

---

## MEMBER COMMITTEE UPDATE REPORT

---

### 1 HEALTH UPDATE

#### Housing Options for Older People (HOOP)

- 1.1 SHG's dedicated Housing Options for Older People (HOOP) service has provided bespoke advice and information to 381 customers since April 2020. This has included information and advice on housing and care options as well as general guidance on maintaining well-being during the pandemic. Successes include providing advice and support to 43 customers to access 'extra care' housing to prevent the need for residential care. 37 customers received other advice about issues such as benefits, money management and affordability, 19 were referred for adaptations and 18 were supported with other issues related to supporting independent living e.g. accessing domiciliary care. The service supported nine people out of hospital and stepdown accommodation into suitable accommodation, reducing the length of stay in hospital.

#### Talk Listen Change (TLC)

- 1.2 The Talk, Listen, Change (TLC) contract which provides a counselling service to customers as well as offering quality placements to counselling students, has experienced some challenges as a result of Covid, due to restrictions from some colleges on their students working remotely and some clients being reluctant to engage online. Sessions continue to be delivered remotely with a plan to return to some face to face sessions as soon as suitable venues are available. Since April 2020 to the end of August 2020 the service has received 150 referrals and delivered 510 counselling sessions to 86 different customers. Positive feedback continues to be received on the service and examples are provided below:

*"Helped me identify the way I'm feeling and understand myself more. Don't feel as much anger. Got a lot out of my system"* (Female Client)

*"Helped me understand what's happened to me and helped me develop better coping skills and believe in myself. Helped me to move away from unhelpful experiences and relationships"* (Female Client)

- 1.3 Most colleges are now allowing their students to return to placements, and a full cohort of student counsellors are now back in place.

For further information contact Anne-Marie Heil, Assistant Director – Access and Support [anne-marie.heil@stockporthomes.org](mailto:anne-marie.heil@stockporthomes.org) 0161 474 2863

## **2 EMPLOYMENT UPDATE**

- 2.1 Work is underway with other housing providers within Greater Manchester to bid for funding under the government's Kick Start scheme which will offer six-month, high quality work placements to young people aged 16 to 24 who are claiming Universal Credit. The initial bid will be for up to 80 placements collectively amongst the organisations. Stockport Homes has created 10 opportunities at this time.
- 2.2 Customer Skills and Training provision continues to be delivered. On-line video training sessions continue to prove an essential resource for customers, with 24 videos on themes around Employment, Well-Being and Community viewed over 2000 times. Face to face training for the Introduction to Housing course has restarted in September at the Offerton Community Centre.

For further information contact Anne-Marie Heil, Assistant Director – Access and Support [anne-marie.heil@stockporthomes.org](mailto:anne-marie.heil@stockporthomes.org) 0161 474 2863.

## **3 FUNDING**

- 3.1 During Covid19, the SHG Funding Officer has worked on a wide range of bids to support community groups to access funding to support vulnerable customers. Recent successes include supporting FRESH (Food Ready Every School Holiday) who have received £4,000 from Comic Relief CV19 fund to provide urgent food packs of essentials to children and families in Adswood.
- 3.2 The Sport England Active Ageing project has been completed on target and under budget. This project was a Sport England/Manchester University initiative across GM which aimed to encourage older people to become more active. As part of this, i-Can digital training sessions were delivered at five different schemes. These incorporated healthy eating and a weekly 30-minute walk and attracted 15 participants. Another element was 'Eazy Riders' which is free, level one and level two bike ability training. This was provided by CERAcycloan in Stockport, with the option of a bike loan scheme, consisting of free use of three pedal bikes and two electric bikes. Seven older people took part in this initiative. A further £1,350 has been approved for SHG to spend on more i-CAN sessions organised by the Independent Living Team.
- 3.3 OSCAR older people's group has won a variety of funds to expand activities in SHG sheltered schemes including £870 from the Greater Manchester Walking Grant Fund and £8,400 from the National Lottery Awards for All fund.

- 3.4 Stockport Homes continues to support homelessness charity “H3” as a “corporate friend” with grant finding and bid writing services. This has led to the award of a £42,340 grant from Andy Burnham’s Mayoral Fund. This will pay the salary of a project worker for the “H4” Helping the Homeless out of Hospital and into Housing project for 12 months. H3 were also awarded a £500 grant from the ASDA Foundation Hygiene Fund, this will enable H3 to provide homeless people with free packs of personal hygiene essentials and help to tackle “period poverty”.
- 3.5 Rising Stars NW is run by local entrepreneur Solomon Onaolapo. Stockport Homes has a long history of supporting Rising Stars and their work with young people and the BAME community. In return Rising Stars produced a number of podcasts for Stockport Homes. The Workers Educational Association have made a further ESF grant of £19,510 to Rising Stars NW which will enable 15 young people aged 16 to 24 to take part in a pre-employment course run online using “zoom”.
- 3.6 Stockport Homes have been supporting the Heaton Norris Pavilion Committee for many years and this group has also been awarded a further allocation of ESF grant by The Workers Educational Association in the sum of £19,420. Under the 5<sup>th</sup> and latest round of WEA ESF grants, Stockport achieved the highest allocation of grants in Greater Manchester after the City of Manchester itself.

For further information contact Tanya King, Customer Engagement & Inclusion Manager [tanya.king@stockporthomes.org](mailto:tanya.king@stockporthomes.org) 0161 474 2887

## **4 CARECALL UPDATE**

- 4.1 Carecall recently retained their Telecare Services Association (TSA) accreditation, which includes quality standards ensuring both customer and staff safety. In addition, the service was included as a case study and best practice example in the TSA’s ‘Sector Insight Report’ to Government. The report included a feature on Carecall and lobbied for a programme of actions to embed technology enabled care across the UK and support the Government's Rebuild & Repair Plan of health and social care.

For further information please contact Ferri Brown, Carecall and Concierge Manager, [ferri.brown@stockporthomes.org](mailto:ferri.brown@stockporthomes.org) or 0161 217 1908

## **5 CHILD SAFETY PROGRAMME**

- 5.1 The child safety programme which targets vulnerable households with children under two years of age has seen SHG fit a range of equipment to 11 households since April 2020. This includes 17 stair gates, 13 auto-close gates, two blind cleats and 14 cupboard locks.

For further information please contact Kate Meredith, Head of Customer Safety, [kate.crowther@stockporthomes.org](mailto:kate.crowther@stockporthomes.org) or 0161 218 1481

## **6 COMMUNITY CENTRE**

- 6.1 From Wednesday 2 September the centres were open for hire, following lifting of restrictions in Stockport. All centres have had a risk assessment and practical measures are in place to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all users. Customers have continued to receive regular updates throughout and the team have supported groups to reschedule events and activities, in line with ensuring continued social distancing.
- 6.2 During lockdown the team have continued to actively market the centres, through the SHG community centre web pages and direct contact with users and as a result, seven new users have signed up to deliver a range of activities and events at Bridgehall, Offerton and Arthur Greenwood Centres. Work will continue to take place to maximise the use of all centres. Collaborative working continues with Stockport Council to plan for further opening of libraries and advice centres at Bridgehall and Offerton.

For further information please contact Martyn Preston, Community Buildings Team Leader 0161 474 4243 or [martyn.preston@stockporthomes.org](mailto:martyn.preston@stockporthomes.org)

## **7 GREENSPACE**

- 7.1 The grounds maintenance and tree services were rescheduled following the lifting of lockdown restrictions and all sites are now receiving a regular service. This includes the restarting of the twice-yearly Assisted Gardening Service, for 300 vulnerable customers. The team are working with customers to reschedule these visits during September and October. Improvement work will be taking place during the remainder of 2020/21 and this will include replacement hedge and shrub planting, rose bed improvements, edging off grassed areas, tree management and new tree planting.

For further information please contact Tony de-Beaufort, Greenspace Manager 0161 474 2953 or [tony.de-beaufort@stockporthomes.org](mailto:tony.de-beaufort@stockporthomes.org)

## **8 ASB**

- 8.1 Ensuring the safety and security of communities is a priority for Stockport Homes and following several complaints from the Woodhall Crescent area in particular, a detailed plan was developed with Greater Manchester Police (GMP) to deal with complaints of drug use, rowdy behaviour, arguments and verbal abuse. These investigations have resulted in a warrant being executed for suspected drug related crimes. GMP enquiries into this are ongoing and pending the results of these Stockport Homes will proceed for possession of the property. A second property was secured on Friday 26 June with a male being arrested and charged with burglary and witness intimidation. They are now on court bail and have conditions not to enter Stockport. Although, not linked to the warrant, this investigation does form part of the general ASB in the Woodhall Crescent area.

- 8.2 Door to door visits to residents were undertaken jointly by Stockport Homes and the GMP Reddish Neighbourhood Policing team to offer support, information and reassurance and these have been welcomed by the community. Regular future meetings to keep the community safe are also planned.
- 8.3 The ASB reporting app called “ReMote” allows customers to make reports of ASB incidents in new and existing cases. Downloaded to their smartphone from the App store, it will allow customers to send in not just written reports but photos, videos and noise recordings. The reports will go straight into ReAct which is the ASB case management system. This will save officer time in opening new cases. The functionality of the App also means the case officer can send messages back to the customer via the app making it easier to keep customers up-to-date with the progress of their report. Using the app will negate the need for customers to complete incident diaries which will also make an efficiency saving for SHG in terms of printing costs.

For further information contact Liz Smith, ASB Services Manager on [liz.m.smith@stockporthomes.org](mailto:liz.m.smith@stockporthomes.org) or 0161 218 1381

## **9 FOUNDATIONS STOCKPORT**

- 9.1 Stockport Homes charitable arm, Foundations Stockport, continues to deliver a range of services which promote inclusion and support vulnerable households and explore a range of opportunities, often in partnership with others, to bring more resources into the Borough. Examples of some of the initiatives are provided below.

### Rough Sleeper Initiative

- 9.2 Following the outbreak of Covid-19 there was a significant increase in the numbers of single people becoming homeless and at risk of rough sleeping. With limited services available, Foundations Rough Sleeper Initiative (RSI) outreach workers, funded by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, played a key role in locating people who were street homeless, working closely with partner agencies and referrals from the public. In total SHG accommodated over 30 people who were either rough sleeping or at serious risk of doing so over the first quarter, either in temporary accommodation in Stockport or a smaller number initially in the Greater Manchester Hotel Scheme before being returned to the Borough.
- 9.3 Funding of £40,000 through the RSI is being received in 20/21 in addition to the £20,000 allocated in 2019/20, which paid for the delivery of a specialist substance misuse outreach service for a period of ten months as well as the creation of a room for health services to be delivered from the Buxton Road temporary accommodation scheme. The money for 2021/21 will be used to develop further health initiatives for homeless people, and as a personalisation fund to offer bespoke solutions to accommodation and other difficulties experienced by rough sleepers with complex needs. Additional funding has been agreed by the RSI to employ a Navigator role for a period of 12 months. The Navigator will work with the most entrenched rough

sleepers across the two Boroughs, supporting the work of the Outreach service as well as support access to other services such as Adult Social Care and Substance Misuse services and will be able to access dual-diagnosis and psychological support.

#### GM Housing First

- 9.4 The GM Housing First contract continues to be delivered by Foundations, all six customers currently being supported are sustaining their tenancies and progressing well. Daily phone calls and weekly visits have continued throughout the Covid-19 pandemic due to the complex needs and particular vulnerabilities of those being supported. Recruitment for a second Officer in response to the increased allocation of referrals in Year 2 & 3 of the contract has been completed.

#### Move-On Fund

- 9.5 A successful bid has been submitted to Homes England's Move-On Fund, which provides funding to increase the availability of affordable move-on housing for rent for people affected by homelessness and / or domestic abuse, with funding secured to acquire and refurbish 6 x 1 bedroomed self-contained properties. To date two properties have been refurbished and let and a Part Time Support Worker, also funded by the Move-On Fund, in place to support those placed in the accommodation.

#### Foundations Opportunities

- 9.6 A range of funding opportunities are currently being explored including:
- Ministry of Justice Dynamic Framework. Successful applications have been made to the framework for the following workstreams:
    - Accommodation
    - Education, Training and Employment
    - Finance, Benefits and Debt
    - Lifestyle and Associates
- 9.7 Specific call-offs for individual commissions will be pursued as appropriate.
- Youth Homelessness. Prior to the Covid-19 Pandemic, GMCA and other local commissioners had commenced a process of market engagement on a commission to develop a new model of homelessness prevention for under 35-year olds delivered through a social outcomes-based contract. This had been paused, however is likely to be launched as a pathfinder for a 12-month period in a smaller number of Local Authority areas with higher numbers of homeless young people. This will enable delivery assumptions and intervention models to be tested whilst match funding from Local Authorities is sought. This opportunity will continue to be evaluated as more information becomes available.

For further information contact Anne-Marie Heil, Assistant Director – Access and Support [anne-marie.heil@stockporthomes.org](mailto:anne-marie.heil@stockporthomes.org) 0161 474 2863



## 10 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

- 10.1 The Greater Manchester Ethical Lettings Agency (ELA), named 'Let Us' is a partnership established by Greater Manchester Housing Providers (GMHP) to work with the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) to tackle poor quality standards in the lower end of the Private Rented Sector (PRS). It will work with landlords to improve access to PRS homes at affordable rent levels and increase the supply of homes across GM to meet the needs of customers who are homeless, threatened with homelessness and those likely to experience a housing crisis without an intervention. Operating under the brand 'Let Us', SHG are one of five core housing service providers working in partnership to achieve the objective across GM aiming to create an additional 800 units by 2023 / 24. Each organisation has significant experience of working with the private rented sector (PRS). This will support the 10 GM Authorities in discharging their duties and will alleviate the pressure on the housing providers across GM by offering a viable housing alternative.
- 10.2 In addition to the Homelessness trailblazer funding secured, Let Us have been approached by Resonance, a social impact investment company, who create and manage investment funds which focus on tackling major societal issues, with expertise in homelessness, poverty, community-led projects, health, wellbeing and education. Their aim is to deliver a financial return for investors plus a targeted social impact. The success of a project between Resonance and St Mungo Community Housing Association, a charity helping homeless people with a real focus on providing quality accommodation which is integral to achieving better life outcomes, has demonstrated similar scheme could really work towards meeting the aims of Let Us in providing a viable and achievable quality housing solution for those who cannot access social housing due to lack of supply. The model is based on a ten-year leasing arrangement, with rents being set at local housing allowance levels with a set percentage of the rent being retained by the Let Us member for ongoing property and tenant management and day to day repairs.

For further information contact Emma Crick, Property Management Lead, [emma.crick@stockporthomes.org](mailto:emma.crick@stockporthomes.org), 0161 217 6016

## 11 THE BUILDING SAFETY BILL

- 11.1 Following the Hackitt Review into building safety which was set up after the Grenfell Tower fire, on 20 July 2020 the Government published the draft Building Safety Bill. The Building Safety Bill has significant implications for the way landlords will manage and maintain housing stock in the future and will require certain property types like high-rise buildings to have a building safety certificate issued by the newly formed building safety regulator. With this in mind SHG have set up a cross-directorate project group to ensure that the relevant information and processes are in place to enable a building safety certificate to be issued by the Regulator.

For further information contact Steve Leonard, Head of Assets and Development on [steve.leonard@stockporthomes.org](mailto:steve.leonard@stockporthomes.org) or 0161 218 1014

## **12 DEVELOPMENT AND SALES TEAM**

- 12.1 Homes England have announced that the current grant funding programme (SOAHP 16-21) has been extended for a further year. This means that schemes which start on site before March 2022 and complete by March 2023 can be funded through the current programme. The launch of the new £12bn programme announced in the Budget in March will then follow and be open for bidding (there is still no detail on what this will look like). This is good news for Stockport Homes because a number of schemes which will hopefully start on site this financial year have had funding bids approved but the cash had not actually been allocated. Work is now underway to establish which schemes are now funded through the current programme.

For further information contact Chris Munby, Development Manager on [chris.munby@stockporthomes.org](mailto:chris.munby@stockporthomes.org) or 0161 474 2927

## **13 ENVIRONMENTAL AND ENERGY TEAM**

- 13.1 Following the floods which impacted Stockport in the winter of 2019 Stockport Homes have been working closely with Enzygo (Flooding specialist) to undertake an in-depth study of the housing stock and the potential for flooding risks. An interim report was presented to SHG's flooding group on the 24th July and further work will now be undertaken in the next phase of the review to determine appropriate actions and resources required to mitigate the risk of flooding to SHG managed homes in the future. Stockport Homes has operated a Climate Change Strategy since 2010 which is to be reviewed this year. As part of the review SHG have commissioned specialist consultants Anthesis to carry out carbon/energy efficiency assessments of the housing stock and provide modelling advice.
- 13.2 Following the biomass fuel procurement, as of May 2020 we have been able to secure and implement a new 3-year contract and pricing schedule. This will see SHG save 4% on biomass fuel costs in comparison to last year.

For further information contact Joe Keating, Environmental and Energy Manager on [joe.keating@stockporthomes.org](mailto:joe.keating@stockporthomes.org) or 0161 218 1363.

## **14 AWARDS**

- 14.1 Stockport Homes Group (SHG) won two awards at the TPAS Awards; Excellence in Community Action for the OWLS Group who support people experiencing domestic violence, and Excellence in Tenant Communication for the engagement with residents for fire safety. These are the only awards dedicated to recognising and rewarding engagement excellence and best practice in the housing sector.
- 14.2 SHG won the award for Best Company to work for at the UK Employment Experience Awards 2020. These awards honour the hard work and dedication that goes into improving the employee experience.



- 14.3 SHG also won two awards at the Greater Manchester Business Awards: Business of the Year and Community and Social Responsibility. These awards recognise innovation and expertise within the GM business community.
- 14.4 On 10 July, SHG won the award of 'Best Place to Work' at the 2020 UK Business Awards. These awards celebrate excellence and innovation in business, honouring individuals and organisations that demonstrate exceptional business performance.
- 14.5 On 19 July, Foundations Stockport celebrated its first award win, for the contribution the furniture recycling service has made to the community during Covid-19, winning the title of 'Frontline Stars Team' by HQN (Housing Quality Network).

For further information contact Verity Calderbank, Head of Marketing and Communications [verity.calderbank@stockporthomes.org](mailto:verity.calderbank@stockporthomes.org) 0161 474 2863.

## **15 STAFF CONFERENCE**

SHG held a Staff Festival' on 24 September. Teams met in different locations around the Borough and discussions and presentations were screened live from a studio. It was not as engaging as the real thing but there was lots of positive feedback and it was an innovative initiative in these difficult times.