangle was published for a 6-week period of consultation, closing on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2007. It is intended that a revised brief be adopted as Interim Guidance by the Council and in due course be formally adopted as a Supplementary Planning Document within the Local Development Framework alongside the Central Area Action Plan.

A draft scheme prepared by a development company with an option on the northern railway triangle was presented to Members on 11<sup>th</sup> March for their information. Two meetings have been held with a range of Officers and the prospective developers to discuss the emerging proposals, and the developers have also attended the URC Steering Groups to compare the developer's proposals with the URC masterplan. The developers have held a public exhibition to display the draft proposals and explain their intentions for the site. The proposals will require a high level of supporting information *and the prospective applicants are keen to submit an outline planning application as soon as possible. The prospective applicant has been in attendance at recent steering group meetings to seek to co-ordinate the URC Masterplanning process with their proposals.*

## **SECTION 2 – EMERGING PROJECTS**

### **Blackfriars**

The GHURC Regeneration Framework proposes to transform the Blackfriars area into “the creative and cultural heart” of the City. The framework proposes a mix of office, hotel, retail and cultural uses with a strong cultural focus on the Blackfriars priory complex.

The Regional Development Agency (SWRDA) is the lead partner on the Blackfriars project. A GHURC Steering Group, which includes a number of council officers meets on a regular basis to drive this complex project forward.

SWRDA appointed consultants, Feilden Clegg Bradley, to oversee this project and to produce a Master Plan for the area and a Conservation Plan for Blackfriars Priory and the Fleece Hotel. Work on the Master Plan is at an advanced stage. Members of the Steering Group are currently appraising the final draft and officers have provided detailed comments to the GHURC.

With regard to potential occupiers within the redevelopment the City Council has made an ‘in principle’ decision to relocate its offices to Blackfriars subject to a strong business case, affordability and appropriate new uses being found for the Docks complex. The County Council is exploring its future accommodation requirements and has commissioned property experts to define and inform on the options available. On a related note the redevelopment of the Shire Hall complex has implications for the Police Service which occupies substantial office space at Bearland. Positive discussions have taken place with representatives from the Police Authority. The Master Plan includes the potential for a new city centre police station.

The University of Gloucestershire has also made an ‘in principle’ decision to relocate significant faculties to Blackfriars. They will have a major positive effect on the scheme and the City. Options to accommodate the University have been included in the Master Plan which will emerge when it is completed. The University is pursuing funding opportunities with the Higher Education Funding Council *and* SWRDA.

Feasibility work on proposals to bring Blackfriars Priory into more active use together with proposals for the Clutch Clinic site are being refined.

Property acquisition and site assembly is proceeding. The City Council is actively assisting the RDA in securing property.

### **Kings Quarter**

The GHURC Regeneration Framework proposes a comprehensive retail led regeneration scheme to transform the King’s Quarter Area into an attractive new shopping destination. A minimum of 25,000 sq metres of new comparison retail floor space is proposed together residential, office and food and drink uses all creating significant new employment.

The City Council in partnership with GHURC and Morley (which owns the Kings Walk Shopping Centre) commissioned consultants, Urban Initiatives, to produce a Master Plan. The completed Master Plan has been formally approved by the City Council.

The City Council entered a Co-operation Agreement with Morley in February 2007 *although this has now expired*. A procurement route and method to drive this scheme forward *is now being progressed*.

With regard to Kings Square itself an international design competition resulted in over 40 expressions of interest. The panel selection process has now chosen a preferred practise which will be engaged to work up a detailed scheme in consultation with stakeholders and the public. *Consultation will be undertaken in the near future*.

### **Greyfriars/The Mall**

English Partnerships has not yet appointed a developer for the former Gloscat sites. Discussions between EP and a shortlisted bidder are ongoing.

The Mall organisation has been in detailed and productive dialogue with Council officers and partner organisations to explore a regeneration scheme to expand the Mall (formerly Eastgate Shopping Centre). The scheme will include a new “fit for purpose” modern market hall, high quality new shopping facilities, a food hall opening onto the outdoor space and improvements to the setting of the monument. *Discussions are ongoing between Officers and the Mall with regard to progressing this development and the potential timescale*.

### **SECTION 3 – FORMAL REGENERATION PROJECTS**

#### **St. Oswald's Park**

Persimmon have *slowed* work on their housing development *due to market conditions*. It is hoped that the tripartite agreement between the City Council, Hammerson and Persimmon for the leachate drain will be signed *very soon*.

The units on the St. Oswalds frontage are now complete. These include a new Home Sense store, a bank and a Subway outlet.

The Council is arranging to *explore* with Hammersons *the pursuit of a* planning approval for a housing scheme in the western corner of the site. This includes about 5 acres of Council land and a similar area controlled by Hammersons. Construction work has commenced on the Rooftop Extra Care Village.

#### **Four Gates Centre (Building Communities project, previously dubbed Westgate Neighbourhood Centre)**

English Partnerships are keen to progress their agreement with a private sector housing developer, to be agreed in principle in November 2008. The Westgate Community Trust *is keen to engage with the developer to explore delivery options for the Four Gates Centre*.

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# SCRUTINY COMMITTEE FOR THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT WORK PROGRAMME 2008

*(Covering the following portfolios : Regeneration and Culture, Planning and the Environment, Housing, Health Scrutiny)*

<b>TASK (Status)</b>	<b>SCRUTINY METHOD</b>	<b>AIMS</b>	<b>MEMBERSHIP (if task and finish group)</b>	<b>LEAD OFFICER &amp; SUPPORT</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>CURRENT/ PROPOSED WAY FORWARD - RECOMMENDED BY GLT</b>
Licensing Review	Task and Finish Group	Examine whether Licensing Act achieved statutory licensing objectives and examine whether fees set by Govt are sufficient to carry out authority's enforcement duty.	Cllrs. Jonathan Whittaker, Mary Smith, Norman Ravenhill  (excludes Licensing & Enforcement Committee members)	CD(S&N)	Final meeting 8 April 2008  Report to OSM Committee 3 June 08.  Report to Cabinet 5 June 08 – deferred.  To be considered by Cabinet 8 October 2008		Final report by Chair
Buildings at Risk Register (Ongoing)	Update reports at each meeting	To monitor progress on Buildings at Risk in the City		Conservation and Design Officer	ongoing		
Gloucester City Homes Performance	Provide quarterly update reports	To monitor the performance of Gloucester City Homes		CD (S & N) (formerly Phil Lane)	ongoing		
<b>TASK</b>	<b>SCRUTINY</b>	<b>AIMS</b>	<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>	<b>LEAD</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>CURRENT/</b>

<b>(Status)</b>	<b>METHOD</b>		<b>(if task and finish group)</b>	<b>OFFICER &amp; SUPPORT</b>			<b>PROPOSED WAY FORWARD - RECOMMENDED BY GLT</b>
Choice Based letting system	Regular Update Reports	To monitor progress on implementation of a Choice Based Letting System		CD(S&N)	<p>Presentation to Scrutiny Built Environment 28 January 2008.</p> <p>Cabinet 30 July 2008 approved the Joint procurement of a Choice Based Lettings System</p> <p>Arbitras (the system)</p> <p>Key decision scrutinised by OSM 30 July 2008</p>		Delete
Use of the Council website	Report from the ICT working party		Cllrs. Hobbs, Emerton and Taylor	CD(Res)	<p>Presentation of Content Management System to ICT Working Party 1 October 2008</p>		Turn into a report
Homelessness Advice Post GLOFYSH	Report	Assess impact of GLOFYSH closure on homelessness	N/A	CD(S&N)	TBA		Produce report on impact

<b>TASK</b>	<b>SCRUTINY</b>	<b>AIMS</b>	<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>	<b>LEAD</b>	<b>TIMESCALE</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>	<b>CURRENT/</b>
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<b>(Status)</b>	<b>METHOD</b>		<b>(if task and finish group)</b>	<b>OFFICER &amp; SUPPORT</b>			<b>PROPOSED WAY FORWARD - RECOMMENDED BY GLT</b>
Housing Green Paper	Update report	Assess impact for Gloucester		CD(Reg)	Report to SBE 24 November 2008		Review/possible report next time
Planning White Paper	Update report	Assess impact for Gloucester		CD(Reg)	Report back as appropriate		Review/possible report next time
Demoted Tenancies	Report	Effectiveness of introducing demoted tenancies 12 months after implementation			Report to SCBE 21 November 2008		
Bandstand Inquiry	Report	Outcome of bandstand inquiry detailing costs.	N/A	TBA	Requested at Council September 2007 Inquiry listed 19 November 2008		
Late night transport Review	TBA	TBA	TBA	CD(S&N)	TBA		Update note
Marketing Alliance	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBC	(reference Council 13/03/08)		Defer until November 2009
Supporting People Contract	Possible joint scrutiny with County	Scrutinise delivery of the Supporting People Contract	TBC	CD (SD)	TBC		
Night-Time Transport (suggested at OSM Committee, 3 June 2008)	TBA	TBA	TBA	TBC	TBC		

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