

FORDER LANE HOUSE
REGISTERED CARE HOME



SOUTH DEVON RURAL
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

South Devon Rural Housing Association Limited
Registered England and Wales
South Devon House, Babbage Road, Totnes TQ9 5JA

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Website: www.southdevonrural.com

We are open from 9.00 am to 5pm Monday – Friday
From 31st July 2017 new office opening times will be 8.45am – 4.45pm Monday – Friday

South Devon Rural Housing Association is an exempt charity registered with the Cooperative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 No R14949 and the Homes and Communities Agency LH 0920.



2016/17
Annual Report



SDR acquired a number of properties at Broomborough Court & Kellock Drive in Totnes from Sovereign Housing in October 2016. This has enabled SDR to provide a more proactive, local service to tenants. Within the short period since SDR have acquired these properties, SDR has received positive feedback from tenants on the services provided.



SOUTH DEVON RURAL
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

Chairman's Report 2017

I am pleased to report that the Association has had another successful year in 2016/17.

We continue to follow our primary objective of creating more affordable housing in South Devon. We also have an excellent reputation for delivering projects on time and managing properties very well.

The Association was approached by another housing association and acquired 42 properties in Totnes, in addition to increasing revenue for SDR, this will enable these tenants to receive a more localised service from SDR.

Four 3 bedroom properties have been developed and allocated to local people in Morleigh.

The delays on our Brimhay redevelopment have been particularly frustrating for us and our remaining tenants. The continued delays, due to no fault of the association, have decimated the community that was Brimhay. We continue to pursue our ambitious plan to provide 20 affordable homes, part funded by 12 open market sales.

Our Care Home, Forder Lane House continues to be very popular with very high occupancy, and generally a waiting list is in operation. Voids for the year were only 4.73% of the total rent.

South Devon House continues as a thriving business hub, with a mix of longer term rentals, as well as providing the registered offices for the Association. SDR has built a new office in the hub, which has increased revenue for SDR, and given the opportunity to another local business to work from Totnes.

The Association has a planned component replacement programme to ensure all properties are well maintained. The Board have recently agreed to increase spend on repairs and improvements for the next 4 years, with a budget of over £1 million to ensure SDR meet and exceed their targets, in upgrading properties, including heating, kitchens & bathroom works.

Turnover for the year has increased by 6.8% to £2,139,927 in 2017. The operating surplus has increased by 14.5% to £536,795 in 2017.

The Association's net assets of £1,055,000 have increased by £246,000 (2016: £809,000).

The Association continues to manage its stock very well with low rent arrears of 0.59% and total rent losses from housing voids of 0.07%.

A community fund has been established to which communities in the South Hams and Teignbridge areas have access. SDR has sponsored the Totnes Rugby Club, who also support the community with various fundraising activities.

Elsewhere in this report you will find details of our service standards, how well we are performing, and how we are progressing with the HCA's regulatory standards. We continue to spend substantial amounts repairing, maintaining and improving our housing stock. While we are doing well with all these, we are not complacent and strive to improve further.

I would like to thank all our staff for their hard work and dedication, especially our senior management team – Steve Prime, CEO, Claire Barnett, Financial Director, and Francis Bourke, Operations Director – for all their hard work. I would also like to thank Bonnie Van Beek, our Care Manager.

I am also very grateful to the Board for their support to Rod during his Chairmanship over the last few years and I would like to thank him for his service and ongoing support.

Let us look forward to more successes in 2017.

Jim Davis, Chairman of the Board

Introduction from the Chief Executive

Welcome to this year's annual report. In this report, we have 3 aims:

- to set out how we provide services to you, and meet the standards set by the HCA
- to report how well we are performing
- to identify the ways in which you can comment on our procedures and our performance, and influence how SDR is run

We will also give feedback on comments, suggestions and complaints from tenants and service users.

I hope you find our Annual Report interesting, and that it encourages you to get more involved with the way SDR is run. If you would like to contact me personally to discuss anything in our report, please feel free to email me on: steve@southdevonrural.com
I can also be contacted by telephone on 01803 863550

A reminder of existing communication routes and ways to get involved we have already set up:
consult@southdevonrural.com
a dedicated consultation e-mail address

consult@ - a matrix of tenants and stakeholders who receive policies and procedures on which to comment upon as part of our consultation and tenant involvement strategy. (Where they have said they wish to do so)
feedback@southdevonrural.com
a dedicated e-mail address which goes out on all association e-mails inviting feedback from anyone with whom we communicate.

Repairs satisfaction surveys – In addition to our main contractor West Country Maintenance Service (WMS), satisfaction surveys, SDR staff will also contact customers by telephone to ask if they were satisfied with works carried out.

What You Want surveys – an annual survey of tenants giving their views on what is important to them for forthcoming years. The results of which influence the Association's investment plans.

Grounds Maintenance Annual Satisfaction Surveys to measure the level of tenant satisfaction with the grass cutting and grounds maintenance service provided by our contractors.

Regular site inspections – Our Housing Staff makes regular inspections of our housing schemes to ensure they are maintained to our expectations and standards – residents are invited to accompany the Housing Staff on these inspections should they wish to do so. You may also contact us by telephone on 01803 863550 and ask to speak to me or any member of staff on this matter.

Tenants on the Board

The Association has, for many years, had two places available on the Board of Management, reserved for tenants of the association. Tenant Members are voted onto the Board by tenants and are subject to the normal selection criteria for Board Members.

With best wishes

Steve Prime, FCMI FCIH Chief Executive

Family homes
in Moreleigh
now completed
and occupied



Our Service Standards

The regulatory framework requires SDR to include in our Annual Report how we are meeting the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) regulatory standards, which relate to:

- Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard
- Home Standard
- Tenancy Standard
- Rent Standard
- Neighbourhood & Community Standard
- Value for money Standard
- Governance & Financial Viability Standard



The HCA has published detailed definitions of the standards it expects against these headings – if you would like to read these, visit the HCA website at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-standards>, or contact any of the contact names at the end of this report for a copy.

SDR believes that it meets the standards identified by the HCA. However, we recognise that there is always room for improvement, and we are committed to continuing to improve our performance each year. We support the HCAs view that performance can be improved by increasing the involvement of our tenants in running the association, and this report sets out how we aim to achieve this.

In setting our service standards to meet both our tenants priorities and the regulatory expectations, SDR will:

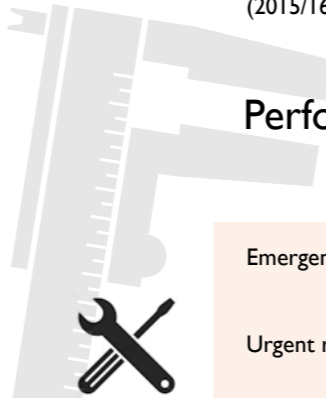
- Set rents which are affordable, and only increase rents in line with regulatory rules
- Allocate all homes according to our published Lettings Policy, with particular priority given to local people
- Provide assured tenancies for all tenants, except where we manage property for other landlords who require us to use Assured Shorthold Tenancies or where we operate specific affordable housing schemes such as SHIRE





- Minimise the number of our properties that are empty at all times
- **Operate a defined lettings standard**
 - Maintain a 24 hour responsive repairs service, with target times for action which reflect the urgency of the repair need
 - Undertake a stock improvement programme on our own properties each year, to ensure they continue meet the government's Decent Homes Standard
 - Inspect all our housing sites bi monthly, (6 monthly for individual outlying properties) to ensure that communal areas and gardens are maintained properly, and identify any problems that need to be addressed
 - Respond actively to protect our tenants against anti-social behaviour, and take strong action against perpetrators
 - Address any complaints as quickly as practicable in accordance with our published Complaints Policy
 - Work with other social housing organisations on local initiatives, where this can benefit our tenants
 - Keep under review our Local Offer to Tenants, taking into account tenant comments.

How well are we performing?

In this section, we aim to give you information about how well we are performing.

The chart below includes a number of 'performance indicators' showing SDR's current performance (over the last year). To put these figures in context, we have also included SDR's performance the previous year (2015/16) as well as average performance for a group of housing associations similar to SDR (our 'benchmarking club').

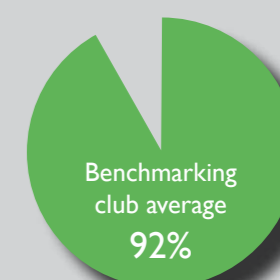
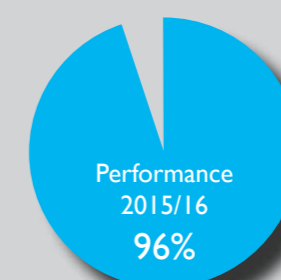
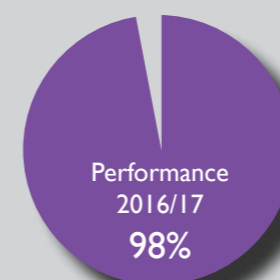


Performance indicator	Performance 2016/17	Performance 2015/16	Benchmarking club average
Emergency repairs completed on time	100%	100%	100%
Urgent repairs completed on time	100%	98%	95%
Routine repairs completed on time	91%	92%	93%
 Rent lost through empty properties	0.36%	0.45%	0.4%
 Average Time to re-let an empty property (days)	13	15	23
 Rent arrears after housing benefit due is taken out	0.59%	0.57%	1.8%
 Average weekly rent	£85.42	£89.35	£98.48

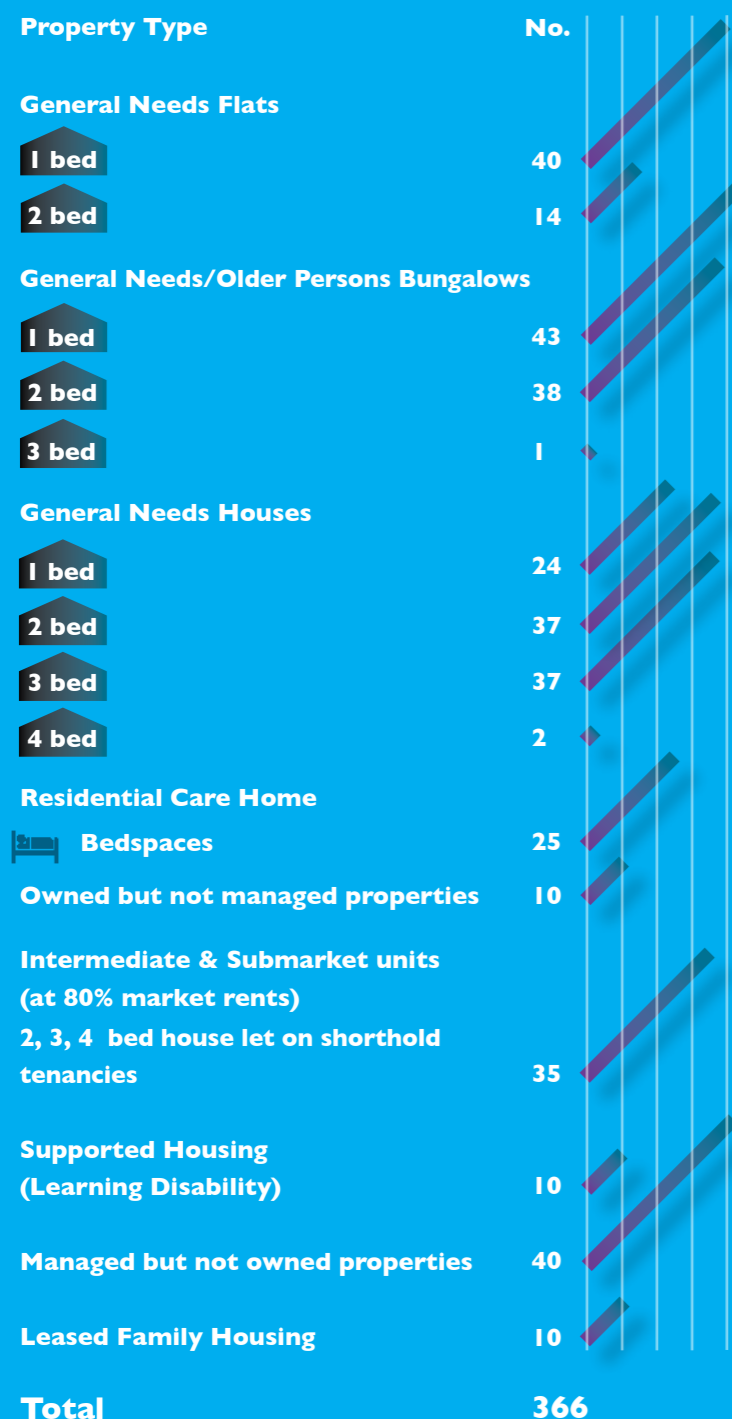


You told us that repairs & maintenance is the most important service we provide to you. We continue to monitor all aspects of satisfaction (or dissatisfaction) with the service we and our contractors provide. We investigate all reports of dissatisfaction through our quality assurance system.

Overall satisfaction



Our Rented Stock as at 31.03.17



(Above)
2 Bed flat in Salcombe
Family homes at Moreleigh

Pipeline/future development

The Association is following its development strategy and intends to build more affordable homes and more homes for sale to subsidise the building of affordable homes. To this end we are progressing a number of sites which could produce 100 homes over the next five years.

Brimhay - Planning Permission – not yet on site – Total 32 units - 12 for market sale
Plymouth - Rent To Buy Units – 11 due for completion 2017

Do you want to make a difference?

Get more involved in SDR's decision making?

Become an ambassador for SDR?

Tenant Involvement

“
Have your Say
”

Well, if the answer is yes to these questions, why not be part of a tenant panel. You can be involved by becoming a member on our tenant panel, where you will have the opportunity to influence and question what we do. Meet directly with the senior management team and board members.

- What are the benefits of being on a Tenant Panel:
- Enables you to be involved and have a say in what we do
 - You can contribute your direct experience to the development of services
 - Learn new skills, meet new people
 - Improve career prospects

For further information, please contact Francis Bourke – Operations Director 01803 863550.

This could be an opportunity to work as a consumer group, where you can give first hand experience of what we do well, and maybe not so well.

Plans for Improvement Update of Action Plan for 2017

Action

Upgrade telephone system at SDR and Forder Lane House.

Upgrade Housing Management System (OMNI) including image management, and supporting tenants to access their Housing Accounts.

Establish a tenant panel and recruit tenant board members.

Review and implement a plan for alternative heating systems.

Deliver 121 advice to tenants on Welfare Reform, and produce a Welfare Reform Action Plan.

Update

The phone systems have now been upgraded, with a more modern, efficient cost effective system.

A number of upgrades have been implemented including My Tenancy, where customers can access their rent accounts, personal data and report repairs. SDR has purchased Image Management and this will be implemented throughout 2017, to support an improved electronic document managed system.

Further to promoting tenant panels, SDR still need to generate more interest this year to enable setting up an established panel.

SDR have installed a number of new heating systems, as an alternative to storage heaters, and are continuing to research further alternatives.

A Welfare Reform Action plan has been drafted and the housing team are working with tenants regarding the impact of Welfare Reform.

Strategy

Action Plan for 2017/18

- Review and implement further plans for alternative heating systems.
- Implement Image Management on the Housing Management System, to support Electronic Document Management, to support improvement in efficiencies and service.
- Improve Asset Management Information on the Housing System to support improved business analysis.
- Develop business opportunities through Rural Homes Limited.
- Install computer console in SDH to enable tenants to access benefits and housing advice.

Value For Money: How are we doing?

Information Technology (IT)

Websites for the Totnes Work Hub, SDR, Forder Lane House and Rural Homes Ltd have been updated. These changes include a more customer friendly version which can be accessed from any mobile phone or Ipad through an app. SDR have also set up facebook and Twitter accounts, please visit & follow us.



Further upgrades on SDR's housing management system (OMNI) to include image management and tenants access to their tenancy account.

SDR have implemented a new telephone system, which will support improved customer service and business analysis.

SDR have invested in planned maintenance modules, to support improvement of projections and decision making in this area.

These new systems also allow us to deliver a more efficient service and also allows us to gain improved business analysis.

Solar Panels

Further to the installation of solar panels on a number of SDR properties, through SDR funding or working in partnership with local community providers, this supports customers in reducing their fuel bills and also reduces the carbon footprint.



During the year ended 31 March 2017 SDR received income of **£16,409** from our photovoltaic cells which are on **77** of our properties.

Responsive Repairs

Further to the outcome of the responsive repairs pilot in 2014/15, WMS have been managing SDR's responsive repairs throughout 2015/16, and 2016/17. There has been a continued reduction in costs and increase in customer satisfaction. This arrangement will continue during 2017/18 and will be reviewed regularly through budget meetings and contract meetings, with a possible view of a more formal arrangement.

Customer satisfaction in this area has improved, and recorded at **98%** in qtr 4 2016/17.



This decision supports SDR's Value for Money objectives, as there will be a benefit in resources such as staff time, and allowing SDR more time to focus on compliance and business analysis. SDR will retain some key contractors for some works, such as gas servicing.

Asset Strategy (Social Value)

SDR have increased the planned maintenance budget for the next 4 years. This will allow SDR to meet and exceed targets to replace components in customers homes, such as Kitchens, Bathrooms, & Heating systems.

Our Value for Money Self Assessment:

To remain compliant with our regulator, in addition to having a proactive approach and evidencing VFM activities, we are required to provide a self assessment/statement annually, by September. The self assessment will include evidence of how we are achieving VFM, such as the examples given in this report.

SOCIAL MEDIA – SDR have updated their Facebook and Twitter accounts for South Devon Rural Housing and the Totnes Work Hub, please visit us. You will find that people wishing to exchange or swap their home, post on our Facebook page.



SOUTH DEVON RURAL
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Income and Expenditure

ASSOCIATION STATEMENT OF COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2017

	2017 £'000	2016 £'000
TURNOVER	2,140	2,003
Operating costs	(1,603)	(1,534)
OPERATING SURPLUS	537	469
Gain on disposal of property, plant and equipment (fixed assets)	203	221
Interest receivable	2	4
Interest and financing costs	(475)	(429)
Fair value gain/(loss)	(21)	(6)
SURPLUS ON ORDINARY ACTIVITIES BEFORE TAXATION	246	259
Tax on surplus on ordinary activities	-	-
SURPLUS FOR THE YEAR and TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR	246	259

These financial statements were approved by the Board on 19th July 2017.
The association results relate wholly to continuing activities.



(from L to R)

Solar panels at Sutcliffe Close, funded by SDR.

Friendship Court, in Mary Tavy had storage heaters replaced with new Eco heating system

Broomborough Court.

Balance Sheet

ASSOCIATION STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION AS AT 31 MARCH 2017

	2017 £'000	2016 £'000
FIXED ASSETS		
Housing properties	17,575	15,594
Other Fixed Assets	360	485
Investment Properties	360	250
Investments	10	10
Investment in Subsidiary	15	10
Total fixed assets	18,320	16,349
CURRENT ASSETS		
Debtors	64	92
Assets Held for sale	112	68
Cash at bank and in hand	776	625
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	952	785
	(645)	(570)
NET CURRENT ASSETS	307	215
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	18,627	16,564
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due after more than one year	(12,642)	(10,804)
Deferred Capital Grant	(4,930)	(4,951)
LONG TERM LIABILITIES	(17,572)	(15,755)
TOTAL NET ASSETS	1,055	809
RESERVES		
Non-equity share capital	-	-
Income and Expenditure Reserve	1,055	809
TOTAL RESERVES	1,055	809