



Exeter City Council

HRA BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE
REPORT
2012 / 2013

HRA BUSINESS PLAN UPDATE REPORT

This update provides information on the activity of the Housing Revenue Account for the financial year 2012/2013 and summarises the progress on the HRA Business Plan (2012-2042).

The principle highlights of activity over the last 12 months include:

- Commencement of a three-year major kitchen and bathroom replacement programme to provide 1,032 new kitchens and 736 new bathrooms.
- Sign off of the Right to Buy Retention Agreement
- Significant changes by way of the Government's welfare reforms and action undertaken to try to mitigate the effects of such reforms
- Commencement of the Council Own Build Wave 2 Development Programme and the identification of four sites for a Wave 3 Programme
- The retention of Laing Easiform Council homes and their renovation/ refurbishment
- The acquisition of 17 new homes from S106 transfer opportunities
- The publication of a new Downsizing Strategy
- The production of a Garage Sites Report to help identify new sites for housing development
- Two buy-back purchases from the proceeds of sale of two former Council homes
- 104 major disabled adaptations (389 minor adaptations)
- Production of new Tenancy Strategy and Policy ahead of the introduction of new flexible tenancies
- Energy efficiency measures in the form of solar panels on 284 homes, 518 new high efficiency gas condensing boilers and 40 homes with increased levels of loft and cavity wall insulation.
- The commencement of a £1.8 million project to refurbish Rennes House.
- Twenty-three Right to Buy Sales

The report covers the following areas:

1. Stock Profile and Stock Condition
2. Non-Traditional Properties
3. Responsive and Programmed Repairs
4. Planned Maintenance and Major Works
5. Disabled Adaptations
6. Procurement and Partnering
7. Energy Efficiency
8. Tenancy Strategy /Policy
9. Housing Resident Involvement
10. Anti-Social Behaviour
11. Welfare Reforms
12. Downsizing
13. Capital Resources
14. Income
15. Right to Buy
16. Buy-Back
17. Council Own Build
18. S106 Purchases
19. Future Funding Streams for Housing Delivery
20. Housing Service Performance Overview

1. Stock Profile and Stock Condition

- 1.1 As at 1 April 2013 the Council owned 5028 homes for rent, plus 21 sold on shared ownership leases and 937 flats sold on Right to Buy leases. In addition, the Council has 930 garages and car parking spaces available for rent. The housing stock profile by dwelling type is shown in the table below:

Council Housing Stock: (1st April 2013)

Property size (no. bedrooms)	Property Type:				Total
	Bungalow	House	Flat	Maisonette	
Bed-sit	0	0	146	0	146
1	150	5	1298	3	1456
2	103	592	971	110	1776
3	10	1445	12	88	1555
4	1	86	0	0	87
5	0	8	0	0	8
Totals	264	2136	2427	201	5028

- 1.2 With regard to the stock condition survey work progress to date includes 38% of the communal flat blocks have been surveyed and 15% of the Council houses have been surveyed. In total 955 dwellings have been surveyed.
- 1.3 Based on the historic data and current life cycles of key components it indicates 2794 homes fall below the Decent Homes Standard.
- 1.4 A £60,00 budget has been approved to appoint an external consultants to undertake stock condition surveys for 25% of the Councils housing stock to better inform asset management plans.

2. Type of unit	Total
Cornish	203
British Steel	33
Wimpey no- fines	75
Dorran Bungalows	32
Orlits	38
Laings Easiform	21
Total	402

Non Traditional Properties

- 2.1 The Council has a total of 402 non –traditional properties as follows:
- 2.2 Whilst not technically unfit, many of these properties require extensive renovation. Since June 2012, the Council has stopped the ‘trickle-transfer’ of the Laings homes to Sovereign Homes and will in future retain the remaining 21 homes and refurbish them as and when they become available. It is estimated that the refurbishment of these 21 homes will require an investment from the Council of at least £1.58 million. This expenditure will be funded from the HRA but will only be payable as and when Laings homes become vacant and require refurbishment.
- 2.3 Refurbishment works will commence on the following Laings homes in summer 2013; 57 Newman Road, 44 Merrivale Road and 40 Myrtle Road.

3. Responsive and Programmed Repairs

- 3.1 In 2012/2013, 19,605 repair orders were raised, 91% of appointments made and kept.
- 3.2 98% of routine repairs were completed on time. 97% of orders were completed within Government timescales.
- 3.3 99.29% of tenants said service was good or satisfactory, with a return percentage of 53%.

4. Planned Maintenance and Major Works

- 4.1 The Council continues to work to maintain properties to the decent homes standard. The total delivery project for the refurbishment of kitchens and bathrooms has a further two years to run and will deliver approx 1032 new kitchens and over 736 new bathrooms. In addition to this, there are programmed works to replace the communal heating system at Toronto House.
- 4.2 At Rennes House, a budget of £1.8 million has been set aside for major refurbishment works, this will include external wall insulation, structural repairs, new windows and some internal works. A project manager is to be appointed and timescales will be set once this person is appointed. At this moment it is anticipated the work will stretch over into the 2014/15 financial year.

5. Disabled Adaptations

- 5.1 493 adaptations orders were completed in 2012/13, 389 minor and 104 major. The average waiting time from referral to completion for major works was 33.28 weeks. The total spend was £404,000.00. In 2013/14 the budget has been increased to

£600,000 with the intention of reducing the current waiting list.

6. Procurement and Partnering

- 6.1 The Council's responsive and void repair contracts run from October 2010 for five years. Mears are the appointed Contractor.
- 6.2 2012/13 was the second year of a 5 year contract with Mears to provide the responsive repairs and voids service for the Council. In this year a handyman service for tenants in our older persons accommodation and vulnerable tenants was introduced. This service provides a repairs service over and above The Council's requirements within the tenancy agreement.
- 6.3 During the year work commenced on the "maintain our assets" review and Mears have agreed to work in partnership with the Council through this review.

7. Energy Efficiency

- 7.1 The Council continues to improve the energy efficiency of its homes and in 2012/13, in partnership with Eon has fitted 284 properties with Photo Voltaic (PV) panels for which the Council receive a modest income and the tenants of these properties enjoy reduced energy bills. In March 2013 Executive agreed that the allocated Energy works budget for 2013/14, any under-spend from the 2012/13 budget, Feed In Tariff (FIT) payments and any grant income received from energy efficiency works would be used to install photovoltaic arrays to as many properties at Hawthorn Road as possible, in conjunction with the re-roofing programme. It was also agreed that £40,000 from a combination of existing budgets would be used to undertake a trial retro-fit to improve thermal efficiency at two properties identified at Shakespeare Road. £31,200 from the Communal Areas budget is planned to be used this year for upgrading the window glass on 48 flats, in conjunction with the external rendering programme works.
- 7.2 In 2012/13 40 properties benefited from increased levels of loft and cavity wall insulation, 518 properties had new high efficiency gas condensing boilers to either replace older less efficient units or complete new heating systems. In 2013/14 to compliment the new roofing programme it is intended that 55 units will have photovoltaic panels fitted.
- 7.3 With regard to the overall energy efficiency of the Council's housing stock, the Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) rating for the Council stock for 2012/13 was 70.25 compared with 69.87 in 2011/12, 68.41 in 2010/11 and 67.96 for 2009/10. The maximum SAP rating for a dwelling is 100; the higher the score the more energy efficient the property.

8. Tenancy Strategy /Policy

- 8.1 Following the approval of the tenancy strategy and policy by Members in November 2012 Officers are currently putting in place the procedures and details relating to the appeals process in order to operate flexible tenancies from October 2013. This policy will ensure the right type of tenancy is allocated to each tenant, that the under occupation of properties is addressed effectively and that the Council provide family and/or adapted housing where it is required.

9. Housing Resident Involvement

9.1 TALC's progress over the last 12 months

- 9.1.1 Over the past 12 months the Tenant and Leaseholder Committee (TALC) have made recommendations that have led to a change in the window cleaning schedule, changed the way in which we measure performance of some Sustainable Lettings Team KPI's and resulted in changes to the policy in place for recharging the estates of deceased residents. The TALC have also undertaken a review of all elements of the Resident Involvement Structure which has resulted in changes to make the structure more effective.

- 9.1.2 There is however, a concern that in general, tenants and leaseholders of Exeter City Council are not motivated to become involved. Work will be carried out over the next 12 months to investigate why this and put in place measures to overcome these issues.

9.2 Resident Auditor Team Update 2012/2013

- 9.2.1 The Resident Auditor Team (RAT) carried out research with the tenant population as part of the investigative work for the creation of the new tenancy policy. They have carried out a Mystery Shopping exercise to measure the performance of landlord service against local offers and have started a regular programme of inspection of void properties. This has led to changes being made to the voids procedure within the Repairs and Technical Services Team.

9.3 Repairs Partnership Board Update 2012/2013

- 9.3.1 There have been no meetings of the Repairs Partnership Board over the last 12 month. The Repairs and Technical Services Manager has brought issues where the input of residents is required to TALC meetings.

9.4 Editorial Board (insight)

- 9.4.1 The contract for the production of InSight was re-tendered in the past year which has resulted in a 25% saving in production

costs. Four editions have been produced. The newsletter is now also available as an audio download to increase its accessibility. A resident satisfaction survey found that 60% of tenants read the publication and that satisfaction with the information included is high. InSight has been used as a vehicle to inform residents of changes to the welfare benefits system. In addition to providing education and support to tenants this also seeks to protect the income of landlord services.

9.5 Performance Improvement Panel

9.5.1 The Housing and Regeneration Act (2008) introduced statutory objectives to empower tenants and ensure that they have the opportunity to shape services and standards. This approach is called co-regulation: where landlords the regulator and tenants together set, monitor and ensure that standards are met.

9.5.2 A Performance Improvement Panel has been set up to meet this need. The Performance Review Committee that was in existence has been absorbed into the panel. The role of the panel is not to act as a consultation group, advising on policy and procedure, but as a scrutiny panel to challenge performance and the way in which services are provided and can be improved. The panel will regularly review performance, actively challenging the way in which services are delivered to assist in continuous improvement.

10. **Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)**

10.1 The Tenancy Services Team uses all the tools available to tackle anti-social behaviour. In 2012/13 there were 694 cases opened. Many of these cases are regarded as low level ASB.

10.2 Where the case has escalated beyond a 'level two letter' the Council have carried out the following actions:

- 35 Acceptable Behaviour Contracts have been agreed and signed by perpetrators of ASB
- Notice's of Intention of intention to seek possession have been served on tenants of ECC property
- 3 Notices of Proceedings for Possession of an introductory tenancy have been served on those residents accused of committing ASB whilst their tenancy is with in the first 12 months.
- 13 Anti Social behaviour Injunctions have been obtained through the courts.
- 2 evictions were carried out during 2012/13 as a result of ASB.

11. Welfare Reforms

11.1 From April 2013, the Welfare Reform Act brought major changes to how benefits are administered and paid.

11.1.1 In summary the changes are:

- Abolition of Council Tax Benefit to be replaced with a local support scheme
- All benefits, including Local Housing Allowance, to be increased by Consumer Price Index not Retail Price Index
- Benefit reductions for working-age social housing tenants under-occupying their homes
- Community Care Grants and Crisis Loans abolished and the funding transferred to Devon County Council to use at 'local discretion'
- Introduction of Universal Credit between 2013 and 2017 that brings together separate benefits into a single, monthly payment
- 'Digital by default' for all applications for Universal Credit with an expectation that 80% of claimants will claim online by the end of transition
- Medical reassessment of all Disability Living Allowance claims and the introduction of the Personal Independence Payment
- Time limiting of contribution based Employment Support Allowance (formerly Incapacity Benefit)

11.1.2 So far the changes, while affecting some individuals significantly, have had a relatively low-level impact on benefit claimants in Exeter and their interaction with the services the City Council provides. These changes are:

- Removal of Local Housing Allowance excess of £15 from those paying less than LHA- level rent
- Removal of the Local Housing Allowance rate for a 5 bedroomed house
- Reduction of Local Housing Allowance rates from median rents to 30th percentile rents
- Increases to non-dependent charges
- Loss of extra benefit to households with children under 12 months
- Shared room rate extended to single people between 25 and 35 years old

11.1.3 The Devon Strategic Partnership have conducted an Equality Impact Needs Assessment of the wider reforms. The main findings from this assessment are as follows:

- The changes are so comprehensive that all groups with protected characteristics under the Equality Act will experience some impact.
- Pensioners are largely protected from these reforms

- unless their partner is of working age.
- There will be a need to help people adapt to the change such as budget management and life skills to enable people to make the most of their income and assistance to maximise their income through work
- Groups that will particularly affected are as follows:
 - People with disabilities, especially those with mild to moderate or fluctuating health issues and their carers
 - Families with children with disabilities
 - Under 35 year old, single people, and potentially NEETS (Not in Employment, Education or Training) and care leavers
 - Women

11.1.4 Scale of changes

The table below sets out the number of people in Exeter likely to be affected by these changes. It should be noted that those figures with an asterisk(*) are crude estimates taken from national data and proportioned by population size. This is due to the fact that DWP has only released national figures. Those benefits not marked with an asterisk are based on actual case load data.

Benefit	Estimated No. of people (Exeter)	Timescale for implementation
Universal Credit	24,780*	October 2013 - 2017
Disability Living Allowance to Personal Independence Payment	7080*	April 2013 – March 2016
Incapacity Benefit to Employment Support Allowance	5900*	October 2010 – 2014
Benefit Cap	42 households	April 2013
Council Tax Support	5,400 claimants	April 2013
Social Fund	-	April 2013
Local Housing Allowance – size restrictions	329 council tenants 400 RP tenants	April 2013

11.2 In order to mitigate the uncertainty of the effect of the welfare reforms additional budgeting has been undertaken for a potential increased bad debt provision. Which has resulted in an increase bad debt provision of £140,000 to £360,000.

11.3 In addition to budgeting for an increased bad debt provision, ECC have also resolved to increase the amount retained in the

Year	Budget (£)	Tenants				Total Spend (£)			
		Down- sizing	D/sizing to an RP Property	Giving up ≥ 2 Beds	Giving up 1 Bed	Incentive Payments	Rent Arrears & Repair Costs	Removals (Incl. carpets)	Total Spent
07-08	100,000	60	8	18	42	92,964.41	--	25,275.31	118,239.72
08-09	50,000	41	9	2	39	47,300.53	--	16,060.15	63,360.68
09-10	35,000	33	6	5	28	31,635.85	--	10,879.30	42,515.15
10-11	50,000	15	2	7	8	9,274.33	--	7,162.05	16,436.40
11-12	50,000	33	11	11	22	34,194.70	9,866.31	1,358.00	45,419.01
12-13	50,000	28	9	9	19	24,718.63	17,832.45	4,602.50	47,153.58

13. Capital Resources

13.1 The table below shows the amount of capital resources, which are expected to be available over the years to 2016-17:

HRA Capital Resources	Balances as at 31/3/2013	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Total
		£	£	£	£	
Opening Balance, 1 April		6,895,971	4,133,896	1,284,051	5,075,842	9,932,535
HRA Working Balance - Transfer To / (From) *	3,290,297	365,159	(2,685,793)	3,344,145	4,422,341	8,736,149
Major Repairs Reserve	2,269,806	2,186,900	2,186,900	2,186,900	2,186,900	11,017,406
Capital Receipts	1,263,927	500,000	500,000	163,294	150,000	2,577,221
External Funding	71,941	0	0	0	0	71,941
RCCO		6,384,485	9,500,231	4,571,168	3,492,972	23,948,856
Accum Balance	6,895,971	16,332,515	13,635,234	11,549,558	15,328,055	46,351,573
Less Approved Capital Commitments		(12,198,619)	(12,351,183)	(6,473,716)	(5,395,520)	(36,419,038)
Available / Closing Balance, 31 March		4,133,896	1,284,051	5,075,842	9,932,535	9,932,535

* The available capital resources detailed above exclude a further £3 million, as this is the amount that the Council has

resolved to retain in the HRA Working Balance as a contingency sum.

13.1.2 Resources Needed

The reduction in available capital resources between 2013-14 and 2015 -16 reflects an enlarged HRA Capital Programme over this period which incorporates a £7.5m investment in building new council dwellings (COB Wave 2) and an additional £4.5m investment in replacement kitchens and bathrooms within existing housing stock.

13.2 Borrowing

The Government has set a Council Housing Borrowing Limit for each local authority (the cap). The HRA is currently operating up to its 'debt cap' with borrowing standing at £57.882m, which prevents the HRA from taking on any additional borrowing. The Council's policy for setting aside monies for debt repayment will be reviewed annually.

14. Income

14.1 The Government is keen for local authorities to continue working towards the social rent policy, whereby convergence with housing associations will be achieved by 2015-16. Rents will then follow the same formula as for housing associations; currently an increase of RPI + 0.50% per annum. Rents set in line with the Government's social rent policy remain below the 'limit rent' and ensures that maximum housing benefit subsidy is receivable by the Council.

15. Right to Buy

15.1 As of 2 April 2012 the Right to Buy discount has been increased to a maximum of £75,000 or 60% of the house value (70% for a flat) depending on which is lower.

15.2 In 2012/2013, the Council sold 23 homes through Right to Buy, this is a significant increase in sales when compared with the number of Right to Buy sales in 2011/2012 and reflects the interest in Right to Buy following the Government's increase in discounts.

15.3 At the budget statement made on the 20 March 2013 the Government announced its intention to lower the eligibility criteria so tenants can apply to buy their homes after three years instead of five and also pledged to simplify the Right to Buy application process. In order to do this the Government requires primary legislation which at this time has not been timetabled. It is clear that this may impact on the number of properties sold under right to buy and this will need to be assessed and modeled to see what impact it will have on the business plan.

15.4 The Retained Right To Buy Receipt Statement as at 31 March

2013 shows that the Council is on target to expend the retained receipts for re-investment in the Council Own Build Wave II Programme and to assist with the purchase of S106 Transfers.

15.5 A summary of the Receipt Statement is provided below:

<u>Retained RTB Receipts</u>		£	
Qrt 1		0.00	
Qrt 2		0.00	
Qrt 3		275,256.92	
Qrt 4		369,933.50	
		<hr/>	
Total Retained 2012/13		645,190.42	Must not exceed more than 30% of the total amount spent on the provision of social housing
<u>Required Expenditure</u>			
Total Retained 2012/13	30%	645,190.42	
Required Match Funding	70%	1,505,444.31	
		<hr/>	
Total to be spent by Qrt 4 2015/16	100%	2,150,634.73	3 year time restriction to spend retained receipts
<u>Expenditure To date</u>			
7-12 Poppin Court	Z4751	309,000.00	
COB Wave 3	Z3248	111,233.71	
St Andrews Road	Z3249	9,396.25	
		<hr/>	
		429,629.96	
		<hr/>	
Balance to be spent		1,721,004.77	

16. Buy-Back

16.1 Buy Back Policy

16.1.1 On 24 April 2012 the Council resolved to acquire suitable housing properties on the open market using receipts generated by the disposal of properties that are no longer deemed suitable for social housing, in accordance with the Housing Asset Management Plan framework.

16.1.2 During 2012/13, the Council sold two properties; 15 Church Street and 78 Hoopern Street and their disposal proceeds were used to purchase two replacement properties; 4 Gareth Crescent and 9 Stoke Hill Crescent.

16.2 Buy Back Allowance

16.2.1 In accordance with the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England) Regulations, the Council is permitted to recover 50% of the cost of re-purchasing former council dwellings from its Right to Buy sale receipts, which equates to our Buy Back Allowance, before calculating the amount to be reinvested in replacement homes in accordance with the Right to Buy Retention agreement.

16.2.2 Monies retained under our 'Buy Back Allowance' can be used for any housing capital purpose, whereas monies retained under the Right to Buy Retention agreement must be spent on the provision of new affordable rented housing within 3 years.

16.2.3 To date, we have retained £44,853 under our 'Buy Back Allowance' and a further £130,512 will be retained in respect former council homes the Council has re-purchased, which include 4 Gareth Crescent and 9 Stoke Hill Crescent.

17. Council Own Build

17.1 Council Own Build – Wave One

17.1.1 The Council's first wave of 21 new Council Homes were completed in 2010 and 2011 at Rowan House and Knight's Place. These homes were part-funded from the Labour Government's 2009-2011 Affordable Homes Programme. The homes are within the HRA.

17.1.2 There have been a number of outstanding defects at Knights Place due to the main contractor ISG's lack of performance. A retention of £64,000 remains in place for this development. The Council Legal Service are currently working with the project architects and quantity surveyors to appoint external specialist contractors to complete the outstanding works and recover costs from the main contractor. It is anticipated that the remedial works will be completed summer 2013.

17.1.3 Both Knights Place & Rowan House have been subjected to rigorous post-completion monitoring. The Monitoring Project is funded by the Technology Strategy Board and involves 3 flats at Knights Place and 2 flats at Rowan House having monitoring equipment installed to monitor energy usage, air quality and internal room temperatures. The monitoring also includes a review of the design, meeting with tenants and questioning their experiences, U value monitoring, energy auditing, air testing and thermal imaging. The monitoring has been in place for 12 months with a further 12 months remaining. Initial monitoring result feedback has been encouraging supporting the low

energy credentials of the PassivHaus standard. A full report will be prepared and disseminated on completion of the monitoring programme.

17.2 Council Own Build – Wave Two

17.2.1 Four new Council own build sites are underway following an allocation of funds from the Housing Revenue Account. The first sites are at Bennett Square, Brookway and Newport Road. Previous Planning Permissions for over 55 homes have been superseded taking account of current housing needs and the feedback from the Wave One developments. New planning applications have been submitted updating the PassivHaus designs so that they are cheaper to deliver, provide for a generic house type design, have the capability to be easily extended within the roof space to provide an additional bedroom and better meet the current housing needs for three bed family homes. The three sites will deliver 20 three bedroom houses of which 3 will be fully wheelchair accessible. Construction works are programmed to commence summer 2013.

17.2.2 The fourth site in wave 2 is located on Vaughan Road, adjacent to Rennes House. The current planning consent for over 55's accommodation will be adapted and updated to reduce the construction costs and incorporate the learning from Wave One. A new planning application will be submitted later in the year, with a view to construction starting in spring of 2014. This development will deliver 20-25 apartments for over 55's with priority given to those downsizing from larger family sized homes.

17.3 Council Own Build – Wave Three

17.3.1 Design work has commenced on a further eight potential Council Own Build sites, of which, following consultation with Planning Officers, four will form the third wave of Council Own Build. The four sites are located at Anthony Road, Hamlin Gardens, Thornpark Rise and Bovemoors Lane, and will deliver 26 three bedroom houses, of which 3 will be fully wheelchair accessible. Resident consultation meetings have been carried out for each of the sites and planning applications will be submitted in July 2013.

17.4 Council Own Build – Future Waves

17.4.1 Further waves of Council Own Build will be formed out of a redesign of the four wave 3 sites that didn't make it into wave three, along with any other HRA sites identified by the Housing Development Team. An external consultant has recently been appointed to identify other potential housing sites in the City which will help constituent further Council Own Build programmes.

18. S106 Purchases

ECC Purchased units during 2012/13

Development	Address	No. of units	Type	Of which wheelchair adapted	Price per unit (£)	Total Cost (£)	Date completed
RNSD, Topsham Road	Blakeslee Drive	5	Houses	3	1	5	22/10/2012
RNSD, Topsham Road	7-12 Poppin Court	6	Flats	0	50,000	300,000*	20/12/2012
RNSD, Topsham Road	1-6 Poppin Court	6	Flats	2	1	6	31/01/2013
Total		17		5		300,011	

18.1 During 2012/2013, the Housing Development Team have secured a number of new homes through their S106 negotiations at nominal values. The table below summaries the purchases made during the year:

**£240,000 commuted sum to be paid to ECC in 2014/15 in lieu of off-site provision of three one-bed flats*

Outstanding ECC purchases

Development	Address	No. of units	Type	Of which wheelchair adapted	Price per unit (£)	Total Cost (£)	Predicted date to complete
Dean Clarke House	TBC	4	Flats	4	42507.00	170028.00*	Apr-14
Monkerton (Heywood Land)	TBC	3	Houses	3	55603.00	166809.00	TBC - have started on site
Newcourt (Dukeminster) Lower RNSD	TBC	1 x 5-bed	House	1	82414.00	152414.00	TBC - have started on site
		1 x 4-bed	House	1	40000.00		
		1 x 3-bed	House	1	30000.00		
Newcourt (Pratt)	TBC	2	Houses	2	1.00	2.00	TBC - have started on site
Total		12		12		489,253	

**Plus Commuted Sum of £112,001*

- 18.2 From 2013/14 onwards, additional S106 transfers have been earmarked as indicated in the table below. Funds have been set aside from the HRA to finance the S106 purchases which provide the most cost-effective way of acquiring new homes.

19. Future Funding Streams for Housing Delivery

- 19.1 During 2012/2013 the Housing Development Team explored and financially modelled a number of alternative funding streams for delivering new Council homes. Some of the potential models fall outside the Housing Revenue Account whilst some models could be adopted within the Housing Revenue Account. A number of models are presently being considered as well as the potential of utilising private sector finance. These include:
- Direct new build in the General Fund
 - New build Council Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV)
 - Council Revenue Account Housing Company (CoHoCo)
 - Direct new build in the Housing Revenue Account
- 19.2 Further work will be carried out in 2013/2014 to ascertain which models and financing options are best suited for the Council.

20. Housing Service Performance Overview

- 20.1 Exeter City Council's Landlord Services have a good record on performance.
- 20.2 The Council maintains performance monitoring records in the Quarterly Performance Digest which is available on the Council website. The Council also benchmarks performance, satisfaction (through the biennial STAR Survey) and costs with up to around 400 different housing organisations nationwide through Housemark.
- 20.3 Performance is discussed and commented on at quarterly meetings of the Performance Review Committee which comprises residents and Councillors. The meeting receives written and verbal reports from staff and can question managers about any aspect of performance.
- 20.4 Repairs
- 20.4.1 The Council carries out many thousands of responsive repairs to council properties every year. Last year the Council undertook over 17,500 repairs, a very slight fall on the number in 2011 – 2012. Of these repairs the percentage completed on time increased from 97.7% to 98.6%.
- 20.4.2 The number of repairs to void properties remained stable at around the 390 number. However, the percentage completed on time increased dramatically from 87.4% to 97.7%.

20.4.3 The number of outstanding gas services remained at zero.

20.4.4 Satisfaction with the repairs service in nearly all areas (such as time taken to complete a repair, attitude of contractors and quality of work) has improved since 2011/2012.

20.5 Rents

20.5.1 Our figure for rent arrears as a percentage of collectable rent at 0.79% is among the lowest in the country. The Council has performed consistently well in this area for many years. It will, unfortunately, almost certainly not be possible to maintain this level of performance in the future after the introduction of the welfare benefit changes (such as the benefit cap, the 'bedroom tax' and the payment of benefit directly to tenants).

20.5.2 85% of residents found that their rent represented good value for money, an increase of 2% since the previous STAR survey in 2008.

20.6 Void Times

20.6.1 Average void times, or the period in which council properties are empty between lettings, increased marginally from 28 days in 2011/2012 to 31 days last year. This is a little above the median figure for stock retaining local authorities.

20.6.2 The number of council homes becoming void during 2012/2013 was 6%.

20.6.3 The Council are currently undertaking a review of our void management service with a view to measuring performance in line with our corporate priorities, concentrating more on outcomes rather than outputs.

20.7 Neighbourhood Management

20.7.1 The Council continue to inspect 100% of our identified housing estates on time and take appropriate action as a result of those inspections.

20.7.2 The incidence of anti-social behaviour (ASB) remains high. Almost 700 new cases were reported last year; however, the number of current cases being investigated has fallen from 132 to 104. Nevertheless, dealing with allegations of anti-social behaviour comprises much of the work of the Neighbourhood Management Team.

20.7.3 The average time taken to deal with cases has increased to 67 days, representing the increased complexity of many of these reports. However, the number of repeat reports of the same problem has fallen to only six.

20.7.4 Although satisfaction with specific aspects of the service has fallen, overall satisfaction with the anti-social behaviour service has increased from 58% in 2008 to 70% in 2012.

