



Housing Portfolio

Performance Report

Q3 2018/19

Gravesham
Borough Council 

Delivering for the Community



02 Stronger Gravesham

"a healthier more cohesive community where children have the best start in life and people are proud to call home"

Policy Commitment

1. Implement a 'pro-growth' agenda, ensuring the delivery of the right volume and quality of new housing at the right time, whilst protecting the greenbelt from inappropriate development.

Q3 2018-19 saw 26 completions of affordable housing which included 6 x 2 bed council houses at Alders Court in Northfleet.

Moat completed the remaining four shared-ownership homes on phase 1B at Springhead Park, providing 2 x 3 bed houses; 1 x 4 bed house and 1 x 2 bed flat.

West Kent Housing Association completed 16 x 2 bed affordable rented flats at Dalefield.

PI 11 Net additional homes delivered (NB: Collected Annually: outturns relate to previous year)

| | Q1 2017-18 | Q2 2017-18 | Q3 2017-18 | Q4 2017-18 | Q1 2018-19 | Q2 2018-19 | Q3 2018-19 | Q4 2018-19 |
|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Outturn | Collected Annually | | | 0 | Collected Annually | | | |
| Direction of Travel | | | | ↓ | | | | |

PI 12 Number of affordable homes delivered

| | Q1 2017-18 | Q2 2017-18 | Q3 2017-18 | Q4 2017-18 | Q1 2018-19 | Q2 2018-19 | Q3 2018-19 | Q4 2018-19 |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Outturn | 0 | 36 | 53 | 0 | 18 | 34 | 26 | |
| Direction of Travel | ↓ | ↑ | ↑ | ↓ | ↑ | ↑ | ↓ | |

Policy Commitment

2. Confront the blight made by landlords of empty properties and Houses of Multiple Occupation.

Three properties were brought back into use through council intervention during Q3, including a property that had lain empty for more than 10 years. Through regular contact with the owner and monitoring of works, the property was occupied on 19.10.2018. A further long term empty property that was 'gifted' to the council which required major works, has been occupied since 12.11.2018. A third property required major refurbishment prior to occupation with a family moving in on 22.12.2018.

The Private Sector Housing Service deals with in the region of 100 cases at any one time, this includes general service requests from single family dwellings, licensed HMOs, renewal licenses or those HMOs going through the licensing process for the first time. This has increased by approximately a third due to the extension of the mandatory licensing scheme in October 2018.

The team prioritises all cases and those that are recognised as most important, particularly those falling under the mandatory HMO licensing scheme, take precedence. New HMO licence cases have been found through continued proactive work across the borough, using local knowledge and experience and by working closely with other departments such as Planning, Council Tax and Community Safety.

The team continues to proactively inspect those that are already licensed, to ensure standards are maintained. The data held by the service, requires continuous updating as new properties are identified via the proactive work of the service.

We are continuing to engage with Landlords to raise housing standards by delivering Landlord Forums, updated website information to reflect latest legislative changes, email signatures which deliver key messages for landlord support. There is also information provided to landlords on grants available through the Energy Company Obligation (ECO) and the LA Flex which the Council aims to capture those vulnerable households in Private Sector.

PI 13 *Number of non-local authority owned empty homes brought back into occupation*

| | Q1 2017-18 | Q2 2017-18 | Q3 2017-18 | Q4 2017-18 | Q1 2018-19 | Q2 2018-19 | Q3 2018-19 | Q4 2018-19 |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Outturn | 8 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | |
| Direction of Travel | ↓ | ↓ | ↓ | → | → | → | → | |

PI 14 *Number of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) brought up to standard*

| | Q1 2017-18 | Q2 2017-18 | Q3 2017-18 | Q4 2017-18 | Q1 2018-19 | Q2 2018-19 | Q3 2018-19 | Q4 2018-19 |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Outturn | 0 | 4 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 3 | |
| Direction of Travel | → | ↑ | ↓ | ↑ | ↓ | ↓ | ↑ | |

PI 15 *Number of private sector homes made free of health and safety hazards through council assistance*

| | Q1 2017-18 | Q2 2017-18 | Q3 2017-18 | Q4 2017-18 | Q1 2018-19 | Q2 2018-19 | Q3 2018-19 | Q4 2018-19 |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Outturn | 8 | 6 | 4 | 10 | 2 | 0 | 8 | |
| Direction of Travel | ↑ | ↓ | ↓ | ↑ | ↓ | ↓ | ↑ | |

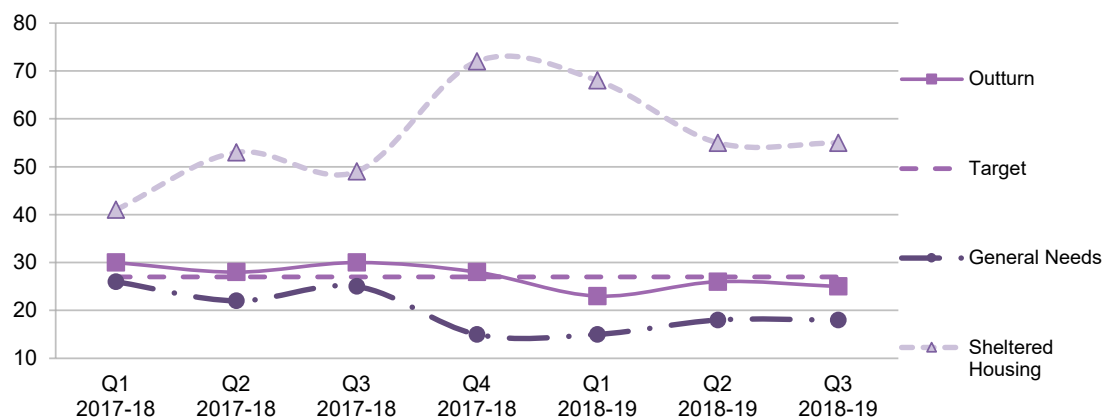
Policy Commitment

3. Tackle the housing waiting list by providing a range of properties, including actively procuring private housing for future housing tenants.

We have been marginally above target in lettings for the past quarter. When broken down further into general needs and Sheltered housing void times being split, general needs housing has consistently performed at well above target. However, sheltered has been below target consistently which therefore is an area where more focus will be this year to improve re-let times. Work is ongoing to ensure that properties are advertised at the pre-void stage to ensure that an applicant is available to move in as soon as the property is ready to let. Capita is being used again to accurately capture data regarding void works and stages.

PM 5 Average time taken to re-let local authority housing (days)

| | Q1 2017-18 | Q2 2017-18 | Q3 2017-18 | Q4 2017-18 | Q1 2018-19 | Q2 2018-19 | Q3 2018-19 | Q4 2018-19 |
|--------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Outturn | 30 | 28 | 30 | 28 | 23 | 26 | 25 | |
| Target | 27 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 27 | 27 | |
| General Needs | 26 | 22 | 25 | 15 | 15 | 18 | 18 | |
| Sheltered Housing | 41 | 53 | 49 | 72 | 68 | 55 | 55 | |
| Target Met | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | |
| Exception Notes | | | | | | | | |



Policy Commitment

4. Improve the standard and efficiency of our housing stock

Performance within DSO building Management has remained consistently high across both responsive Repairs and Voids during Q3. Emergency jobs completed within target has remained at 100% and 91% of non-emergency repairs were completed within target across Q3. The monthly breakdown can be found below:

| | Outturn - Oct 18 | Outturn - Nov 18 | Outturn - Dec 18 | Q3 average |
|--|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------|
| Non-emergency jobs completed within target (88%) | 91.50 % | 90.20 % | 91.20 % | 91 % |
| Emergency jobs completed within target (98%) | 100 % | 100 % | 100 % | 100 % |

Customer satisfaction across Responsive Repairs is also monitored and the monthly breakdown and Q3 average can be found below:

| | Outturn - Oct 18 | Outturn - Nov 18 | Outturn - Dec 18 | Q3 average |
|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------|
| % Customer satisfaction- Have we completed your repair? | 100 % | 99.00 % | 100 % | 99.6 % |
| % Customer Satisfaction- Are you happy with it? | 97 % | 97 % | 98 % | 97.3 % |

The length of time it takes for DSO Building Management to bring an empty property up to a let-able standard is also monitored. This area of business has continued to perform well and has, in fact, been consistently better than the set target this financial year. The monthly breakdown for Q3 can be found below:

| Void Category | Outturn - Oct 18 | Outturn - Nov 18 | Outturn - Dec 18 | Q3 average |
|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|------------|
| Minor (14 day target) | 8 | 9 | 7 | 8 |
| Major (28 day target) | 23 | 23 | 24 | 23 |
| Refurb | 56 | 42 | 56 | 51 |

PI 16 *Percentage of emergency jobs completed on time*

| | Q1 2017-18 | Q2 2017-18 | Q3 2017-18 | Q4 2017-18 | Q1 2018-19 | Q2 2018-19 | Q3 2018-19 | Q4 2018-19 |
|----------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Outturn | 100.00% | 100.00% | 99.59% | 99.95% | 99.67% | 100.00% | 100.00% | |
| Direction of Travel | ↑ | → | ↓ | ↑ | ↓ | ↑ | → | |

6. Maximise housing rent collection, including recovery of arrears.

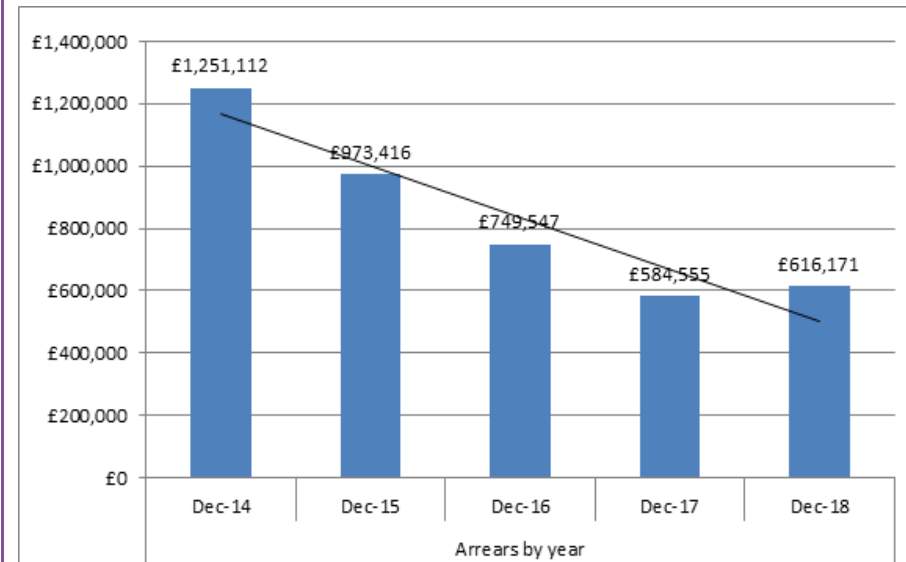
There had been a consistent reduction in the level of arrears year-on-year, totalling just over a £630,000 reduction in four years. The reduction has now turned into a slight increase on the same period last year. The arrears have decreased significantly and the accounts left are now harder to reduce at pace. Performance has also been impacted by the implementation of Universal Credit (UC). The arrears for 2018-19 have now breached the 2017-18 level for the month, despite the focussed work on rent accounts and working with DWP to ensure tenants are not affected by delays in receiving their Housing Element.

We are currently carrying circa £240,000 arrears that we would not have carried had tenants remained on HB so, had the benefit changes not occurred, our downward rent arrears trajectory would have continued. Greater numbers of cases are going through the portal than previously and so the impact of new cases going onto UC is not fully offset by the payments made from earlier cases. As new cases go onto UC there will be a fluctuation in arrears.

We have now worked through the issue with Alternative Payment Arrangements (APAs) as DWP make 13 four-weekly payments per year to GBC, but on a monthly basis. This means that there is a month throughout the year where no payments are received, with the expectation that there will be a month in the year when two payments are received from DWP, therefore having a positive impact in that month. If this is not the case then a team discussion will be held to see if APA's are an appropriate way of dealing with arrears or if the full responsibility to make payment will lie with the tenant.

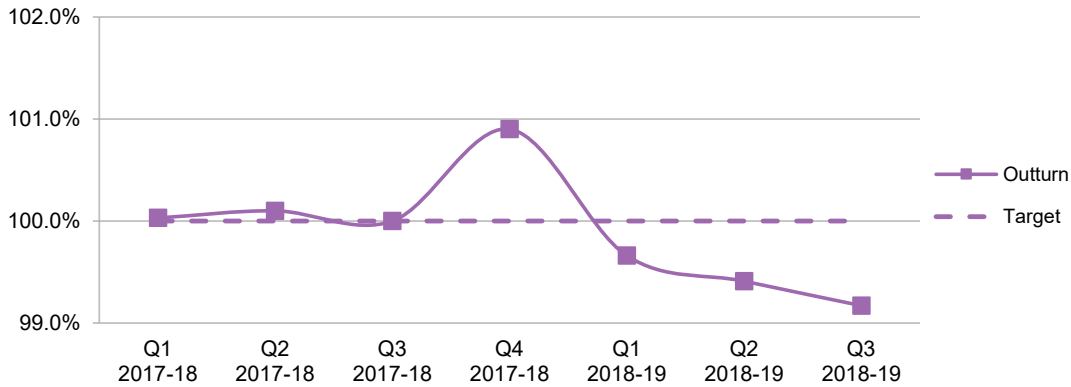
Further arrears letters have been created to send to tenants claiming UC – mainly at prevention stage - to tell them what is required and offering support where needed. We also ask that tenants come into the Civic Centre to go through their online journal with us so we can fully understand the position. As useful as this is, these meetings are also a time-consuming exercise - an officer may spend half an hour or more with a tenant we would not have previously needed to meet with.

Focus remains on actions that have a real impact, namely home visits and early prevention work. In addition, joint working, with both internal and external partners / agencies continues. Year-end is still a concern as, on top of the issues with UC, 01.04.2019 is a Monday so any Direct Debits due on that date will fall into 2019-20. These would normally fall in the current financial year so an increase in arrears between February and March 2019 is expected, whereas it's usually a decrease.



PM 4 Percentage of total housing rent collected (including arrears)

| | Q1 2017-18 | Q2 2017-18 | Q3 2017-18 | Q4 2017-18 | Q1 2018-19 | Q2 2018-19 | Q3 2018-19 | Q4 2018-19 |
|------------------------|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Outturn | 100.0% | 100.1% | 100.0% | 100.9% | 99.7% | 99.4% | 99.2% | |
| Target | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% | |
| Target Met | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✗ | ✗ | ✗ | |
| Exception Notes | The year-on-year reduction in the level of arrears, totalling just over £630,000 in four years, means those remaining accounts are harder to reduce at pace. Performance has also been impacted by the implementation of Universal Credit (UC) which has resulted in us currently carrying c£240,000 arrears that we would not have carried had tenants remained on HB. Focus for the team in seeking to reduce arrears will be on those actions that have a real impact, namely home visits and early prevention work. | | | | | | | |



PI 10 Current tenant arrears over 7 weeks as a percentage of total rent due

| | Q1 2017-18 | Q2 2017-18 | Q3 2017-18 | Q4 2017-18 | Q1 2018-19 | Q2 2018-19 | Q3 2018-19 | Q4 2018-19 |
|----------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Outturn | 1.29% | 1.14% | 1.04% | 0.85% | 0.97% | 0.98% | 1.08% | |
| Direction of Travel | ➡ | ⬆ | ⬆ | ⬆ | ⬇ | ⬇ | ⬇ | |