

PERTH AND KINROSS COUNCIL

Housing and Health Committee – 13 March 2013

NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES STRATEGY 2012-13

Report by Executive Director (Housing and Community Care)

ABSTRACT

This report reviews progress with the Neighbourhood Services Strategy and identifies areas for continued work.

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that Committee:

- 1.1 Notes the progress in implementing the Neighbourhood Services Strategy.
- 1.2 Remits the Executive Director (Housing and Community Care) to continue to develop the strategy actions, detailed in Appendix 1, during 2013-14.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 In March 2012 Housing and Health Committee approved a report on Improving Local Neighbourhoods – A Strategy for Neighbourhood Management (Report 12/119).
- 2.2 Many of the actions were linked to the Tenant Participation Strategy and so were monitored through the Tenant Participation Strategy Monitoring group which meets on a quarterly basis. The remaining actions have been monitored mainly through the Area Housing Manager's meetings and through the recently established Joint Safer Communities and Neighbourhood Services working group which includes three tenant representatives.
- 2.3 The strategy is based on the outcomes outlined in the Scottish Social Housing Charter developed to encourage social landlords deliver an efficient and customer-focused housing service, improving the quality and value of services we provide. It is structured around 5 key themes:
 - The Customer/landlord relationship.
 - Neighbourhood and community.
 - Access to housing and support.
 - Getting good value from rents and service charges.
 - Other customers, including Gypsies/Travellers.
- 2.4 A range of issues, challenges and priorities were identified across each of the five themes and were detailed in the Strategy.

3. STRATEGY PROGRESS

3.1 The key outcomes achieved in each of the areas above is summarised in the attached Appendix 1. Highlights include:

- Successful work with individual neighbourhoods.
- Strengthened links with our partner agencies through Tasking and Coordinating Groups for the benefit of communities.
- Intense short life action group on reducing rent arrears in Letham.

3.2 We will continue to develop those actions where work is still required and these are detailed in the Appendix.

4. CONSULTATION

4.1 The Perth and Kinross Tenants' and Residents' Federation (PKTRF) were consulted about this report and wish it noted that they feel tenants were engaged with, rather than consulted with, in relation to the rent setting, as stated on page 141 of this report.

4.2 The Head of Legal Services was also consulted on this report.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Any resource implications arising from this report will be contained within existing Housing and Community Care resources.

6. COUNCIL CORPORATE PLAN OBJECTIVES 2009-2012

6.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 2009-2012 lays out five Objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. All are relevant to this report:-

- (i) A Safe, Secure and Welcoming Environment
- (ii) Healthy, Caring Communities
- (iii) A Prosperous, Sustainable and Inclusive Economy
- (iv) Educated, Responsible and Informed Citizens
- (v) Confident, Active and Inclusive Communities

7. EQUALITIES IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EqIA)

7.1 The Council's Corporate Equalities Assessment Framework requires an assessment of functions, policies, procedures or strategies in relation to race, gender and disability and other relevant equality categories. This supports the Council's legal requirement to comply with the duty to assess and consult on relevant new policies to ensure there is no adverse impact on any community group or employees.

7.2 The function, policy, procedure or strategy presented in this report was considered under the Corporate Equalities Assessment Framework and the determination was made that the items summarised in this report do not require further assessment as they will all have a positive impact on people's wellbeing.

8. STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

8.1 Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a legal requirement under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that applies to all qualifying plans, programmes and strategies, including policies (PPS).

8.2 The details presented in this report were considered under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 and no further action is required as it does not qualify as a PPS as defined by the Act and is therefore exempt.

9. CONCLUSION

9.1 The Neighbourhood Services Strategy set out the current position, key challenges and actions for 2012-13 to promote the Neighbourhood Services' vision that 'our neighbourhoods are vibrant, successful places where people can enjoy a safe, secure and healthy environment'. We will ensure people have access to suitable good quality affordable accommodation with the necessary support to sustain them in their own homes'.

DAVID BURKE

Executive Director (Housing and Community Care)

Note: No background papers, as defined by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to any material extent in preparing the above report.

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Neighbourhood Services Strategy Progress Report 2012/13

1. The Customer/Landlord Relationship

Equalities, communication and participation

Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes

- Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.
- Tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with Neighbourhood Services and get the information they need about Perth and Kinross as a landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services that we provide.
- Tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence our decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.

Individual Needs Recognised

- We have provided information regarding an older people's group in our recent Tenant Participation Update and a programme of presentations is being arranged for Sheltered Housing Tenants.
- 'Us and the Housing' Group have launched their commissioned DVD 'It Goes On and On' which is about disability related harassment.
- Work is underway with Perth College to deliver a Tenancy Academy to deliver a course for homeless and mainstream tenants about housing and tenancy skills.
- We have supported existing Registered Tenants' Organisations to become actively involved in improving neighbourhoods and communities which has led to successful projects such as: a community development project to improve the Loon Braes area of Davie Park; Letham Climate Challenge and Tulloch Tenants and Residents Association accessing funding to develop unused land into community gardens and allotments; and Double Dykes Residents worked with the Council to provide a more efficient form of heating in all chalets.

Communication

- We have increased the use of texting to tenants and residents to enable staff to communicate more efficiently. We have delivered prompts to customers to remind them of payment dates, appointments and deliver service information. This is enabling us to save time, money, recover arrears, reduce waste and lower our carbon footprint.
- The Quality Panel have been involved in reviewing the Perth and Kinross Council (PKC) website to help improve navigation.

Participation

- We have started working with tenants and residents to achieve the outcomes and standards detailed in the Scottish Social Housing Charter.
- We held 6 Neighbourhood Forum events in November 2012 to consult with tenants on rents and service charges, garage sites and lock ups and to update them on the Scottish Social Housing Charter.
- We commissioned Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) to provide training to tenants on the Scottish Social Housing Charter, negotiation skills, value for money and Landlord Scrutiny.
- We have already provided accredited training for 15 tenants and residents through 'Just Housing'. There are currently a further 8 undertaking the 15 week accredited course, 2 of which are Hillcrest tenants. There has also been a total of 15 people who have gone through the informal 2 day training.
- We have met with the Tenant Participation Officer from North Ayrshire Council to explore 'participatory budgeting' and a report is now being prepared for the Senior Management Team.

2. Neighbourhood and Community

Supporting our communities, working together to address key issues

Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Neighbourhood Services work in partnership with other services and agencies to ensure that tenants and other customers live in well maintained neighbourhoods, where they feel safe. |
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Our aim is to have well maintained safe neighbourhoods where people want to live. We recognise the impact that the quality of housing and the environment can have on the overall quality of peoples' lives and the necessity of involving them and other partners to meet this aim.

Supporting Communities

- As landlord, to 7343 households we receive very positive feedback from tenants about the quality of their homes and neighbourhoods that they live in (87% satisfaction).
- We are working closely with the Quality Panel who have undertaken inspections in each of the four areas and will now discuss actions for improvement with Neighbourhood Services staff.
- We have developed networks of professional staff to target individuals and families with complex needs in the Perth and Kinross North area (e.g. our Tasking Groups and Equally Well networks).

Collaboration

- We have carried out a review of our caretaking service and are working with local Registered Social Landlords to see how we can work together in this area and other tenancy and estate management issues, such as garden maintenance.

- We will be undertaking a detailed stock condition and feasibility survey of garage sites and lock ups between April and July 2013 before carrying out full consultation with tenants and residents and reporting to Committee later this year. We did however consult on this at our Neighbourhood Network events and the Quality Panel have developed a separate checklist for site inspections.

Community Safety

- In Letham Tayside Fire and Rescue check housing blocks on a regular basis with the local housing team and provide information and support to tenants and residents. Where fly tipping is evident and the culprit is unknown then the team liaise with the Environment Service to remove items. Staff in Letham and Blairgowrie also take part in a Street a Week initiative with Tayside Police and the Community Wardens to become more visible in the community. They consult on local issues and provide advice and assistance in relation to community safety. Where there are issues with youths Street Sports for all can be booked to divert activities.
- We have also worked with The Environment Service to move bin stores outside flatted blocks to mitigate against the risk of fire.
- We have developed a Tenancy Academy learning pack that will help people (particularly young people) prepare for their tenancies through the Homeless Voice Group.
- Five of the Tasking and Coordinating groups are well established and bring key agencies together to jointly address anti-social behaviour and other community problems. These groups are working particularly well in the North and Letham areas and lessons learned will inform the review by the Safer Communities Team.
- We have tenant and resident involvement in the newly created Safer Communities and Neighbourhood Services working group. This has been established as a point of reference to consultation on service developments in relation to community safety and implementing the Neighbourhood Strategy.

3. Access to Housing Support

Sustaining tenancies
<p>Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants get the information they need on how to access support options to help them to remain in their home and can get suitable support including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.

Support Options to help people remain in their home

- We improved tenancy sustainment during 2012/13, with 100% of tenants housed in the last 12 months remaining in their homes during Apr-June 2012, 96% in July-Sept 2012 and 95.5% in Sept-Dec 2012.
- We moved the rent arrears team to work in local neighbourhoods to work more closely with housing staff to support tenants prevent cases escalating. There is now a more concentrated effort to make face-to-face contact with tenants with low levels of rent arrears to prevent the arrears

escalating. We have also introduced a rent arrears action plan and have been inspected by the Scottish Housing Regulator and are awaiting their report.

- Housing Officers provide advice and signpost tenants to Welfare Rights, Citizen's Advice Bureau (CAB) and Benefits at pre-tenancy viewings, sign up and settling in visits to ensure that they receive benefit and income maximisation checks if they are experiencing difficulties.
- We drafted an article on debt for 'On the House' and will be reviewing our Web page on rents and arrears with the assistance of the Quality Panel. We made use of the digital display screens in Area Offices to publicise the importance of paying rent and also produced a leaflet for prospective tenants on how to pay rent which is included with their offer of a let.
- In June 2012 a short-term action group carried out an exercise of focussed interventions with tenants in rent arrears in the Letham/Hillyland area of Perth. Its purpose was to identify the causes of failure to pay rent and implement a series of interventions to support successful tenancies and help tenants reduce their arrears. These included ensuring that tenants have the appropriate information, support and advice to maximise their income and prevent or minimise debt. These also included improving joint working and communication between staff based centrally and Area Team staff. This was very successful with 13 tenants clearing their accounts in full and a reduction of rent arrears due amounting to approximately £8,800. This work is now being expanded to the Perth City area.
- We have identified tenants who will be affected by the new under occupation rules and made contact with them to provide advice and assistance.
- 67% of staff have attended training in relation to the Scottish Social Housing Charter and 93% on Welfare Reform in order to ensure that they understand the outcomes which the Scottish Housing Regulator expects to be met for tenants and to enable them to support tenants with changes to welfare benefits.
- Training on Short Scottish Secure Tenancy was also provided during January and February 2013.

Housing options, access to social housing and homeless people

Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes

- People looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them.
- Tenants and people on housing lists can review their options
- People at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness.
- Homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice, are provided with suitable, good quality temporary or emergency accommodation, when this is needed, and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep a home.
- People looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and their prospect of being housed.

- We held a Business Improvement Team event in July 2012 on tenancy management of temporary accommodation. From April 2013 this function will be managed by Neighbourhood Services in the Perth and Kinross North and South teams in order to integrate the management of mainstream and temporary accommodation.
- Working in the Housing Options Hub for Tayside, we have purchased the Abris portal which allows people to self assess their housing situation and view options in conjunction with partner authorities. This is currently being piloted at the Housing Advice Centre and is likely to mean a 5% reduction in cases seeking a full housing options interview.
- Greater emphasis has been placed on pre- tenancy visits, particularly in the North team with the intention of assessing the condition of current properties, managing expectations of what can be offered and identifying support needs. This needs to be rolled out to other areas.

4. Getting Good Value from Rents and Service Charges

Value for money, rents and service charges

Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes

Perth and Kinross set rents and service charges in consultation with our tenants and other customers so that:

- Tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay.
- A balance is struck between level of services provided, the cost of the services and how far current and prospective tenants and service users can afford them.
- Tenants get clear information on how rents and other money is spent, including details of individual items of expenditure above thresholds agreed between landlords and tenants.

- We held six tenant network events throughout Perth and Kinross during November 2012 to consult with our tenants on their priorities for the future, including rent-setting and priorities for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

5. Other Customers

Gypsies/Travellers

Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes

- Perth and Kinross will manage their Gypsy Traveller Sites so that they are well maintained and managed.

- We have a draft Gypsy Traveller Strategy which has been developed through the Gypsy Traveller Community Engagement working group.
- A survey has been undertaken with Gypsy Travellers and the results will feed into the Gypsy Traveller Strategy.

- We are also developing a specific survey for Gypsy Travellers living on our sites.
- We have worked on a local lettings plan for Double Dykes and our next step will be to consult with tenants about this.
- We are currently undertaking a feasibility study of a possible site for a Gypsy Traveller transit site.

Over the next year we will:

- Continue to work with tenants and residents to involve them in assisting us to meet the Scottish Social Housing Charter outcomes.
- Continue to develop thematic and local forums.
- Further increase the use of texting to tenants and explore the use of social network sites such as Facebook.
- Work with the Quality Panel to review the Neighbourhood Services website and ensure that all leaflets are tenant assured.
- Report on and implement the recommendations of the garage site and lock up stock condition and feasibility study.
- Encourage more tenants and residents to become involved in the Safer Communities and Neighbourhood Services working group.
- Work with Education and Children's Services on their Parenting Strategy and Early Years project and integrate this within housing services.
- Continue to develop ideas for collaborative working with our local Registered Social Landlords in areas, such as tenancy and estate management.
- Work to reduce our rent arrears which have continued to rise during 2012/13.
- Establish regular training for staff on equalities, customer care and tenancy and estate management.
- Work with our colleagues in the Homelessness Service to develop a new approach to Housing Options.
- Consult on and implement local lettings plans.
- Roll out pre tenancy visits to all areas.
- Undertake a Tenant Satisfaction Survey which will also include questions on value for money and rent arrears.
- Launch the Gypsy Traveller Strategy and report on the feasibility study of a possible transit site.

ACTION PLAN

Customer and Landlord Relationship

1. Equalities: Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.			
Ref	Key Actions	Target/Output	Progress
1.1	Develop thematic forums for hard to reach groups.	Homeless Voice Group Learning Disability Housing Forum Older Tenants Forum.	Homeless Voice Group and Learning Disability Housing Forum continue to develop with projects such as the Tenancy Academy and the launch of a DVD by the Us and the Housing Group. Information has been included in the most recent Tenant Participation update and a series of presentation will shortly be delivered to Sheltered Housing Tenants.
1.2	Continue staff training on equalities.	59 Neighbourhood Services staff.	While staff have attended Gypsy Traveller Awareness Sessions between June and December 2012, we need to provide regular training on the Equality Act 2010.
2. Communication: Tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with Neighbourhood Services and get the information they need about Perth and Kinross as a landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services that we provide.			
Ref	Key Actions	Target/Output	Progress
2.1	Expand the use of texting.	Increase in numbers Baseline = 983(189 tenants).	We have succeeded in expanding the use of texting to 1089 residents and 207 tenants. We now also have 2,500 tenant mobile numbers confirmed on our housing management system.
2.2	Work with tenants to update the information on the Neighbourhood Services website.	Quarterly.	Quality Panel has reviewed negotiation around the new PKC website and will now review the Neighbourhood Services element.

3. Participation: Tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence our decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.			
Ref	Key Actions	Target/Output	Progress
3.1	Implement the Tenant Participation Strategy.	Tenants and Residents are able to be involved in the decision making process of Housing and Community Care in a range of ways.	We have established a Joint Tenant Participation Strategy Monitoring and Implementation Group which meets quarterly with our Housing Collaborative partners and progress on the Strategy is reported annually to the Housing and Health Committee.
3.2	Work with tenants and residents to achieve the outcomes and standards detailed in the Scottish Social Housing Charter.	Set up a working group April 2012.	Working group established and tenant/resident members identified.
3.3	Support the existing Registered Tenants Organisations to become actively involved in improving neighbourhoods and communities.	Empowered Communities who take ownership of their area.	<u>Loon Braes Parknership</u> - community development project to improve the Loon Braes area of Davie Park. <u>Allotments</u> - Tulloch Tenants and Residents Association were instrumental in accessing funding to develop unused land into community gardens and allotments. <u>Double Dykes Residents</u> worked with the Council to provide a more efficient form of heating in all chalets.
3.4	Work with the quality panel to assess neighbourhoods.	1 inspection in each area.	Quality checklists drafted for neighbourhoods and at least 1 inspection carried out in each area
3.5	Consider an Older Persons forum (under 'Equalities).	Meet the needs and priorities of older people.	See 1.1.
3.6	Explore Participatory Budgeting for Estate Based Initiatives.	Increase number of Tenants/Residents involved in improving their neighbourhood. Increased ownership by residents.	Meeting took place with the Tenant Participation Officer from North Ayrshire Council regarding participatory budgeting and tenant participation. Service manager to present report to SMT in early March with a view to implementing a similar model in Perth & Kinross.
3.7	Expand the use of text messaging (under 'Communication).	Increased numbers	See 2.1.

Neighbourhood and Community

4. Estate Management: Neighbourhood Services works in partnership with other services and agencies to ensure that tenants and other customers live in well maintained neighbourhoods, where they feel safe.			
Ref	Key Actions	Target/Output	Progress
4.1	Improve the percentage of tenants who are very or fairly satisfied with their neighbourhood through implementing range of initiatives.	90%	Further tenant satisfaction survey to be undertaken in April 2013.
4.2	Prepare strategy and improvement plan for caretaking and maintenance functions ensuring effective liaison with housing management teams and developing caretakers' relationship with residents	Improved communication and working relationships with tenants and residents. Improved ownership for common areas.	Raised awareness of caretakers' role in multi storey blocks by attending sign ups with new tenants, maintaining contact with elderly and vulnerable tenants and residents, assisting other areas to deal with estate management issues. Review undertaken and action plan developed which includes collaborative working with Caledonia and Hillcrest Housing Associations.
4.3	Review garage and lock-up sites and implement action plan.	July 2012.	A feasibility study is to be carried out between Apr-July 2013 and a report prepared on, findings, options and recommendations which will be reported to Committee in the autumn.
4.4	Continue to work with the Environment Service and other partners such as Tayside Police and Tayside Fire and Rescue to focus on community hot spots.	April 2012 and ongoing Reduced fly tipping, vandalism, fire raising.	Housing Teams have further developed their strong links with other services and agencies through the Community Tasking Groups.
4.5	Through the Homeless Voice group we are developing a Tenancy Academy-learning pack that will help people (particularly young people) prepare for their tenancies.	Increase in tenancy sustainability Reduction in neighbour complaints.	One homeless service user has been through this training and gained an ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) qualification. The process will be reviewed and further developed during 2013-14.
4.6	Develop networks of professional staff to target individuals and families with complex needs (Equally Well model) and work across hot-spot areas.	Improved quality of life for individuals and the wider Community.	Networks well established in the North area and currently being further developed in Letham.

Access to Housing and Support

5. Tenancy Sustainment: Tenants get the information they need on how to access support options to help them to remain in their home and can get suitable support including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.

Ref	Key Actions	Target/Output	Progress
Rent Arrears			
5.1	Implement the rent arrears action and improvement plan.	Reduction in rent arrears 6%.	Rent Arrears Action and Improvement Plan being implemented and monitored through a Steering Group on a six weekly basis. This is an area for continued scrutiny and priority as reduction in arrears not met.
5.2	Move the Rent Arrears team into local neighbourhood teams to work closely with housing staff to support tenants.	Improved early intervention and support.	Rent arrears staff now integrated into area teams and developing working relationship with frontline housing staff and communities.
5.3	Further improve effective signposting to Benefits and Welfare Rights (e.g. getting benefit checks and income maximisation carried out for people who are struggling).	Tenancy Sustainment. Income maximisation.	Housing Officers provide advice and sign post to Benefits and Welfare Rights at pre tenancy viewings, sign up and settling in visits.
5.4	Promote a 'Payment Culture' through leaflets/publicity.	Increased rental income.	Article in last 'On the House' on debt. Web page on rents and arrears being reviewed. Digital display screens used in Area Offices to publicise importance of paying rent, debt awareness etc; further article in On the House from tenants perspective, texting and poster campaign. Leaflet for prospective tenants on how to pay rent developed and included with housing offer letters.
5.5	Work with tenants to review the current arrangements to identify areas for improvement.	Increase in tenancy sustainment – baseline 92%.	Tenant satisfaction survey will include a section on the arrears service. Work to progress with the Quality Panel in March/April 2013.
5.6	Review with tenants the literature and information provided to them.	Tenants know how to access support August 2012.	Rent arrears letters amended but we will work with the Quality Panel to test these.

5. Tenancy Sustainment: Tenants get the information they need on how to access support options to help them to remain in their home and can get suitable support including services provided directly by the landlord and by other organisations.

5.7	Work with our key partners, including tenants to provide joint support to prevent enforcement actions.	Increase in tenancy sustainment – baseline 92% Reduction in evictions baseline =5	Tenancy sustainment increased to 100% in the first quarter of 2012-13 and is now sitting at 95.5% in the third quarter. No tenants have been evicted to date. Key partners meet on a monthly basis at the Eviction Prevention Panel. Stronger links being developed with Citizen's Advice.
5.8	Train staff and tenants on the legislation around managing our tenancies.	59 Neighbourhood Services staff Increased tenant satisfaction.	Training held for all staff regarding Scottish Social Housing Charter and Welfare Reform Further training on Short Scottish Secure Tenancy provided in February 2013.

Access to Housing and Support

6. Housing Options, Access to Social Housing and Homeless People

- People looking for housing get information that helps them make informed choices and decisions about the range of housing options available to them.
- Tenants and people on housing lists can review their options.
- People at risk of losing their homes get advice on preventing homelessness.
- Homeless people get prompt and easy access to help and advice, are provided with suitable, good quality temporary or emergency accommodation, when this is needed, and are offered continuing support to help them get and keep a home.
- People looking for housing find it easy to apply for the widest choice of social housing available and get the information they need on how the landlord allocates homes and their prospect of being housed.

Ref	Key Actions	Target/Output	Progress
6.1	Introduce local lettings arrangements within areas of housing stress and better meet local demand.	As required Sustainable Communities.	Draft Local Lettings Plans developed for Old Mill Road, Double Dykes and Bobbin Mill. Tenants to be consulted over the next few months and a report to be submitted to Housing and Health Committee in August 2013.
6.2	Decentralise dispersed tenancy management and deliver from local neighbourhood offices.	Staff engagement at Business Improvement Event July 2012	Business Improvement Event held in July 2012. Neighbourhood Services will manage temporary accommodation in rural areas from April 2013

6. Housing Options, Access to Social Housing and Homeless People

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Ref	Key Actions	Target/Output	Progress
6.3	Complete the review of Housing Options including introduction of the Abris portal which allows people to self assess their housing situation and view options in conjunction with partner authorities in the Housing Options Hub for Tayside, Fife and Central.	Individuals better able to make choices and find their own housing solutions. Increased time for Neighbourhood Services staff to address tenancy/ estate management issues	Homeless Service Manager is now the lead for Housing Options. Abris portal purchased to allow customers to self assess their housing options. This is currently being piloted by staff at York Place and once installed at Area Teams.

Getting good value from rents and service charges

7. Value for Money, Rents and Service Charges:

- Tenants, owners and other customers receive services that provide continually improving value for the rent and other charges they pay
- A balance is struck between level of services provided, the cost of the services and how far current and prospective tenants and service users can afford them
- Tenants get clear information on how rents and other money is spent, including details of individual items of expenditure above thresholds agreed between landlords and tenants

Ref	Key Actions	Target/Output	Progress
7.1	Through the Tenant Participation Strategy, work with tenants to encourage participation in rent discussions and review the information available to tenants on the services provided and whether best value and value for money are being achieved.	Commence April 2012.	Six Tenant Network events held across the district during November 2012.

Other customers

8. Gypsies/Travellers: Perth and Kinross will manage their Gypsy Traveller Sites so that they are well maintained and managed			
Ref	Key Actions	Target/Output	Progress
8.1	Continue to work with Gypsy Travellers and partners to meet their needs.	Increased satisfaction with site management and provision.	Monitored through the Gypsy Traveller Community Engagement Working Group: Survey developed for all Gypsy Travellers the results of which will feed into the Gypsy Traveller Strategy which is currently being drafted. Planned launch April 2013.
8.2	Consider a Local lettings plan for Double Dykes.	Balanced approach to pitch allocation.	Draft prepared for discussion with residents in early 2013.
8.3	Identify a Gypsy Traveller transit site.	Meet the needs of travelling families. Reduce unauthorised encampments (18 in last year).	Site Development group established and options for transit sites and a permanent site currently being considered. Consultation with key stakeholders including the Gypsy Traveller Community to take place in the Spring.
8.4	Measure resident satisfaction in relation to site management.	Obtain baseline September 2012.	Resident satisfaction survey being developed in line with the survey issued to tenants of houses but will be specific to Gypsy Traveller sites and will be issued in April 2013.

