



---

# MEMBER COMMITTEE UPDATE REPORT

---

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report contains items that fall outside the significance of a full, individual report but are areas Members may find of interest given their wider impact on the community. It also attempts to capture the current context and issues within in which SHG working. Members are invited to comment on or question any of the items covered.

## 2 DAMP MOULD AND CONDENSATION UPDATE

- 2.1 In January 2023, Stockport Homes Group (SHG) implemented a 12-month pilot on changes to service delivery with regards to responding to DMC. This pilot included the introduction of a Rapid Response Team to be able to take immediate action on any reports of damp or mould; aiming for a quick removal of the hazard (the cleaning down and removal of mould).
- 2.2 Key learning outcomes by the implementation of the DMC pilot has provided valuable experience from which positive changes have been realised on related front-line services which benefit the customers. Some of the learning/improvements which have now been implemented are:
- Improved data quality and compliance relating to DMC via the provision of a real-time operational MI dashboard.
  - The provision of an online DMC e-Learning course that now forms part of the new staff induction programme. Later updates are expected as part of the Awaab's Law legislation which will come into effect later in 2024.
  - Fine-tuned process to enable an effective delivery of mould cleaning services. This includes enhanced provisions to accommodate customers with vulnerabilities.
  - A new process of reviewing complex cases involving contractors, and client representation from a number of teams. This model will continue to be developed as it is seen as an invaluable process in delivering effective and efficient services.
  - An automated customer feedback tool as the most effective method to promptly capture customer feedback about the DMC services.
- 2.3 In conclusion work undertaken over the past 12 months has helped define a new standard of service delivery for works associated with damp, mould and condensation. This work has created a rapid response team in which waiting

times for cleaning down of mould is between 10 days (summer) and 18 days (winter), with additional services to those identified as vulnerable. SHG has also created a much greater understanding of the data around DMC and able to run efficiently reports on service performance. It is believed further enhancements within this subject will continue to be developed as details of Awaab's Law become available. The measures within the DMC pilot have now become BAU within the organisation.

### **3 INDEPENDENT LIVING UPDATE**

- 3.1 SHG's annual programme of Winter Welfare Visits was completed in the final quarter of 2023/24 with a total of 564 visits to some of the most vulnerable, older customers in the borough. Information and advice on support services is shared with customers, these include a particular focus on energy advice, benefit checks, money advice, mobility adaptations and fire safety. The Winter Welfare Visits generated 208 onward referrals for further support which included: 160 to the money advice team, of which 42 were specifically for pension credit advice, 41 referrals for ongoing welfare calls from the Housing Support Service and 16 referrals to Adult Social Care.

### **4 HOUSING OPTIONS OLDER PEOPLE (HOOP)**

- 4.1 The Housing Options for Older People (HOOP) service provides advice and information to both customers and internal and external colleagues. In Quarter 4, the Officer provided bespoke information and advice to customers and both internal and external colleagues on 470 occasions. The HOOP Officer works in close partnership with key stakeholders and external agencies including Adult Social Care, Stockport Support Hub, Viaduct Healthcare, Stockport Without Abuse (SWA), Disability Stockport and step-down facilities throughout the borough.
- 4.2 During Quarter 4, the service completed 17 referrals for extra care housing in addition to providing information and advice on 11 further cases. Referrals to extra care can often prevent escalation to more costly residential care provisions. The service delivered advice and support to 13 customers regarding benefits, money management and affordability, nine referrals concentrated on home adaptations and 12 referrals supported customers to maintain independent living in their own home by addressing care needs or providing information on the SKylight Care call service.
- 4.3 This quarter the service supported four people during their discharge from hospital, providing stepdown accommodation to suitable facilities, this supports the NHS with ongoing challenges related to bed blocking.

### **5 MENTAL HEALTH HOUSING SUPPORT WORKER (MHHSW)**

- 5.1 SHG funds a Mental Health and Housing Support Worker who provides advice and support directly to customers experiencing poor mental health and signposts and supports access to mental health services and specialist provision. Between January and March 2024, 35 referrals were received from SHG teams and external agencies which generated 71 onward referrals, during 2023/24; 275

referrals were made in total. The highest number of onward referrals were made to Open Door, the Mental Health Crisis Team, GPs and Silver Cloud who deliver digital mental health support.

- 5.2 The MHHSW is also on hand to advise and guide SHG colleagues to better support customers facing mental health issues, improving understanding and assisting colleagues to navigate referral pathways for appropriate services.

## **6 BEACON COUNSELLING**

- 6.1 Stockport Homes commissions Beacon Counselling to provide a counselling service to SHG tenants and customers of The Prevention Alliance (TPA). During 2023/24 a total of 273 referrals were received and 184 initial assessments completed. A total of 720 counselling sessions were delivered over the course of the year, 457 of those were delivered by students on placements and a further 352 sessions by Complex Case workers as the customers required more intensive support.
- 6.2 The most common presenting needs included anxiety and panic attacks, this was followed by depression with some customers citing ill health and long-term sickness as the cause of their depression.

## **7 YOUTH UPDATE**

- 7.1 SKylight continues to deliver the Mental Toughness (MT) programme at secondary schools across Stockport, in addition to two Pupil Referral Units (PRU), a primary school and one higher education college. The wellbeing sessions are delivered over the course of six weeks either as a group activity or one-to-one format depending on the needs of the young person. During Quarter 4 of 2023/24, Mental Toughness was delivered to 40 young people, ranging in ages from 10 to 16.
- 7.2 A 10-week programme of wellbeing sessions is currently being delivered at Stockport College as part of their "Engage Programme". The Engage Programme is intended to re-engage vulnerable students at risk of dropping out, with 12 students aged 16-19 selected to attend by the college. Mental Toughness also continues to be provided at the Pendlebury Centre, a specialist mental health Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) and is scheduled to deliver to a new cohort in the upcoming term.
- 7.3 During the Easter and May half term break, SKylight Holiday Club provided 93 placements for vulnerable young people aged 11-17 in Stockport. 85 of the young people who attended were eligible for Free School Meals and 32 had special educational needs and disabilities. Various enrichment activities took place at Bridgehall Community Centre including a healthy meal preparation session, a film-making workshop, and various graffiti board sessions. External trips included taking the young people kayaking on Droylsden canal and hiking in the Peak District. During the six days of events, 16 volunteers from across SHG and Stockport Council donated their time to help deliver the club.

## **8 EMPLOYMENT & TRAINING**

- 8.1 In April, the employment and training team worked with SMBC to deliver the Inclusive Jobs Fair and Money Maximising Roadshow in Cheadle. Over the course of the day 225 people attended and the SKylight Employment team took 32 new

referrals and signed up 61 people for the weekly SKYlight Jobs Booklet. Wider SHG colleagues also attended the event to promote entry level vacancies throughout the organisation.

- 8.2 SKYlight has been awarded the 'Best Resident Support & Wellbeing Service 2024' at the recent Northern Housing Awards. The award submission detailed the breadth of services delivered by the Employment & Training, Housing Support and Inclusion teams, with judges commending the holistic, person-centred services delivered by the teams.
- 8.3 The Stockport Social Supermarket Programme, funded by the National Lottery and delivered by a partnership of SKYlight and Groundworks will launch in July. The programme will deliver targeted employment and cost of living support to men who are either furthest from the employment market or working in insecure jobs. The Social Supermarket will provide a joined-up approach between the customer, SKYlight core services and Key stakeholders, operating a 'no wrong door' approach where customers can enter at any point. Groundwork will deliver the men's working wardrobe element of the service. Funding has been secured for three years and will enhance SKYlight's wider employment support offer and complement the Smartworks offer for women.

## **9 MARKETING UPDATE**

- 9.1 Three Sixty was awarded the prestigious RoSPA Gold accreditation in recognition of their commitment to prioritising colleague safety, for the sixth consecutive year. The RoSPA Gold accreditation is a reflection of dedication to maintaining the highest standards of safety.
- 9.2 HQN invited the Head of Marketing to deliver a presentation about SHG's approach to delivering a customer focussed Annual Report. This popular session will be repeated in August.
- 9.3 Viaduct Housing Partnership launched a multi-channel campaign successfully to support the ongoing commitment to serving the diverse needs of communities across Greater Manchester, helping prospective buyers and sellers on the open market.C
- 9.4 Home Marketing continues to grow, with new clients secured including West Yorkshire Housing Partnership and SHG's Charity of Choice, The Wellspring.
- 9.5 Carecall has been shortlisted for Best Digital & Age Tech Campaign 2024 at the Silver Marketing Association Awards for a successful marketing campaign with the M.E.N. The awards focus on brands who engage the 'Baby Boomer Generation', Carecall's target audience. Winners will be announced on June 25th in London.
- 9.6 SKYlight's Inclusion Services Team won the Best Resident Support and Wellbeing Service Award at The Northern Housing Awards – recognition of the quality services delivered to customers.

## **10 GENDER PAY GAP**

- 10.1 Stockport Homes is proud of its record as an inclusive employer and are pleased to report a further year on year improvement of the gender pay gap.
- 10.2 The median difference for the reporting date of 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023 is 0%. This has decreased again from 2022, in line with the pattern for the last three years which has seen a decrease from 5.8% in 2021. When analysing the pay gap, it is evident

that colleagues have opportunity to grow and develop their careers with it being particularly positive to see that female colleagues make up 62% of all Development Pathways, Job Regrades, Promotions and Secondments. Stockport Homes remain committed to doing as much as is possible to maintain the gender pay gap and focus on encouraging female representation in “non-traditional” occupations within the organisation.

- 10.3 Whilst Stockport Homes Group are only required to report on the Stockport Homes Limited population of the group, analysis of both Skylight and Three Sixty Limited pay gaps have been undertaken. The results of the other group companies are also reflective of a positive direction in reducing and eradicating the pay gap.
- 10.4 Skylight median pay gap is +1.8% difference, showing that the median female hourly rate is slightly higher than that of males. The biggest contributing factor for this positive gap is the number of females in management positions across Skylight. Three Sixty median pay gap is 14%, showing that females hourly rate remains lower than males across Three Sixty. According to ONS, the average gender pay gap for Skilled Trade Occupations is 15% and therefore Three Sixty compare positively within their sector.

## **11 CONCLUSION**

- 11.1 It is clear from a number of reports on this agenda the increasing challenges the housing sector faces, regulation, homelessness, inflation, the vulnerability and poverty of many of our customers, increased expectation, lack of investment. These all mean not only great difficulties for those who use/need our services but are also very pressuring for staff. Recruitment has been a challenge for some time, but this continues to increase with more change in the Senior Managers at Stockport Homes than ever before. The pressures and the uncertainty therefore are not only challenges in themselves but lead to further ones in maintaining staff morale and keeping experienced talented staff who can relatively easily get similar, easier better paid jobs elsewhere. Managing and minimising these challenges is a key focus.