

**ROCHFORD HOUSING ASSOCIATION
OFFER DOCUMENT UPDATE**

	Nature of Work	Progress to date / further work planned
1	<p>Major Repairs and Improvement Programme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £40 million investment over 10 years including £27 million in the first 5 years to bring properties up to the “Rochford Standard”. - The Rochford Standard includes good quality, modern kitchens and bathrooms, central heating, thermal insulation, improved estate security and “secure by design” standards. 	<p>The Board adopted a business plan pre transfer regarding delivery of this expenditure within timescale. The business plan (reviewed annually) outlines the Associations vision and key objectives to deliver the promises made to tenants in the Offer Document.</p> <p>Programme Following a detailed tender process that followed European procurement rules, the five year refurbishment contract was awarded to Connaught Partnerships Ltd in April 2008. Following initial difficulties in the summer of 2008, 255 occupied and void properties were completed in phase 1.</p> <p>The delivery of the Rochford Standard will be undertaken in phases, as follows:</p> <p>2008/2009 Rochford 2009/2010 Rochford / Canewdon / Paglesham 2010/2011 Canewdon / Paglesham / Rayleigh West 2011/2012 Rayleigh / Hockley / Hullbridge / Rawreth 2012/2013 Great Wakering / Little Wakering / Barling</p> <p>Budget Expenditure year 1 was £3.4m; anticipated net expenditure for year 2 of £5,030.879. The average cost of bringing an empty home up to the Rochford Standard is currently approximately £11,000 for an occupied homes and £13,800 for an unoccupied property.</p>

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		<p>Progress To 31 December 2009/10, 208 occupied properties and 62 void properties have been brought up to the Rochford Standard. This includes 27 flats within Millview Court (a sheltered scheme in Rochford) but excludes 82 properties in Spa Court and Britton Court which have undergone major refurbishment and remodelling work as part of a different contract.</p> <p>Our contractor continues to employ a full time Resident Liaison Officer on the contract and RHA have both a Clerk of Works and Reinvestment Surveyor. Monthly project meetings with Connaught continue and are attended by three residents. Overall customer satisfaction figures for 2009/10 are shown in the table below:</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="919 834 1919 906"> <thead> <tr> <th>April</th> <th>May</th> <th>June</th> <th>July</th> <th>August</th> <th>September</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>94%</td> <td>100%</td> <td>100%</td> <td>95%</td> <td>96%</td> <td>97%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	April	May	June	July	August	September	94%	100%	100%	95%	96%	97%
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	<p>Kitchen Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More than half of all general tenants' homes (not sheltered schemes) will get new kitchens, with at least 650 homes in the first five years. 	<p>As at 31 December 2009, 75 occupied and 25 void properties have received new kitchens (general needs) during the current financial year (against a target of 130)</p>												
	<p>Bathroom Improvements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More than half of all general tenants' homes will get bathroom improvements, with at least 665 in the first five years 	<p>As at 31 December 2009, 70 occupied and 18 void properties have received new bathrooms (general needs) during the current financial year (against a target of 133).</p>												

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	<p>Heating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Around 400 tenants will benefit from full central heating fitted within the first five years 	<p>94 replacement heating systems have been fitted in occupied and unoccupied general needs properties during the current financial year.</p>
	<p>Entrance Doors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More than 700 homes will be fitted with new doors within the first five years 	<p>External doors have been fitted to over 140 general needs properties during 2009/10.</p>
<p>2</p>	<p>Improvement to services for sheltered housing tenants</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - £5.4 million budget for home upgrades and communal facilities (timescale not fully stipulated in the offer document) 	<p>In 2009/10 Britton Court, Rayleigh and Spa Court, Hockley have been subject to a £3 million remodelling programme which has:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Converted 38 bedsits into 1 bedroom flats - Brought all accommodation within those two schemes up to the Rochford Standard - Improved communal areas, including the addition of storage areas for electric scooters and enlarged, newly equipped communal kitchens <p>The work has been undertaken by Apollo and has now been completed, albeit later than originally planned. Residents were involved in the selection of Apollo as the contractor and in the monthly progress meetings. Initial survey results from Apollo give a resident satisfaction rating of 95% for the quality of the work undertaken.</p> <p>Residents were given choices as to the finishings within their own flat and also those of the communal areas – such as which soft furnishings and furniture to have in the communal areas and colour choices.</p>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Within two years provide a 24 hour video-tell style door system in all schemes - £2.3 million investment for communal improvements, including £800,000 in the first two years 	<p>This year has also seen an upgrade to the communal kitchen at Millview Court, Rochford which has been both enlarged and re-fitted.</p> <p>Following resident consultation, works commenced in summer 2008 and all sheltered schemes with the exception of Spa Court and Britton Court had new systems installed by December 2008. These have now been fitted at the remaining two schemes as part of the remodelling and refurbishment work, completing this promise.</p> <p>The cost of the above video door entry system (£450,000) and new kitchens at Bellhouse, Great Wakering (in 2008 at a cost of £10,600) and Millview Court, Rochford (this year at a cost of £12,500) has been met from this budget. In addition there have been some minor upgrades to lighting, fencing works at various schemes and, of course, the improved communal areas at Britton and Spa Courts as mentioned above.</p>
3	<p>Environment, safety and security</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - More than £300,000 each year over 10 years to fund works linked to environment, safety and security - Residents to be consulted on the best way to spend the money 	<p>In years 2-6 post transfer, the bulk of this money will be spent on estates and in communal areas following on from the Rochford standard works. Thus, in 2009/10, £230K is being spent on blocks of flats in Rochford to upgrade or install door entry systems, provide new flooring, upgrade lighting and fire systems and to re-decorate communal areas.</p> <p>Residents in Rochford were consulted via individual surveys and at the Fun Day held in July to celebrate completion of year 1 of the Rochford Standard works.</p> <p>In addition, £20K has been allocated to each of the three residents associations for their specific recommendations about the areas they represent. Comments have been encouraged via estate walkabouts, residents meetings and estate newsletters. Take up has varied between the</p>

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		<p>three associations but suggestions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Improved communal fencing – e.g. at Bardfield Way, Rayleigh - Improved parking – although some suggestions were unfeasible due to us not owning the land or cost, we are considering improvements in Meadowside, Rayleigh - Improved external lighting – e.g. Harrogate Drive, Hockley - New signage – e.g. Essex Close/Worcester Drive, Rayleigh
4	<p>Disabled Adaptations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Invest over £100k per annum in aids and adaptations 	<p>In 2008/9 the association invested in excess of £129K in aids and adaptations, including a ground floor extension to one property. This cleared the backlog of adaptation work inherited from the Council, with the exception of the extension requests.</p> <p>In 2009/10 the forecast expenditure is £125k (excl VAT).</p>
5	<p>Day to Day repairs / Cyclical Maintenance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Set an annual budget of around £750,000 for day to day repairs - Provide an annual budget for cyclical works of around £250,000 per year 	<p>Since April 2008, the responsive repairs contract has been delivered through Connaught Partnership. As part of a Group-wide initiative, steps are now being taken to bring the delivery of this service in-house in order to achieve greater accountability to residents and achieve cost savings. Although resident satisfaction with the responsive repairs service has been high within the Rochford area, this has not necessarily been the case elsewhere in the Group. The Association sees this as a positive move to further enhance resident satisfaction and as an extension of our already popular Handyman service. It is anticipated that our new “Internal Maintenance Services” will go live in February 2010.</p> <p>Much of the cyclical work, such as external painting or decorating communal areas in schemes and blocks of flats, forms part of our Rochford</p>

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		Standard programme although there are some works in garage compounds taking place and upgrading of fencing.
6	All homes up to at least decent homes standard by 2010	It is expected that the association will achieve this target by December 2010, although dispensation has been requested from the Tenant Services Authority to reflect the five year major investment programme which is in place.
7	Aim to provide at least 50 new affordable homes each year	<p>As at January 2010, planning applications have been submitted for the following sites:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The Chestnuts (6 units) - Springfield Court (6 units) <p>Work is being undertaken on finalising the planning application for the redevelopment of Stratford House.</p> <p>The Association has, with the backing of Sanctuary Group, the expertise, capacity and commitment to deliver this development programme and recognises the need for the Council and RHA to work together to achieve the promise made and to identify suitable sites. The approach we are taking is to look at strategic and private opportunities (such as those with Colonnade and section 106 opportunities) and to utilise land that we already own.</p>

	Nature of Work	Progress to date / further work planned
8	<p>Long term rent stability / rents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rent guarantee for first five years and one rent rise per year - To not introduce any new service charge for existing services <p>To look at introducing payment by direct debit</p>	<p>The rent policy was set out in the offer document and adopted by the board prior to transfer. Rents and charges will change in line with inflation (RPI) plus 0.5% in April each year. This is also in line with government expectations. Those tenants who currently pay the target rent for their property will see their rents fall by 0.9% in 2010/11 as RPI was -1.4% in September 2009.</p> <p>RHA has not introduced any new service charges for existing services. In December 2009, direct debits were implemented.</p>
9	<p>Have two accessible local offices for all tenants enquiries</p>	<p>Consultation with residents about a second office has commenced and will be concluded during 2009/10.</p>
10	<p>Resident involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involve tenants in all areas of the housing service - Provide up to £18,000 to cover travel, meeting expenses and training 	<p>Four of the Association's 12 Board Members are residents of the Association.</p> <p>In 2008, RHA developed and published a clear 'Resident Involvement Agreement' in conjunction with members of the Residents Forum and a cross section of tenants from the 'Telephone Panel'. This is now under review.</p> <p>There are a number of ways which residents can get involved, from residents meetings and focus groups, to being part of the Telephone Panel or completing surveys e.g. on satisfaction with repairs or the 'New Resident Survey'.</p> <p>The Association plans to broaden involvement for residents during 2009/10 by creating 'service inspectors' on the key service standards that the Association operates. To date this covers grounds maintenance but will be expanded to include repairs, cleaning and customer services.</p>

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		<p>Opportunities for resident members to attend relevant training are made available. The budget for 2009/10 is £40,000 (including tenant board member election costs).</p>
11	<p>Dealing with Anti Social Behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Have a designated Anti Social Behaviour Officer - Take prompt action on nuisance, crime and anti social behaviour - Ensure all tenants know their responsibilities 	<p>RHA is currently reviewing the scope of anti social behaviour across its neighbourhoods to establish how to best target resources. Our initial experience has shown that most anti social behaviour on or about our estates is relatively low level and predominantly based on noise nuisance. That said, during 2009/10 three cases of anti social behaviour have been taken to court and the perpetrators evicted. We have recently started using a new system for monitoring ASB and the detailed performance information that this is able to provide, will be used by us later this year to assess whether a designated ASB officer is necessary.</p> <p>The association has a robust policy and procedure on anti social behaviour which allows for quick and effective action through the use of possession action, injunctions, acceptable behaviour contracts (ABC's) and anti social behaviour orders (ASBO's). This is backed up with good partnership working, including attendance at the Council led 'Joint Action Group' and the CDRP meetings.</p> <p>All housing and frontline staff have been trained to understand how to respond to complaints of anti social behaviour and a thorough sign up process ensures that new tenants understand the requirements of their tenancy agreement. These are also outlined in a tenants handbook.</p>

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION1. **MOCK INSPECTION**

- 1.1 In 2009, Sanctuary Group undertook an assessment of the Association's services in line with Audit Commission requirements for a full inspection and using their Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs). They assessed the Association as providing a good service with uncertain prospects for improvement.
- 1.2 In terms of the service score, the cross cutting Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs) were assessed as follows:
- Access and Customer Care – balance of strengths and weaknesses
 - Diversity – weaknesses outweigh strengths
 - Value for Money – area of weakness
- The main service areas were been assessed as:
- Maintenance
 - capital, planned and cyclical works – balance of strengths and weaknesses
 - responsive repairs, empty homes, aids and adaptations – strengths outweigh weaknesses
 - gas servicing – an area of strength
 - Income Management and resident involvement – balance of strengths and weaknesses in these areas
 - Allocations and lettings and sheltered housing – weaknesses outweigh strengths in these areas
 - Tenancy and estate management – strengths outweigh weaknesses
- 1.3 The reason for the 'uncertain prospects for improvement' rating was largely attributed to the short history of the association (less than three years) which the mock inspectors felt did not give a "sufficient track record, in Audit Commission terms...although good progress is being made".
- 1.4 At the time of the inspection, the Association was less than 18 months old and, although the results in some areas were disappointing for staff, it was felt by the Board that to be a good assessment for an organisation of our age.
- 1.5 To respond to the recommendations contained within the report, which was received in summer 2009, an action plan has been devised and adopted by the Board. As at November 2009 good progress was being made with 20% of actions complete and good progress being made against the others.

2. RESIDENT SURVEY RESULTS

- 2.1 The Association participates in a Sanctuary group-wide annual STATUS-based residents survey. In 2009 this was carried out by an external company by telephone with responses from approximately 500 of the Association's general needs and sheltered tenants.
- 2.2 The performance indicators that are required to be reported on externally to the Tenant Services Authority are:
- % of residents satisfied with the landlord's services
 - % of residents satisfied with the way their landlord deals with repairs and maintenance
 - % of residents satisfied with opportunities to participate.
- 2.3 Results showed that overall service satisfaction amongst general needs tenants increased from 76% in 2008 to 83% in 2009, 2% short of top quartile performance. Satisfaction with repairs for this client group increased from 73% to 79% (against a top quartile performance of 82%) and from 80% to 81% for satisfaction with quality of the home in 2009. Satisfaction with opportunities to participate for general needs tenants rose from 52% in 2008 to 71% in 2009 against a top quartile performance of 67%.
- 2.4 For sheltered residents, overall service satisfaction remained the same at 91% over the year, satisfaction with repairs increased from 77% to 89% between 2008 to 2009 and satisfaction with opportunities to participate increased to 74%.