Derby Homes

Annual Report 2014/15

Listening to you – learning from you

Dennis Rees OBE (Chair of the Operational Board) and Mike Ainsley (Chair of Derby Homes) in the Derby Homes van

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A video version of this Annual Report and a full copy of our Financial Statement are available online at: www.derbyhomes.org/annualreport

Welcome

I am very pleased to welcome you to our annual report which marks my first year as Chair of the Board. It has been a privilege for me to be Chair for what has been another successful year. We have continued to build new homes around the city giving the chance of a smart new home to over a hundred people and families. We have also offered specialist help for tenants who have been affected by Welfare Reform. A dedicated team has provided information, guidance and budgeting advice to our customers, and assistance for those who have chosen to move to a smaller home.

Although most of the work we do at Derby Homes is collecting rent and looking after the bricks and mortar, we are about much more than that. Like many housing organisations, the wider work we do is about changing lives within the communities we serve, rejuvenating neighbourhoods, inspiring young people, and helping those who need extra support. Our creative approach to tackling new projects and challenges has produced some truly innovative solutions – many of which are delivered in partnership with other organisations and volunteers. Through innovation and partnership, we are coming up with new ideas and efficient, customer-focused solutions.

This year, we are reporting our achievements differently too. Our customers have told us that they want to be more involved in the planning and delivery of our Annual Report - so, alongside this printed report for 2014/15, we have produced an Annual Report in video format. It features some of our customers, volunteers, staff and partners who have been involved in delivering our key projects. Rather than telling the story ourselves, we thought we'd let them explain what's been happening over the last 12 months. You can watch the video at **www.derbyhomes.org/annualreport**.

I would like to thank everyone who took part in the making of the film, and I am grateful to all of the Derby Homes staff, tenants, volunteers and partners who have worked together to accomplish these life-changing achievements in 2014/15.

Mike Ainsley, Chair of Derby Homes, talks about the achievements of Derby Homes over the past year

Our partnership with Derby City Council

"The partnership between Derby City Council and Derby Homes is working really well. We have a joint set of priorities and we work closely to determine the key issues and agree solutions as to how they will be tackled.

"Derby Homes listens to the views of their stakeholders through regular partnership meetings and they tackle priority issues for tenants and other people involved in the delivery of services.

"Their maintenance and repairs record is excellent, and their new build programme is helping us to increase the supply of rented accommodation available in the city. Decent housing plays a major part in the quality of people's lives and Derby Homes is instrumental in making sure the accommodation on offer is of a high quality."

Councillor Fareed Hussain,
Cabinet Member for Urban Renewal

The journey

Join Dennis Rees OBE (Chair of the Operational Board) and Mike Ainsley (Chair of Derby Homes) on their tour of the locations featured in this Annual Report.

Go to **www.derbyhomes.org/annualreport** to watch the video.

Key to locations

- Derby Homes Hub
- Chesapeake Road
- Hastings Street
- Davies Close
- Meadow Way
- Allenton Market
- Bramblebrook Community Centre
- Milestone House
- Max Road Community Room
- Colville Street Community Room
- Slaney Close Community Room
- Derby City Council House
- Shamrock Street

Thank you to everyone who helped with the production of the annual report

New homes

Over the last twelve months Derby Homes have continued to build new homes in various locations across the city. Some of these have been new developments, such as the properties on Hastings Street, Normanton. Other projects have involved converting or adapting existing buildings, such as the flats on Chesapeake Road in Chaddesden.

Wherever possible, our building developments are completed using Derby Homes' own in-house team and local sub-contractors. By using local companies to complete the work we are able to deliver each scheme more efficiently and cost effectively and any money spent on the projects stays within the local economy.

Official opening of flats at Chesapeake

From Left: Shaun Bennett, Dennis Rees OBE, Marcia Martin, Julie Swierczek, Councillor Sarah Bolton, Councillor Sarah Russell, Chris Williamson, Peter Matthews

Flats on Chesapeake Road

A former family centre on Chesapeake Road, Chaddesden was bought by Derby Homes from the Council and transformed into flats for modern living. The flats are all fitted with sprinklers as part of Derby Homes' partnership with the Think Sprinkler campaign, led by Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service.

"I'm very happy with my new home and impressed with the standard of the conversion"

Julie Swierczek
the first tenant of the flats.

Hastings Street

Habib Khan is a tenant who lives in one of two new properties built on the site of a former disused car park in Hastings Street, Normanton. This is what he said when we asked him how it felt to get the keys to his new home:

"It doesn't feel like a council house. The house is very well thought out. It's economic and it offers a great lifestyle. We're really happy here. We wouldn't change a thing.

"It was the best feeling ever... The fact that I'd got my own place after being homeless for a number of years, it was fantastic.

"I'm such a community person and, for me, moving out of Normanton would have been hard. The community is my family, so it's great that me and my partner have been able to stay in the community we wanted to be in."

New homes on Hastings Street

Habib Khan, Tenant, outside his Hastings Street home

Louise May, Tenant, at her Davies Close home

New homes on Davies Close

Davies Close

It's a year since the first homes were completed in Davies Close. The properties are part of the new build development in Osmaston, created by the partnership of Derby Homes, OSCAR and Derby City Council. In July 2015, the scheme won the National Federation of Arms Length Management Organisations (ALMOs) award for the Best New Build Project.

We spoke to Louise May, a resident of Davies Close, to find out what it's like to live there.

"Before moving here I was living with my parents. Having a place of my own has given me and my daughter independence.

"The house is open plan and modern and has a nice homely feel. It's only three minutes from the main bus route for work and close to my daughter's school.

"There's a nice community feel in Davies Close. My parents live just round the corner and I have a lot of links with the community and school, so it's good that I haven't had to move away from any of that. I think it's given a positive vibe to the community to see these houses being let to local people. That's definitely a good thing."

Helping you through Welfare Reform

This year, many of our tenants have been feeling the effects of Welfare Reform and other benefit changes.

Around **8%** of Derby Homes tenants were affected by the under occupancy charge, and;

39 households were affected by the overall benefit cap.

Working with Derby City Council we commissioned a customer profiling information report to identify tenants who were financially or digitally excluded. By linking this information to rent arrears, we have been able to target money and debt advice to those who need it most.

Derby Homes have helped those tenants with budget advice, and offered them information on how to access affordable credit or manage debt. We have also helped tenants to apply for discretionary housing benefit payments to cover the under occupancy charge.

Jackie Westwood,
Head of Income Management and Advice

Supporting our tenants through Welfare Reform

"In spite of benefit changes and the current economic climate, by March 2015 Derby Homes had seen a slight reduction in rent arrears compared to the previous year.

"However, we know that times are difficult for our tenants, which is why we will continue to be proactive in our approach and carry on offering advice and support."

Getting the message across

"Effective communication has been crucial in getting the message across about benefit changes. We've applied a targeted campaign using text messaging, telephone calls and home visits, and through messages in Derby Homes News, on social media and local radio. We also put adverts on our repair vans offering help to anyone who is struggling to pay their rent."

Helping customers to downsize

Since the under occupation charge was introduced in April 2013, 234 people have downsized, including Philip Wallace from Chellaston. Here's what he said about the experience:

"If I'd stayed in my old house I'd have had to pay the under occupancy charge, so Derby Homes helped me move. They've been brilliant. Without their support I wouldn't be where I am now and in such a nice place. I'm a lot happier and in a much better position thanks to the help I've received."

Derby Mutual Exchange event

Derby Homes worked with nine other social housing providers to create Derby Mutual Exchange (DMEX) which provided tenants with options for downsizing or swapping their home.

Working with our communities

Mackworth Community Centre

During the last 12 months Derby Homes have continued to work in partnership to help breathe new life into failing community venues, or offer support with renovations to community buildings.

In August, Derby Homes' apprentices helped to complete two rooms at a community centre in Mackworth. The refurbishment of the former family centre next to St Francis of Assisi Church had been undertaken by Mackworth Estate Community Association, but they were unable to complete the last two rooms due to a lack of funding. In partnership with Derby College, Derby Homes' apprentices stepped in to finish off the building by boarding and plastering the final two rooms using materials donated by our contractors.

Bramblebrook Community Centre

A major community project this year has been the transformation of Bramblebrook Community Centre in Stockbrook Street. The venue had become run down and dilapidated and it wasn't being used. With support from Derby Homes, a team of hard working volunteers refurbished the centre and transformed its fortunes in around three months. Bramblebrook Community Centre now has a cafe, a community nursery and is used regularly by local people.

Outside Bramblebrook Community Centre

Artwork created by Prince's Trust volunteers at Bramblebrook

Mick Vernon is a Tenant, Operational Board Member and Community Volunteer who used the expertise he gained revamping Sinfin Community Centre to help breathe new life into the centre at Bramblebrook.

"We pulled in lots of favours to complete the project. Derby Homes and Derby City Council gave us access to their contractors who supplied goods free of charge or at cost, and they gave their time and energy to help with the project.

"This project has made us realise that community spirit isn't dead. It's there. It's alive and it's well. You just need a group of people to harness it and use it."

"The new community nursery allows local residents to be able to leave their children in a stable environment while they are at work. They can then come back and collect them at the end of the day and be only a short distance from home." Councillor Sarah Russell

Mick Vernon, Tenant, Operational Board Member and Community Volunteer

Councillor Sarah Russell is the Cabinet Member for Education and Skills at Derby City Council. She has praised the Bramblebrook project as a great example of partnership working within the community.

Councillor Sarah Russell,
Cabinet Member for Education and Skills

"Partnership working creates some fantastic outcomes for the people involved in it and the community surrounding it.

"It was a key priority for us as local councillors to want to see Bramblebrook Community Centre reinvigorated. We did that through partnership with Derby Homes, who came in, brought in the expertise, and pulled together what was needed to once again make this a vibrant place for people to visit. The centre is now a focal point for the local community."

The MashUp Cafe at Bramblebrook

"The cafe is somewhere for people to mingle and congregate. Whether you're old or young, whether it's summer or winter, the cafe is here for the community.

"Our volunteering programme within the cafe gives local people the chance to develop skills, get work experience and gain qualifications, such as Basic Food Hygiene. Alongside the community nursery here at Bramblebrook, we run a parents group and family discos.

"MashUp Cafe is exactly what the name says. It's a mash-up... an amalgamation of different activities within the area. We bring together the things the community wants. We have created a vibrant place for people to come and relax, enjoy or be educated. Whatever it is that people want to do, we are here to help if we can."

Tandeka and Jimmy at the MashUp Cafe

Local residents using the cafe

Homeless initiatives

Derby Homes have moved the Single Point of Entry team to the Council House which has released space for seven additional beds for homeless people at Milestone House. The conversion is being funded by Public Health England, following a successful joint bid with Derby City Council's Public Health team.

Matt Palmer, Housing Advice Manager

Homeless Health Week

"As part of Homeless Health Week, two days of free dental care have been provided for homeless people in Derby. The service was delivered in partnership with The Padley Day Centre using a mobile dental unit provided by Public Health England.

"It's extremely difficult for homeless people to find an NHS dentist. Most of them don't have a dentist and their oral health has suffered, so it was great to be able to offer this dental care service. When the mobile dental unit pulled up it was amazing to see how many people were already queuing to get treatment."

Homeless Health Week

"We submitted a bid to Public Health England for funding to refurbish some of the space within Milestone House. Within that bid we included a request to provide dental services and other treatments that would help homeless people overcome some of the barriers they are facing and start them on their journey to getting their own accommodation.

"Through partnership working we were also able to offer other services during Homeless Health Week such as a GP service, chiropody, health and wellbeing checks from the Live Well team, and a hairdresser."

We also spoke to Sandra Whiston, Consultant in Dental Public Health, Public Health England – East Midlands:

"Oral health contributes to a person's general health and well-being.

"If people are embarrassed by the appearance of their teeth, it can affect their self-esteem and exacerbate any mental health problems they may have. Helping someone improve their oral health can have wider implications in terms of improving their confidence in seeking housing and employment and helping them reintegrate back into society."

Mobile Dentist Unit

Encouraging young people

Derby Homes supports young people through targeted activities that provide a chance to engage in new experiences and gain useful life skills. Initiatives are delivered in partnership with organisations such as the Enthusiasm Trust, and through the Junior Warden scheme, which is now delivered by the MashUp Theatre Company.

Junior Warden Scheme

We spoke to MashUp to find out how activities for the Junior Wardens are delivered:

"Because the Junior Wardens range in age from 9 to 14, we deliver the scheme using a 'nurture and grow' approach. We get them in early and teach them skills that empower them to become people who know what they want to say and can articulate what they are thinking. When the young people get to 14 or 15, they are encouraged to join Derby Homes Youth Board where they can express their views, represent their peers, their area and make things happen. We help them understand how to voice their opinion in a positive way. Our aim is to make these young people the catalyst for change.

"The Junior Warden scheme gives young people a chance to be represented within Derby Homes, which is definitely a positive way forward."

Junior Wardens learned how to make a healthy meal at 'Cook-it-and-Pass-it-on'

Left: Junior Wardens took ingredients home to make the same meal for their family and they also made the meal and shared it with older people within their neighbourhood.

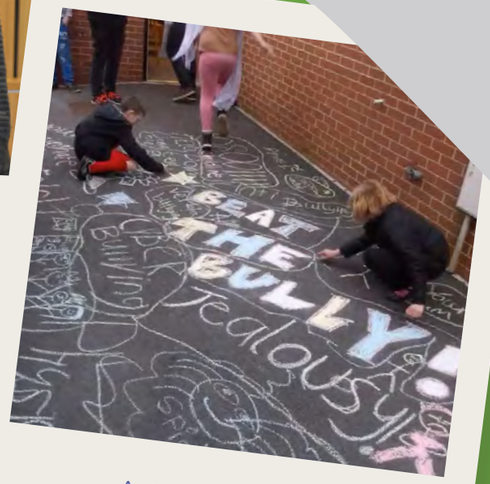
"Activity sessions include some drama, singing and dancing, arts and crafts, and designing stage sets for performances. We also teach the young people about audio and visual production and let them use this medium to get their message across about important issues, such as bullying."

Supporting young people

Kirsty Glover is a Derby Homes Junior Warden and Derby's Deputy Youth Mayor.

"When I became a Junior Warden I started to see the world in a different way. I'm much more confident now. I've become a Youth Leader at Scouts, and I joined Derby City Council's Voices in Action Youth Council through Junior Wardens. That has led to me becoming Derby's Deputy Youth Mayor, and I've been involved in going to schools to talk to young people about new and emerging communities. I explain how we can help people who have transferred from other countries feel more safe, secure and comfortable in our country."

Kirsty Glover,
Junior Warden and Derby City
Council Deputy Youth Mayor



Anti-bullying video
Watch it at https://youtu.be/69VyGS2dK0g

Supporting older tenants

Sandra and Hazel,
Tenants and Community Volunteers

Colville Street coffee morning

Dignity Action Day

In February 2015 Derby Homes took part in Dignity Action Day, an annual event aimed at upholding people's rights to dignity and providing a memorable day for those who use care services. To mark the occasion, and to support Derby City Council's Dignity Challenge, we held events in all of the Derby Homes community rooms across Derby. More than 200 residents took part. As well as enjoying coffee and cakes, they were given the chance to find out more about what else happens within their community room, and get support for new activities.

Volunteers Hazel Johnston-Weild and Sandra Bracken run regular coffee mornings and events at Colville Street Community Room. They were also involved in delivering an event on Dignity Day.

"Derby Homes have been brilliant and have supported us all the way."

"The events we hold here at Colville Street have made a difference to a lot of people. Residents who would have passed each other in the street are now friends and stop to say hello. People who didn't get out very much now come along to the coffee mornings, bingo sessions and day trips. We try to organise one trip every month. On Dignity Day we held a coffee morning and it was well attended as it always is here."

Reducing digital exclusion and social isolation

We have installed superfast broadband in 16 of our community rooms for older customers to use free of charge. Derby Homes worked in partnership with the Workers Educational Association (WEA) to provide free training sessions in community rooms to help digitally isolated residents get online to access information websites, online shopping and discover new ways to stay in contact with friends and family. Sylvia said:

"When my family went on holiday I was on my own and panicking about how I'd cope. But they set me up on Skype and on Facebook and I saw them on holiday every day. Whatever they did they filmed it and I was able to see it, so the week went by really quickly.

"My little iPad means more to me than my telephone. You can play games on it, or do just what you like. For me, learning to use a computer has been a lifeline."

Sylvia Dunn, Tenant, with her iPad

The Housing Pathway

The Housing Pathway is a joint working initiative with Derby City Council that supports the Council's Ordinary Lives project. Its aim is to help people with complex disabilities live independently by finding suitable accommodation for them outside of residential care. The teams involved work in partnership to solve problems, reduce barriers and make decisions that prioritise the interests of service users.

By bringing together expertise from different specialisms, the Housing Pathway is able to deliver creative solutions to housing needs, Brian Frisby, Director of Adult Social Care Services explained.

"The Housing Pathway has brought together social care, housing strategy and housing options staff through Derby Homes to help us work out how to support people and help them navigate the world of housing.

"I am really proud of the fact that Derby City Council's Cabinet signed up to a pledge that within 10 years nobody of working age with a disability should be living in residential care, but should instead have their own home. We couldn't even begin to think about having that kind of ambition without the support of Derby Homes and the work that it does as part of our partnership."

Brian Frisby,
Director of Adult Social Care Services

"We needed the help of Derby Homes to work out how to support people to access ordinary housing, and they have really come through on that."

Adapting properties, changing lives

"We were living in a two-bedroomed bungalow that was too small due to my wife's specific support needs, so we applied through her social worker to Derby Homes for a bigger place. They found us somewhere, but it needed a lot of work. We brought my wife down to the property in her wheelchair so that Derby Homes staff could assess it to reposition doors and carry out adaptations to make the house work for us. Derby Homes made sure that we were involved all the way through.

"Before we moved, my wife had to sleep in the living room. She's now got a bedroom. I'd spent three years sleeping on the sofa and now I've got a bed. We've got a living room that's a living room, a bedroom that's a bedroom. We're more like a family now because we can actually sit together in the same room."

Mark Walker, Tenant

Board expenses

The information in the table shows the full year's payments from April 2014 to March 2015, inluding any travel expenses claimed.

Board member	Travel	Payment	Member's Total
M Ainsley	£0	£6,672	£6,672
I MacDonald	£1,093	£3,201	£4,294
R MacDonald	£0	£0	£0
A G S Osler	£0	£2,192	£2,192
D Rees	£0	£4,002	£4,002
J Shepherd	£0	£0	£0
F Walker	£1,008	£0	£1,008
TOTAL	**£2,101**	**£16,067**	**£18,168**

Payment is a fixed annual sum linked to carrying out specific duties, obligations and time commitment, as set out in the individual Board Member's Service Agreement. Councillor Board Members do not receive payments in respect of their Board Member duties as they already receive an allowance from the Council and have been excluded from the table above.

Derby Homes Board Room

Our performance

These are the performance figures for 2014/15 that our customers have told us they want to see included in the Annual Report.

Customer Priorities

This year we have used new ways to engage with our customers and we have carried out conversations with over 2650 tenants to find out what is important to them.

Home Standard

There are 10 Customer Priorities under this standard and these assess how well we provide the Repairs and Maintenance service along with management of empty properties. Three priorities have targets attached to them.

1. We will keep our repairs appointments
Target 98%, current performance 99.92%

2. We will complete non-urgent repairs within 25 working days
Target 99.8%, current performance 99.86%.

3. We will offer appointments for all urgent and non-urgent repairs
Target 93%, current performance 93%

The other 7 have measures to monitor delivery of the service but no target attached.

4. We will ensure newly let homes meet agreed standards of repair
100% of the 1204 newly let homes met the agreed standards.

5. We will regularly service any appliances we provide in your home
100% of appliances in our properties were serviced and safety checked.

6. We will inform you in advance of any planned maintenance to your home
There were no new programmes of work this year to inform anyone about.

7. We will develop our own energy efficiency standards that will be above the government requirements

- We installed 903 "A" Rated energy efficient gas boilers
- We insulated 46 pre-war properties
- We installed external wall insulation to 13 "Trusteel" properties attracting £78k worth of funding through the Green Deal scheme.

Derby Homes Repairs Van

Welfare Reform campaign at Allenton Market

8. We will ensure any decoration work to your home will be carried out to an agreed standard
We completed 22 decorations per week.

9. We will ensure that any garden or grounds maintenance work will be carried out to agreed standards
A number of improvements including landscaping, cleaning and additional planting have taken place across the city.

10.We will keep you informed if you report a communal repair
We carry out monthly "spot checks" to ensure that inspection visits are being carried out to a consistently high standard.

Tenancy Standard

There are 6 Customer Priorities under this standard that monitor delivery of the local offer but have no target attached.

1. We will provide new tenants with help and assistance to allow them to maintain their tenancy
819 new tenants signed up for new properties and 258 of these also signed up to the Tenancy Sustainment Service.

2. We will give you opportunities to discuss any rent arrears and to clear any outstanding balances in full or by affordable instalments
There were 1380 arrangements made during 2014/15.

3. We will offer to help manage your finances in a confidential and professional manner

- We helped the Erewash Credit Union launch in Derby through promotion on our website and including flyers in with this year's rent statement/increase packs. The Credit Union also supported us on our community bus day at Allenton Market.
- We carried out a number of Income Surgeries and advised tenants through office appointments and in-the-home interviews.

4. We will provide and develop convenient ways to access your rent account

- We have promoted online access through Derby Homes News explaining how the service can be accessed.
- Community rooms have internet access available for tenants.

5. We will actively promote access to low cost credit

- Low cost credit is available to tenants through Erewash Credit Union or Midland Community Finance.
- Derby Homes are paying the credit union membership fee for any tenants interested in opening an account to pay the rent and this will also give tenants access to savings products as well as low cost credit.

6. We will ensure that elderly or vulnerable tenants have access to a range of services to help them live independently

- We supported Derby City Council's "Dignity Challenge" by holding events for Dignity Action Day.
- We have increased the number of activities available in our Community Rooms.

Rent arrears

Performance has been maintained and 100.1% of rent due has been collected this year.

Supporting our tenants through Welfare Reform

We have helped 234 tenants downsize and we have updated our home release policy criteria to include tenants who are affected by the charge. Information and updates have been communicated through a wide variety of methods.

Void turnaround times

The void turnaround time this year was 22.1 days against a target of 24 days. Last year we achieved a figure of 24.12.

Repairs - planned work and new build

We have completed 177 homes towards a target of 700 homes. We are working very hard with Derby City Council to identify suitable sites for new homes. This will be a challenging target and the recent announcements on rental income are likely to have an impact on this target. In addition we have installed:

- 107 new roofs
- 1479 new high security exterior doors
- 376 new kitchens
- 414 new bathrooms with electric showers
- 128 bathrooms for disabled people
- 922 energy efficient heating systems
- 100 lofts insulated.

Compliments and complaints

We received 311 complaints and 98 compliments. We learn from all complaints where processes have been at fault and work with Service Managers to make sure that these are changed.

Improved leaseholder relationship

Update from Anthony Holme, Chair of the Leaseholder Forum:
"For many years Derby Homes supported a Leaseholder Group which held regular bimonthly meetings to discuss the issues affecting leaseholders and residents of Derby Homes' properties. However, when the number of attendees at these meetings began to fall, we decided to take a new approach. Working with the Customer Engagement Team we launched an email newsletter. This was read by over 100 leaseholders and prompted responses from people who would not normally attend meetings. The email newsletters will be issued quarterly and will include links to relevant parts of the Derby Homes website."

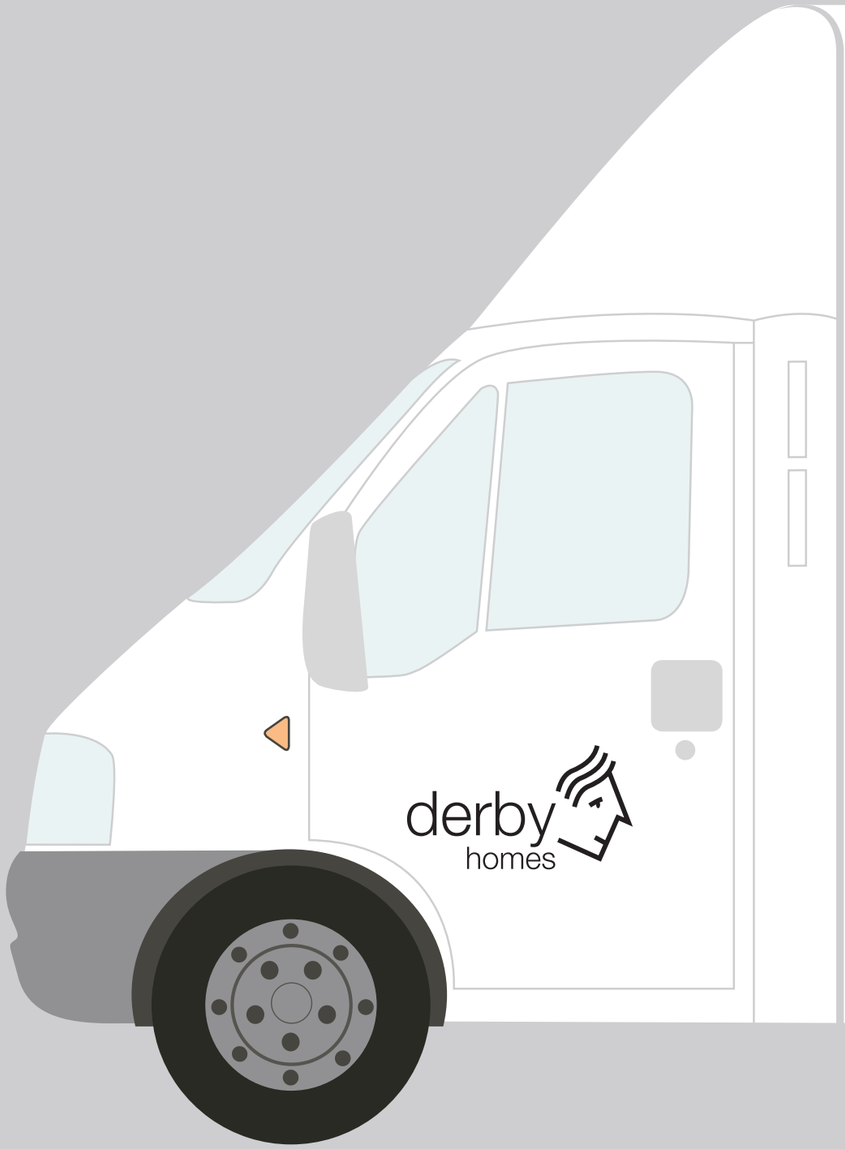
Our volunteers

We currently have 30 active volunteers fully signed up under the new Volunteer Strategy. There are a further 40 to be formally signed up who are currently volunteering their time. The volunteer roles include:

- Main Board
- Operational Board
- Tenant Panel
- Community Room events
- Community allotments
- Church organisations
- Junior Wardens
- Community Centres
- Enthusiasm Trust

We are working with Enthusiasm to provide and manage volunteers. A Volunteer Tree has been created in The Hub to showcase our Volunteers.

New homes being built



Find out more

This report provides a summary of our main achievements during the year. If you'd like to learn more, you can watch the video Annual Report at **www.derbyhomes.org/annualreport**.

You can also access full board reports on our performance and services at **www.derbyhomes.org/derby-homes-board**.

We are interested in hearing your feedback on the new video Annual Report format. If you have any comments or suggestions on how we can improve next year's report please contact us by email or phone, or send us a message through Facebook or Twitter.

Email us annualreport@derbyhomes.org
Customer Service Centre 01332 888777
/derbyhomes **@derbyhomes**

Listening to you – learning from you