



Housing and Community Services Committee

9 June 2010

APPENDICES

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AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME

COMPLETED

Site	Developer	RSL	No. of units	Property type	Provided for	Tenure type	Planning approved	Grant obtained	Achieved handover date	Land - RBC/RS/L/private	
Completed 2007/2008											
Waspe farm/Holloway House	A2 Dominion	A2D	18	1 and 2 bed fls	9x GN 9xSP	SR			Apr-07	RBC	
Other Homeownership											
Open market home buy	TVHA	TVHA	8	Misc		HB			Varied	misc	
Completed 2008/2009											
Schemes that replace existing housing											
Chertsey Bridge Phase 3	George Wimpey SW	TVHA	9	9x 2 bed fls 8x 1bed fl 12x2 bed fl 2x3 bed fl 4x3bed hs 2x4bed hs	LKW	IR			June - November 2008	private	
St Annes School	Charles Church	TVHA	28		GN	SO/HB			June to Nov 2008	Private (County)	
Schemes that replace existing housing											
Wapshott Road Phase 1	A2 Dominion	A2D	62	9 x3 bed hs 13x 2 bed hs 23x2 bed fls 17x 1bed fls	GN	SR			October and November 2008	RBC	
Roakes Avenue Phase	Crest Nicholson	A2D	13	4x2 bed fl 7x2 bed hses 2x4 bed hses	GN	SR			Mar-09	RBC	
Other Homeownership											
Open market home buy	Thames valley Housing Assn (TVHA)	TVHA	21	Misc	GN	HB			Varied	misc	
			133								

AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAMME

COMPLETED CONT

Site	Developer	RSL	No. of units	Property type	Provided for	Tenure type	Planning approved	Grant obtained	Achieved handover date	Land - RBC/RSI/private
Completed 2009/2010										
New Schemes										
Pretoria Road	Explore living	TVHA	32	16x1bed fl	GN	30xSR 2xSO			Jul-09	private
Pretoria Road	Fusion	Fusion	9	16x2bed fl Misc	HB	HB Direct	Yes	Yes	Mar-10	private
Freemantles school	A2 Dominion	A2D	12	4x1bed fl 8x2bed fl	GN	SR	Yes	Yes	Oct-09	private
Abbots Croft	Crest	Crest	28	Misc	HB	HB Direct	Yes	Yes	Varied	private
Schemes that replace existing housing										
Roakes Avenue Phase 2	Crest Nicholson	A2D	29	9x 1 bed fls 14x2bed fls 6 x 3 bed hs	GN	SR	Yes	Yes	Nov-09	RBC
Wapshott phase 3	A2 Dominion	A2D	6	6 x 3 Bed	GN	SR	Yes	Yes	Jan-09	RBC
Open market homebuy	TVHACatalyst	TVHA	7	Misc		HB	N/A	Yes	Varied	misc
Ownhome	Places/People	PP	4	Misc		HB	N/A	Yes	Varied	misc
Total 2007 - 2009			127							
			286							

UNDER CONSTRUCTION

Site	Developer	RSL	No. of units	Property type	Provided for	Tenure type	Planning approved	Grant obtained	Build start date	Estimated handover	Land	Likelihood of delivery by 2011 1 = high 5 = low
Schemes that replace existing housing												
Wapshott phase 3	A2 Dominion	A2D	35	12x3bed hs 14x2bed fls 15x1bed fls	GN	SR	Yes	Yes	Jan-09	Jun-10	RBC	1
Pinefields	TBC	TVHA	39	11 house and 28 flats	GN	SR	Yes	Yes	Jan-10	Oct-10	RBC	1
Tithe Hill/Lime Lodge	Ashill	None	3	3x3bed houses	GN	HB	Yes	No Dev to fund	May-10	TBC	Private	1
RBC/Catalyst Homebuy Scheme	Catalyst	Catalyst	16	varied	GN	HB	n/a	Yes	Jul-10	Mar-11	Private	2
Total under construction			93									
Total completed and under construction			379									

Codes - LKW - Local Key Worker GN - General Needs SP - Supported Housing IR - Intermediate Rent SO/HB - Shared Ownership/Homebuy SR - Social rented

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PERFORMANCE REPORT NOVEMBER 2009 – APRIL 2010

Summary

The main conclusions of this performance report are:

- SEARCH MOVES is a unique and successful CBL scheme with one Common Allocations Policy amongst the 5 partner organisations
- Members in high housing need (bands A to C) are more likely to bid and be housed than other members (Bands D & E)
- Customer feedback on CBL is encouraging, but more needs to be improved to record satisfaction levels by partner organisations
- No clear evidence that CBL has had a positive or negative impact on void performance
- Consideration needed for the timing of moving to 60% cross partner lettings and finally 100% cross partner lettings as set out in the Partnership Agreement
- Clear evidence that within the first 6 months of CBL at 30% cross partner, the trend is to remain within originating Local Authority areas which is in line with CBL research into migration trends

1. Background

The last 6 months has seen a choice based lettings (CBL) provision within North West Surrey. On 3 November 2009 CBL went live in the three local authority areas, Runnymede, Spelthorne and Elmbridge, with 2 RSL partners, A2Dominion and Elmbridge Housing Trust having met the Government's 2010 target to implement CBL.

With such a unique partnership, being the only sub regional group in the UK operating a cross partner letting policy of 30%, good quality performance reporting is essential to ensure that our customers are receiving the best service possible.

2. Housing Registers and Transfer Lists

Each of the 5 partners hold independent housing lists, the 3 Local Authorities holding Housing Registers and the 2 RSLs holding Transfer Lists. As at the time of this report current numbers on lists were as set out in the table below

Both Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) and Spelthorne Borough Council (SBC) are Large Scale Voluntary Transfer authorities (LSVTs). Therefore they hold only the Housing Register applications (homeseekers) as required by Part VI of the Housing Act 1996. Their partner Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) who acquired the stock through LSVT, Elmbridge Housing Trust (EHT) and A2 Dominion Group (A2D) hold the transfer waiting list. This means they hold only the applications of their existing tenants who want to move through a transfer.

As Runnymede Borough Council (RBC) is a stock retained local authority and unique in the group for that reason, RBC's list is a joint housing register application and transfer application one. Therefore the figures below when added together show a similar number of applicants across the three Boroughs.

RBC (joint list)	EBC (Homeseekers Only)	EHT (transfers only)	SBC (Homeseekers only)	A2D (transfers only)
2546	1678	974	1349	844
	EBC plus EHT		SBC plus A2D	
2546	2652		2193	

Table 1 numbers on housing registers and transfer lists within SEARCH MOVES

All applicants are assessed and banded consistently in line with the Common Allocations Policy and the numbers in each band for each partner are set out in the table below

RBC	EBC	EHT	SBC	A2D
Band A	Band A	Band A	Band A	Band A
25	16	26	22	45
Band B	Band B	Band B	Band B	Band B
159	221	280	155	116
Band C	Band C	Band C	Band C	Band C
1265	1097	231	795	158
Band D	Band D	Band D	Band D	Band D
173	97	54	75	348
Band E	Band E	Band E	Band E	Band E
923	247	383	302	177

Table 2 numbers in each band by partner organization

From Table 2 the steering group has identified a need for EBC and EHT to review their applicants in Band B as the numbers are significantly different from those of the other 3 partners. This task will be monitored by the operational managers group and reported back to the Steering Group in July 2010. The impact of higher numbers in Band B means a possibility of EBC and EHT monopolising cross partner properties, where no local connection is required, although trends so far show little cross partner movement between originating Boroughs.

3. Property adverts

SEARCH MOVES has advertised 674 properties in the first 6 months of implementation and set out in the table below by partner organisation

Runnymede	Elmbridge	EHT	Spelthorne	A2D
161	49	246	27	191

Table 3: Number of homes advertised in first 6 months of implementation

Spelthorne and Elmbridge Borough Councils are both LSVT authorities and have nomination agreements with their partner RSLs – EHT and A2D. Runnymede as a stock retained local authority has 25% 'nomination rights' for transferring tenants of Runnymede in order not to be disadvantaged in the partnership. The landlords in the partnership advertise their own properties and the non stock retained local authorities advertise properties on behalf of RSLs that work within their Boroughs. Adverts are then labeled for preference to homeseekers and /or transfers and then monitored to ensure nomination agreements are in line.

4. Lettings by Band in the First 6 Months

Since implementation of CBL, SEARCH MOVES has seen the following trends in lettings as set out in the table below

Let	RBC	EBC	EHT	SBC	A2D
Band A	16	1	12	1	28
Band B	62	9	47	3	50
Band C	38	2	53	3	50
Band D	2	0	1	0	3
Band E	4	0	5	0	3
Total	122	12	118	7	134

Table 4 lettings by band by partners

From Table 4 it can be seen the majority of lettings for all partners in the first 6 months are from bands B & C.

It is important to remember here that the RSLs (A2D and EHT) are the other two landlords in the SEARCH MOVES partnership along with RBC and therefore the lettings reflected in SBC and EBC are for their other RSL nomination rights within their Boroughs, where they have chosen to enter the properties for CBL in agreement with their RSL partners. Not all properties available to let within the SBC and EBC Boroughs will appear on SEARCH MOVES if their partners are not in agreement to the CBL letting system and therefore will be let through manual shortlisting.

5 Direct Lettings

According to the SEARCH MOVES Common Allocations Policy, each partner can make Direct Lets if the criteria is met. The number of these made in the first 6 months are set out in the table below

RBC	EBC	EHT	SBC	A2D
2	0	2	0	10

Table 5 number of Direct Lets by partner

A2D have a major regeneration project underway at Stanwell and therefore they are decanting tenants in Band A through a Direct Let process, which is understood by all partners.

6. Bidding and age

The use of the internet for bidding and broken down into age bands is the overall majority method for all partners in the first 6 months, with 92% of applicants using this method to bid. This supports research into CBL and bidding methods. Very few applicants use coupons, less than 2%, although these will continue to be supplied in the Locata Welcome Packs as they meet the needs of some vulnerable groups. It can also be seen that staff are assisting all age groups to bid, and particularly the group aged 60 years plus. RBC holds CBL surgeries twice weekly in the reception of the Civic Offices and staff are available to advise and assist with bidding and enquiries. This is proving to be very popular and will continue for the foreseeable future.

Age Band	Coupon	Web	Telephone	Text	Staff	Number of Bids
16-19	1.04%	95.49%	.69%	.00%	2.78%	576
20-29	.31%	97.10%	.85%	.65%	1.09%	8097
30-39	1.97%	93.79%	1.85%	.94%	1.45%	8427
40-49	2.19%	91.79%	2.45%	1.74%	1.83%	6490
50-59	3.26%	85.26%	3.06%	.75%	7.68%	2944
60-69	2.23%	76.44%	7.99%	.00%	13.34%	1477
70-79	.55%	79.95%	8.79%	.00%	10.71%	728
80-89		1.75.71%	2.86%	.00%	20.36%	280
90-99	.00%	46.88%	.00%	.00%	53.13%	32
Average	1.64%	91.98%	2.30%	.92%	3.17%	29,051

Table 6 Breakdown of bids by bid method against age of oldest household member

Members are currently able to bid using five different methods; web, telephone, text, coupon or staff assisted.

The partnership adopted a Vulnerable Person's Strategy incorporated into the Common Allocations Policy and Procedure for staff, to ensure that vulnerable groups were not disadvantaged by the introduction of CBL. The document provides partners with strategic guidance on how to deliver equal access of housing to customers. An Equality Impact Assessment has been conducted and this will be reviewed taking into account performance data and customer experiences of the new system.

7. Bidding and ethnic minorities/vulnerable groups

Each of the 5 partner organisations has different housing management software packages and the amount of data is recorded in different ways. One of the aims of the partnership is to ensure the data is consistent throughout and that ethnicity and vulnerability is recorded to reflect an accurate applicant profile. Currently this data is work in progress.

In accordance with the Vulnerable Persons Strategy, local authorities have been encouraged to determine whether members of their housing registers are vulnerable, and therefore could be potentially disadvantaged by CBL.

Applicants in the following groups will be flagged on Locata as the partnership progresses. These details are held on individual management systems but further work with Locata needs to progress so that the data is uploaded to reflect in performance management. At the initial 'go live' stage in November 2009, a set of data essential for the launch of the project was agreed by the five partner organisations and the cost was allowed for within the first year's budget of CBL. Locata process the data sent to them by the CBL partner's individual housing management software systems and draw this information together on Locata as an overarching joined up management system for the purposes of CBL.

Additional data such as the list below will need to be sent to Locata for 'uploading' onto the CBL SEARCH MOVES site and there will be a cost for this additional upload. This cost needs to be met out of CBL budgets for the coming years and needs to be agreed as a partnership by the Steering Group which meets regularly to discuss such issues.

- Care leaver
- Physical or mental disability
- Domestic violence or serious harassment
- People with learning disabilities
- Offenders or ex offenders
- Older applicant
- Drug or alcohol issues
- Rough sleeper
- Teenage parent
- Low literacy skills
- First language is not English
- Needs help bidding

BME statistics in respect of RBC are reported in the monthly Members' Bulletin. The figures for April are reproduced below:-

1) Number of applicants on the register

	White ¹	Asian ²	Mixed ³	Black ⁴	Other ⁵	Chinese	Not Known
Total	2377	52	26	37	37	7	126
As a %	89.29%	1.95%	0.98%	1.39%	1.39%	0.26%	4.73%

2) Number of housed applicants in previous month

	White ¹	Asian ²	Mixed ³	Black ⁴	Other ⁵	Chinese	Not Known
Total	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
% housed	100.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%

Overall to date	12 (100.00%)	0	0	0	0	0	0
% in Population*	94.2%	2.3%	0.7%	1%	0.9%	0.8%	0.0%

3) Number of applicants on the Register by Band

	White ¹	Asian ²	Mixed ³	Black ⁴	Other ⁵	Chinese	Not Known	Total
Band A	25	1	0	0	0	0	1	27
Band B	168	2	0	0	1	1	7	179
Band C	1189	24	14	19	22	3	64	1331
Band D	157	5	4	8	1	0	8	173
Band E	838	20	8	10	13	3	46	938
Total	2377	52	26	37	37	7	126	2502

Table 7 BME breakdown of applicants and lettings for RBC during April 2010

8. Lettings by property type

The majority of lettings across the partnership in the first 6 months have been one bedroom properties, followed by two bed properties. Three bed properties are third, with minimal 4 bedroom lets - as set out in the table below.

Property type	RBC	EBC	SBC	EHT	A2D	Total
1 bed	62	4	4	73	80	223
2 bed	26	6	1	32	30	95
3 bed	33	3	2	10	22	70
4 bed	2	0	0	0	1	3
Total	123	13	7	115	133	391

Table 8 breakdown of property sizes let in the first 6 months

The breakdown of property by type i.e. house, bungalow, flat etc, is set out in the table below for RBC, and shown by bidding cycle.

Issue	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	Issues 1-12
Bungalow	1	3	1	2	6	1	2	0	1	0	0	0	17
Flat	13	22	11	4	2	5	4	6	4	7	6	1	85
House	9	6	4	1	4	1	1	4	2	1	0	2	35
Masionette	3	0	3	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	12

Table 8(a) breakdown of property type by bidding cycle in the first 6 months

9. Lettings to Homeseekers and Transfers within the first 6 months

The table below sets out the breakdown of lettings between homeseekers on the three Local Authority Housing Registers and transfer applicants on the RSL transfer lists. RBC as a stock retained landlord has both homeseekers and transfer applicants. The two RSLs have nomination agreements with their sponsoring authorities, (Spelthorne and Elmbridge BCs), which requires 75% of vacancies to be made available to applicants of the respective registers. The remaining 25% are retained by the RSLs for transfers. Runnymede, being the only stock retained authority in the SEARCH Moves partnership has an agreement with the partnership that up to 25% of vacancies may be 'ring fenced' for transfers. The figures below evidence a fair balance across the partnership in lettings in line with nomination agreements.

H/T	RBC	EBC	EHT	SBC	A2D
Homeseeker	81	68		72	
Transfer	21		28		36

Table 9 Breakdown of lettings in first 6 months to homeseekers and transfer applicants

10. Lettings in the first 6 Months by Mobility Level

SEARCH MOVES has three mobility levels and icons are placed on property adverts to highlight the best use of the property and to encourage applicants with mobility needs to bid for appropriate properties. This does not cover fully adapted properties as these are let as Direct Lets to ensure applicants are matched as best as possible to their needs. The table below shows the lettings in the first 6 months in the three mobility levels across the partnership

- Mobility 1 = suitable for wheelchair users indoors and outdoors
- Mobility 2 = suitable for those who cannot manage steps or stairs and may use a wheelchair some of the time
- Mobility 3 = suitable for those who are only able to manage 1 or 2 steps or stairs

All medical applications are assessed to include mobility issues

Mobility Level	RBC	EBC	EHT	SBC	A2D
1	2	0	0	0	0
2	4	0	0	0	13
3	30	2	3	0	6

Table 10 breakdown of lettings in first 6 months by mobility level

11. Lettings in New developments in the first 6 months

New build developments are excluded from cross partner bidding for the initial lets and are 100% nominations rights for the Local Authority in which the development is built. Within the first 6 months RBC had 32 new properties all of which were allocated to homeseekers and transfer applicants with a local connection to RBC. EBC had 4 new build properties and SBC had none in this period. Subsequent lettings will then fall into any agreed nomination agreements, and will be subject to cross partner bidding.

RBC	EBC	EHT	SBC	A2D
32	4	0	0	0

Table 11 number of new build units in the first 6 months

12. Cross Partner Movement

SEARCH Moves is in the first stage of a three stage process in cross partner lettings. In the first stage, 30% of all partners voids, are randomly selected by Locata and placed into the cross partner 'pot' for bidding. Cross Partner bids by applicants do not require a local connection to a Borough and therefore applicants from any of the three local authority areas can bid for these properties.

As expected, in the first 6 months cross-borough movement has been minimal. Based on CBL research elsewhere, the findings are that migration between boroughs is minimal and applicants prefer to stay in areas where their support networks are.

Therefore the move to the next stage of 60% cross partner bidding should not be a major issue for any of the partners.

The table below (part a) sets out the random cross partner lettings in the first 6 months. The total gains and net gains columns show where each partner is at with 30% of their random lettings target. The table also shows the number of adverts placed by each partner and how many of these were selected to go into the cross partner bidding.

There is also the facility for partners to place more difficult to let properties, such as some sheltered units into a voluntary cross partner bidding cycle and this is shown in the second part of the table, part (b) However, voluntary cross partner lettings are not counted towards a partners' 30% target.

(a) Random Cross Partner

Nominator	Adverts	Cross Partner	% Cross Partner	Total Gains	Net Gains
A2 Dominion	83	24	28%	8	0
Elmbridge Council	183	53	28%	10	-3
Elmbridge Housing	36	9	25%	10	7
Runnymede Council	155	37	23%	4	-8
Spelthorne Council	156	39	25%	15	4
All Partners	613	162	26%	47	0

RBC is slightly below it's 30% target, currently at 23%. This will be corrected as the bidding cycles progress automatically by random selection.

(b) Voluntary Cross Partner

does not include shortlists that were voluntary cross partner and then went random cross partner

Nominator	Adverts	Cross Partner	% Cross Partner	Total Gains	Net Gains
A2 Dominion	83	29	34%	1	1
Elmbridge Council	183	0	0%	3	3
Elmbridge Housing	36	5	13%	0	-3

Runnymede Council	155	3	1%	0	0
Spelthorne Council	156	3	1%	0	-1
All Partners	613	40	6%	4	0

Summary of Random Cross Partner Lettings – how many applicants came into a Local Authority Area

RBC	EBC	EHT	SBC	A2D
4 housed by another partner	10 housed by other partners	10 housed by other partners	15 housed by other partners	8 housed by other partners
8 CP housed by RBC	3 CP housed by RBC	7 CP housed by EHT	4 CP housed by SBC	0 CP housed by A2D

RBC is currently a net 'importer' for cross partner applicants, which will need to be addressed as the bidding cycles progress so that there is not an overall imbalance. The Operational Managers Group for SEARCH MOVES meets regularly to look at such issues and RBC will monitor any imbalance in order to put in place any necessary strategy to redress this by the end of the next 6 monthly performance report. Strategies will include bypassing of cross partner applicants in favour of RBC applicants but always taking into account any overriding emergency housing need.

Table 12 breakdown of cross partner lettings in the first 6 months

13. Lettings Performance

For landlords, the average time that it takes to relet a vacant home is a crucial performance indicator. The partnership is keen to know what effects, if any, CBL has had on void performance.

The table below sets out the total number of days from when an advert is first created to when a final offer is accepted by an applicant. This does not reflect the void performance as this information is reported on the Northgate housing management system and needs to be considered separately from the lettings performance. The figures are also reflective of more than one offer being made on a property before a final offer is accepted.

The current void turnaround figure for RBC is 25 days. This is different to the figure in the table below, due to the fact we try wherever possible to advertise forthcoming vacancies before they become empty, thus minimizing the time they

remain empty. In many cases we are able to advertise and pre-allocate properties before they are ready for occupation. The creation of adverts to final lettings by RBC is significantly above that of its 4 SEARCH Moves partners.

Partner	A2D	EHT	ELM	RUN	SPEL	All Partners
Bidding Closed	15.1	14.0	13.3	12.7	13.4	13.9
Final Offer	12.4	11.1	11.6	5.7	31.4	10.3
Offer Accepted	13.3	19.3	40.0	13.9	17.6	16.2
Total	40.8	44.4	64.9	32.2	62.4	40.4

Table 13 Average letting rate in days by landlord

On-line questionnaire

Since CBL first went live in NW Surrey, there has been an on-line questionnaire for customers to use and to place comments regarding SEARCH MOVES. For the last 6 months we asked members whether they found the website easy to use, with the following 4 questions ?

- Are staff helping in assisting you ?
- Is the public website easy to understand?
- Are you likely to come into RBC surgeries ?
- How are you finding the new CBL scheme ?

Applicants can choose whether to take part in the questionnaire and select which question they wish to answer.

The main two questions answered in the first 6 months were:

- Is the public website easy to understand ?
- Are you likely to come into CBL surgeries (specific to RBC)

There were 1300 replies and only 17 applicants answered 'no' to the question "Is the public website was easy to understand". The majority of answers show applicants find the website easy to use and the majority of applicants answering the CBL surgery question, advised they would not be coming into an RBC surgery. This reflects confidence in the system by these applicants without the need of staff assistance.

A set of questions has now been agreed by the SEARCH MOVES partners to go live on the public questionnaire which should gather important feedback on the SEARCH MOVES scheme and feedback will be published in the next 6 monthly performance report.

14. Staff Engagement with the scheme

RBC Allocations team has fully embraced the SEARCH MOVES project and feedback from the team is that they welcome the transparency of the process and the change in culture to empowering applicants to make informed choices .

There is also a strong emphasis on managing applicants' expectations about what properties are actually available and encouraging other housing options such as the recently launched Homeswapper scheme.

Joan Stephens
Housing Needs Manager
RBC
May 2010