

<b>Committee</b>	<b>Dated:</b>
Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee	21/01/2019
<b>Subject:</b> Tenancy Visits Programme	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Director of Community and Children's Services	<b>For Information</b>
<b>Report author:</b> Dean Robinson – Tenancy Visits Project Manager	

### Summary

The Tenancy Visits project continues to be a success, with residents welcoming fire safety advice during visits by the Tenancy Visits Team. Visits have been underway since August 2018 and we are on target for most of the inspections to be completed by the end of March 2019.

### Recommendation

Members are asked to:

- note the report.

### Background

1. The Corporation has a duty to ensure fair, effective and efficient use of its housing assets. This requires it to ensure that stock is properly let and used for its intended purpose, that service delivery arrangements incorporate principles of equality and diversity, and that it understands its tenants' needs. A number of these requirements have been given added emphasis in recent years through legislation such as the Prevention of Social Housing Fraud Act 2013 and the Equalities Act 2010, both of which strengthened the powers and responsibilities of social housing landlords in their respective areas.
2. To help ensure these duties are carried out effectively officers currently visit and inspect up to a third of its tenanted properties each year. Tenancy visits enable the Corporation to ensure properties are being properly occupied and maintained in accordance with tenancy conditions. They also help us to get to know our tenants and their specific needs better. Visits may, for example, help us to uncover tenancy fraud, update household information where circumstances have changed, or identify additional or changed needs within households which can then be addressed.

## **Current position**

3. The Tenancy Visits Team is currently working on the City's largest estate, Avondale Square.
4. Tenancy Inspectors have knocked on a total of 2,467 doors across all estates. At the time of writing, 1,122 interviews have been completed, accounting for 58% of tenanted properties.
5. Numerous housing management issues have been identified and these have been allocated to the relevant officers for follow-up.
6. As well as carrying out the interviews, the Tenancy Inspectors have also been able to assist tenants in other ways. For example, the inspectors found that an older tenant had lived with what they thought was a faulty light fitting for two years without reporting it to repairs. The Officer discovered it was just a blown fuse, so reset it and replaced the bulb for the tenant, who was incredibly grateful to her.
7. On another occasion, the team discovered a tenant's front door open with no response when they called. Unsure of why the door was ajar, they reported it first to the Project Manager, who fortunately knew that the tenant worked nearby. The two officers stayed outside the flat and another went with an Estate Officer to see if the tenant was at work, as they were unable to get through on the telephone. Luckily enough the tenant was there, and it turned out that she had not closed the door properly on her way out. She was grateful that the team caught it before someone else did.

## **Corporate & Strategic Implications**

8. The tenancy visit programme is a key objective in the Housing & Neighbourhoods division business plan and contributes to the delivery of Strategic Priority 4 - *Supporting homes and communities: Developing strong neighbourhoods and ensuring people have a decent place to live.*

## **Appendices**

- None

## **Background Papers**

Tenancy Visits Programme, Housing Management and Almshouses Sub-Committee,  
23 July 2018

24 September 2018

27 November 2018

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