

We have **vacancies** at our care home. *A safe caring, homely environment.*

When looking for a care home, you need to feel that the care and services provided meet or exceed your expectations. At Forder Lane House we focus on the individual, their needs, preferences and aspirations. Driven by an individual care plan, our team aims to balance care and support to maintain independence, along with encouragement to lead an active lifestyle wherever possible. Our friendly, homely atmosphere allows each resident to continue their daily life in a dignified way, with a high level of privacy, knowing that care and support is always available.



Please call us for more information 01803 863532



SOUTH DEVON RURAL
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED

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Registered England and Wales
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We are open from 8.45 am to 4.45pm Monday – Friday

An Exempt Charity. South Devon Rural Housing Association Limited is a registered society under the Cooperative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014 and The Homes and Communities Agency No. LH0920.



Totnes work hub – a South Devon Rural Housing enterprise

www.totnesworkhub.co.uk

Spring/Summer Newsletter

Inside this issue:

CEO's welcome message | RHL's new Development Manager | Rent-to-buy partnership formed | Brimhay scheme enters final phase | SDR website refresh | Elmhirst tenant's fund-raiser | Jubilee party photos | RSPB gardening tips | Action on Housing shortage | Barbecue burger recipe | Birdsearch puzzle

Spring/Summer 2022



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SOUTH DEVON RURAL
HOUSING ASSOCIATION LIMITED





Now we can really start to spread our wings!

By Christine Candlish, CEO

Spring is well and truly in the air now – and we can look forward to lighter evenings, warmer days and our world opening up again in ways to gladden our hearts!

And Spring has most definitely sprung here at SDR, where the green shoots of progress are all around us. There are lots of exciting developments in the pipeline that will carry us forward strongly towards the goals set out in our Corporate Plan.

Like the rest of the world, we're starting to put the troublesome two years of the pandemic behind us – whilst of course maintaining a heightened sense of awareness, remaining vigilant and maintaining high standards of care and hygiene to protect our residents.

Expertise

I'd like to extend a warm welcome to Jay Lambe, who joined us in April as Development Manager at Rural Homes Limited, the development arm of SDR, where new projects are planned and delivered with expertise and our usual exacting high standards.

I'm also pleased to congratulate Jo Pammenter, who is stepping up from her role as Deputy Manager at our Forder Lane House Care Home to take charge of operations there.

On a corporate level, the most exciting news is our recently announced partnership with English rent-to-buy homes champions Rentplus. I'm delighted to have them as partners so that together we can realise our shared ambition to help more local people get on the property ladder through buying their own homes.

Rentplus is a proven affordable rent-to-buy scheme that operates across England. Tenants move in with no deposit and pay affordable rent for between five and 20 years. This gives them time to save a deposit and build a good credit rating.

When they are ready to buy, Rentplus gifts them 10% of the purchase price to boost their savings and enable them to purchase 100% of their home.

We will work together to allocate homes through Devon Home Choice, the local authority lettings system, and will announce the schemes as they become ready.

Carrying on with the Spring into Summer theme, I do hope you enjoy the leisure pages of your newsletter, where we aim to inform you and encourage you to try something new in the garden and in the kitchen.

See inside for some seasonal advice from this issue's partners – the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB), who want us to do all we can to encourage more wild birds in our communities.

Cookery Corner is all about getting outside and enjoying the social side of life with a barbecue.

I'd like to end by wishing our Elmhirst Court tenant Able Sharp the very best of luck with his bid to raise £20,000 for a new stand-up segway mobility aid.



Rural Homes appoints new Development Manager

Jay Lambe (pictured right) has been appointed Development Manager at Rural Homes Ltd. – a wholly-owned subsidiary of SDR.

As a community-led homes accredited adviser and project manager, Jay supports affordable housing delivery across the South West and has a passion for engaging with and empowering communities to pursue their vision for creating affordable housing and community assets.

Diverse

She has worked on community-led housing projects and initiatives nationally, but primarily across Devon, Dorset and Somerset in her role as Associate with Middlemarch CLH and as a Director of the Confederation of Co-operative Housing.

Over time Jay has gained an extensive and diverse range of

development and housing delivery experience across both public and private sectors and as a result is able to employ this experience to provide practical and technical support and advice to community groups, Local Authorities and development partners.

She said of her new role: "I'm looking forward to working with RHL, using my skills and experience to help deliver its ambitious plans for expansion whilst keeping tenants and communities at its core".

James Gurpinar, Managing Director of Rural Homes Ltd., commented: "We're very excited that Jay has joined our growing team at RHL. Jay's depth of experience and knowledge of the sector will support the delivery of our affordable housing projects and she will be able to make an invaluable contribution to the growth of the group's services in the future".

Jo Pammenter steps up to take charge of our Forder Lane House Care Home

Jo Pammenter (pictured right) has stepped up from her position as Deputy Manager to take charge of our Forder Lane House Care Home, following the departure of the previous manager.

Jo has been working at Forder Lane House since November 2021 and had previously worked in the care sector for a number of years. She is experienced in caring for the elderly and earlier in her career held a number of administrative roles within the medical profession.

She says she's enjoying working with the team at Forder Lane House as their new Manager and also getting to know her colleagues at South Devon Rural Housing.





SDR forms new partnership with rent-to-buy champion

New alliance boosts dreams of home ownership for many in South West

Rentplus-UK and South Devon Rural Housing Association (SDR) are forming a new partnership to offer more affordable rent-to-buy homes across the whole of Devon, plus parts of the east side of Dorset and Somerset.

Rentplus is a proven affordable rent-to-buy scheme operating across England. Tenants move in with no deposit and pay affordable rent for between five and 20 years. This gives them time to save a deposit and build a good credit rating.



Steve Collins, Rentplus CEO, said: *“This new partnership between Rentplus and SDR means more affordable rent-to-buy housing will be available to local aspiring home-owners. We look forward to delivering more affordable rent-to-buy homes in South Devon, turning local renters into home-owners”.*

ASPIRATIONS

Christine Candlish, SDR Chief Executive, added: *“We’re delighted to be working with Rentplus and are looking forward to helping local people realise their home ownership aspirations.”*

“Having more Rentplus homes in Devon will help local people to stay living and working in the area. This supports delivery of a key objective of SDR’s corporate strategy, enabling working people to create homes where they want to live and bring up their children, whilst helping to nurture stable communities in the longer term”.

The partners will work together to allocate homes through Devon Home Choice, the local authority lettings system, and will announce the schemes as they become ready.

ABOVE: Typical Rentplus developments in Devon.

Christine Candlish

Steve Collins



BOOST SAVINGS

When they are ready to buy, Rentplus gifts them 10% of the purchase price to boost their savings and enable them to purchase 100% of their home.

In 2021, the first renters who moved into Rentplus homes without any deposit in Plymouth and Sherborne were able to purchase their home after just five years. Many had managed to save a significant sum, which together with the gifted 10%, meant they had equity of 20-25% in their home from day one and could access a high street mortgage.

Rentplus has already identified several sites across Devon where it might initially offer nearly 50 affordable rent-to-buy homes to deliver home ownership for local working people in partnership with SDR.

Four more Brimhay homes sold as final phase of building gets under way

Our ambitious mixed development housing project at Brimhay, Dartington, is entering its final phase. First conceived in 2014, planning permission was granted in 2018 for the demolition of 18 outdated 1960s bungalows and complete redevelopment of the site bordering our Forder Lane House Care Home.

A block of 12 apartments for the over 50s came first, followed by 11 apartments for people with learning difficulties – all built to exacting standards. Funded partially by grant aid from Homes England and by the sale of 12 market value homes, the project is nearing completion.

The latest four market value homes are ready for their new owners to move in. Work to build the final three homes has begun and all of these are already reserved. Brimhay embodies our vision of a decent home for all.

- All the market value homes at Brimhay are either sold or reserved.



SDR website gets a fresh new look EASIER ON THE EYE AND SIMPLER TO NAVIGATE

Our corporate website has been given a facelift – with a fresh new modern look and some improvements to the tools our visitors use to navigate their way round the site.

The latest news is displayed on the Home Page, along with some great new photos of SDR assets and buildings.

The tabs have been refined and reorganised to make it easier to find your way to the information or service that you’re looking for.

The new-look site includes direct links to our two main sister sites – Forder Lane House and Rural Homes Ltd.

<https://southdevonrural.co.uk/>



Screenshot of SDR’s new-look Home Page

SDR boosts fund for Able's stand-up mobility 'segway'

Tenant hit by devastating childhood illness is now seeking robotic mobility aid

The village of Dartington took a young resident to their hearts as they watched him bounce back from the devastating impact of a potentially killer disease.

Now the village is backing Able Sharp again as he organises an ambitious fund-raiser for the next stage in his drive to gain more independent living – a £20,000 Robotic Mobility Device.

As Able's landlords – SDR were among the first to boost their disabled tenant's GoFundMe campaign with a £1,000 donation. The fund notched up over £3,000 in the first 10 days and stood at £17,000 as we went to press.

The 25-year-old is a popular figure in the community and everyone was delighted when he moved into one of SDR's new apartments at Brimhay – designed for people with learning difficulties and mobility issues to get a taste of independent living.

Now Able wants to take his independence to the next level and has launched an online campaign to raise the £20,000. And the community is backing him all the way!

The money will pay for a 'TekRMD' – a revolutionary mobility aid that enables people who would normally use a wheelchair to move around in the standing position, a bit like a 'segway' personal transporter.

Recovery

Able made headlines over two decades ago when he contracted and survived meningitis as a toddler. The story of his recovery from septicaemia made national news as he was named the "Bus Stop Baby".

Since then, his rehabilitation following brain damage and severe mobility issues caused by the condition has been well documented. He even went on to do a 15,000ft charity skydive in 2018 to support the Dame Hannah Rogers Trust.

At his home: Able with support worker Cassie and the family dog Merry.



"I am so sincerely grateful that the community have put their arms around Able. As his Mum it means so much to me.

"Living in Dartington, Able will never be alone. Wherever he goes he's always welcomed with warmth and generosity.

"When Able eventually reaches his target and is zooming around in his Tek RMD, he'll be thrilled to do a 'victory lap' of the village and say a huge and heartfelt thankyou to everyone for making it possible!"

SDR Chief Executive Christine Candlish said: "Able is a great example of the kind of person we had in mind when we built Elmhirst Court. He's shown how much someone with learning difficulties and other issues can benefit from getting a taste of independent living, whilst remaining in the community where they have love and support.

Support

"We're delighted to play our part in helping Able attain his next step towards greater mobility and independence through this cutting-edge piece of kit. He's a great ambassador for the disabled community and an example to us all in overcoming adversity and living life to the full".

To find out more or to donate, please go to:
<https://gofund.me/57f3cfcb>
Or Google GoFundMe and search Fund Tek RMD Motorised Standing Device for Able

(Top left) Fund-raising: Able Sharp today.

(Below) The revolutionary TekRMD mobility aid.

Able, now 25, moved into his own specially designed apartment at Elmhirst Court, Brimhay, in autumn 2021, since when he has made new friends and is gaining more independence every day – but still has continuing problems posed by his inability to move around in a standing position.

The motorised standing device can change all that, giving him the option of getting around his flat and outside in an upright position. The sole supplier in the UK is Anatomical Concepts Ltd. in Scotland.

Active

Able's mother, Alex, said: "Able depends on various equipment and mobility aids to enable him to be active and move around. But with these he's either stationary in a fixed standing position or needs assistance from others to push him. "It's essential for Able to be up on his feet. There are so many benefits associated with weight-bearing, primarily to prevent his bones from becoming brittle, keep his muscles strong and to aid function of his lungs, heart and digestion.

"The RMD enables people to move around whilst standing up, so Able can be out and about, go to the shops or to gigs, reach everything he needs and be on the same eye level as everyone else. It's the next best thing to walking.

"Our local community has really embraced Able and given so much love and support towards the fund-raiser. The village pub, garage and local businesses have put up posters, shared Able's info on all their social media and are planning ways to boost his campaign.





Happy and Glorious

Care Home Residents celebrate Monarch's 70 Years on Throne

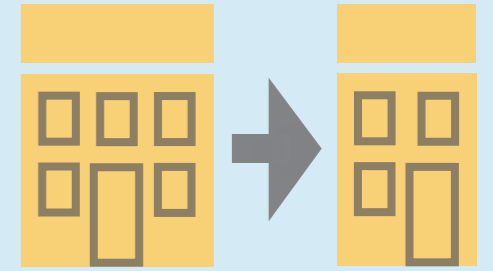
Staff at our Forder Lane House Care Home in Dartington made sure residents enjoyed a right royal celebration on the final day of Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee weekend – 5th June.

The party area was decorated with all the patriotic trappings you'd expect. Residents wearing special hats tucked into to a Jubilee high tea of sandwiches and scones with cream and jam. They also enjoyed music and laughter as they toasted the Queen.

Many of the residents are of an age where they can remember the announcement of Her Majesty's accession to the throne in 1952, as well as her actual Coronation in 1953, and each has happy memories of those times.

ACTION TO TACKLE HOUSING SHORTAGE

Would up to **£5,000** cash encourage YOU to move to a smaller home?



Some South Hams tenants could be in line for a cash payout of up to **£5,000** if they downsize and free up their home for a family that is struggling in cramped conditions.

The South Hams District Council (SHDC) downsizing scheme is open to anyone who currently rents a home that is bigger than they currently need through a housing association or social housing registered provider.

It is hoped that a bigger cash incentive and practical support will help more people to make a move to ease the current shortage of larger three and four-bedroom homes available for local families.

The scheme would help tenants to downsize to smaller homes as their household needs change – for example when children grow up and move out. This in turn helps the council to free up some of the area's larger homes for younger families in need.

SHDC has introduced an extra 'High Demand Area' payment of £2,500. This has been introduced due to the current shortage of larger family homes in the area. The total amount of money local people could receive depends on how many bedrooms are released by the move.

Downsizers will receive:

- A fixed payment of £1,000
- An additional 'High Demand Area' payment of £2,500
- £500 per bedroom released.

So, if you move from a four-bedroom property to a two-bedroom home you will receive £4,500. The maximum total amount you can receive is capped at £5,000.

Find out more about the downsizing offer at: www.southhams.gov.uk/article/8651/Would-up-to-5-000-cash-help-you-move-to-a-smaller-home

Step On Grant can help South Hams step out of the housing crisis

We're pleased to help in promoting an innovative new pilot scheme to support local people in getting on the housing ladder and boost the number of homes available at an affordable rent.

South Hams District Council's Step On Grant Scheme, which launched on 1 April, offers up to £5,000 to anyone currently renting a social housing property to help them purchase a shared ownership home.

With house prices rocketing and the number of rental properties hitting rock bottom, South Hams District Council (SHDC) has looked beyond traditional solutions to pull the district out of the current housing crisis.

The Step On grant scheme offers practical support to help more local people step on the housing ladder while freeing up more homes for rent at an affordable price. Believed to be the first of its kind in the UK, the pioneering scheme is part of a suite of initiatives* planned by SHDC to tackle the housing shortage.





A special 'Spring into Summer' gardening feature – working with national wildlife charity the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds

In this issue of your newsletter, we're working with the RSPB to bring you some seasonal gardening tips. These will not only enhance the appearance of your outdoor space this summer, but give you the extra satisfaction of knowing you're doing YOUR bit to encourage wild birds to flourish. There's nothing like seeing a variety of wild birds landing near your deckchair or outside your kitchen window!

Garden advice for June

If your garden has dense cover, such as thick hedges, you may attract summer visitors, such as the willow warbler and chiffchaff (pictured right), which breed from May to July. All the warblers are shy birds and can be difficult to spot.

If you get tiny pests such as aphids on your plants, it's best to avoid spraying, as pesticides will also kill ladybirds and other helpful insects. Many birds, such as tits, will eat insect pests. Greenfly and aphids can be washed off with a dilute solution of washing-up liquid.

If you've gaps in the flower border there's still time to fill them with quick-growing annuals grown from seed. You can also buy flowers in pots from garden centres, but they will need to be watered in well and kept moist once planted.

It is less work in the long run to opt for perennials that will flower year after year, or wild flowers. Foxgloves are one of our most spectacular native wild flowers; red campion is a similar shade and makes an ideal companion, while ragged robin is an even deeper pink with delicately cut petals that will brighten up damper corners.



June jobs for the month

- Trim box or privet if it is growing rapidly, but first check there are no nesting birds
- Prune spring flowering shrubs such as lilac, spiraea, forsythia and broom as soon as they have finished flowering
- Give spring flowering meadows their first cut at the end of this month
- Spread a mulch of compost or shredded bark around trees, shrubs and roses when the soil is moist
- Plant up containers and hanging baskets with annuals
- If you have been growing plants from seed inside the greenhouse, take them outside to acclimatise before planting
- Sow vegetable crops, such as a lettuce mix, or courgettes directly into the soil, and try some in large pots.

Garden advice for July

Even if you haven't got a garden, it's possible to grow plants in pots on a sunny balcony or patio. Try petunias, convolvulus, phacelia, or pot marigolds, and dead-head them regularly to encourage fresh flowering. You can also grow herbs such as thyme and marjoram. However, you'll need to water all pot plants regularly in the summer – daily if it doesn't rain.

Climate change could bring hotter and drier summers. Mediterranean plants, which often have grey leaves, are good at withstanding summer drought. Try lavender, artemisia, cistus, helianthemum (rock rose), rosemary, Spanish broom, salvias, lambs ears, catmint and aubrietia.

The benefits of water

Water is a precious resource, so consider carefully whether you need to water your lawn and borders. Collect rainwater in a butt – see photo below.

If your lawn looks brown, it will recover once it rains. You can try letting the grass grow a bit longer. If you have a patch that tends to go brown regularly, consider creating a gravel garden in this area. Applying mulch to borders when the ground is wet after rain will help retain moisture.



Female blackbird feeding on worms in long grass.

Wild lawns

Lawns provide a home for lots of different insects that are eaten by birds and other wildlife. Those rich in organic matter are likely to have good numbers of earthworms – the staple winter and spring diet of song thrushes and much loved by blackbirds!

Lawns can also provide seed for birds. Those of annual meadow grass, plantain, buttercup and dandelion are particular favourites.

Any area of short grass will act as a feeding area for birds. Longer grass provides shelter and egg-laying opportunities for the insects on which birds and other wildlife feed.

You can improve your lawn for birds and wildlife by simply avoiding the use of weed killers and artificial fertilisers, or go a step further and look at alternative ways to manage your lawn and introduce variation to your grass.

More tips on the RSPB website:
www.rspb.org.uk



TIME TO ENJOY FRESHLY COOKED FOOD IN THE GREAT OUTDOORS

NHS 'HEALTHY EATING' RECIPE FOR CHILLI BEEF AND BEANBURGER

Wake up everyone's taste buds with some yummy food from the barbecue!



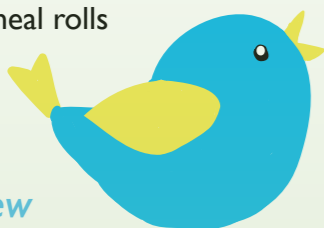
Ingredients

Burgers

- 1 small onion, quartered
- small can (about 210g) red kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 250g lean beef mince (or vegan mince alternative)
- wholemeal breadcrumbs (from 1 slice of bread)
- 2 teaspoons mild chilli powder, or to taste
- 1 egg, beaten (or vegan egg substitute)
- 1 tablespoon tomato purée

To serve

- 1 extra-large tomato, sliced
- 1 red onion, sliced
- lettuce leaves
- 4 wholemeal rolls



Leave a few crumbs for me!

Method*

1. Chop the onion in a food processor, then add the beans, mince, breadcrumbs, chilli powder, beaten egg and tomato purée, and mix again.
2. Shape the mixture into 4 patties and chill until you're ready to cook.
3. Barbecue or grill for 5 to 7 minutes each side.
4. Serve in the rolls, with sliced onion and tomato, and lettuce leaves.

* If you prefer a chunkier texture, mash the beans with a fork or potato masher, chop the onions by hand and then mix with the other ingredients. Serve with corn on the cob and potato wedges for a complete meal. Add ketchup or relish to taste.

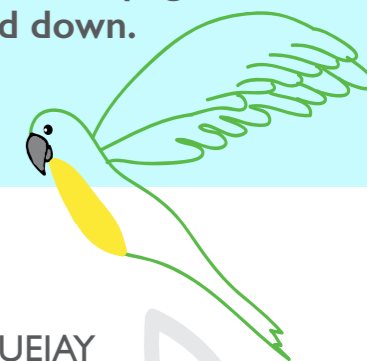
SPRING INTO SUMMER
It's Coffee Break Time!



Can you spot the 21 common bird names hidden in our Summer 'Birdsearch' puzzle?

Here's a fun way to spend your next coffee break - solving our mind-bending Summer Birdsearch.

Can you pick out the 21 bird names nesting in the grid on this page? Words are horizontal, vertical and diagonal, both up and down. Good luck!



- BLUEJAY
- CHICKEN
- COCKATOO
- CROW
- DOVE
- DUCK
- EAGLE
- FINCH
- GOOSE
- HUMMINGBIRD
- MALLARD
- PARROT
- PHEASANT
- PIGEON
- RAVEN
- SNOWYOWL
- SPARROW
- STARLING
- SWALLOW
- SWAN
- WREN

S I J V R U F D S P A R R O W
O C H U M M I N G B I R D K N
C S H L H Q X A T D U K Y E E
S K S I V V Z Q T W H B V L V
D H B P C N T Q X Z H A G N A
B D U C K K S W A N R A V C Z
G P W B L U E J A Y E N X E U
P O I Y P S Y N S W A L L O W
H X O G S N O W Y O W L O C C
E I F S E K T U I A K S W R N
A W S U E O R Y F I B M R O U
S L B U R X N I G I Q C E W E
A D Z R S T A R L I N G N V U
N M A L L A R D B J Y C O X M
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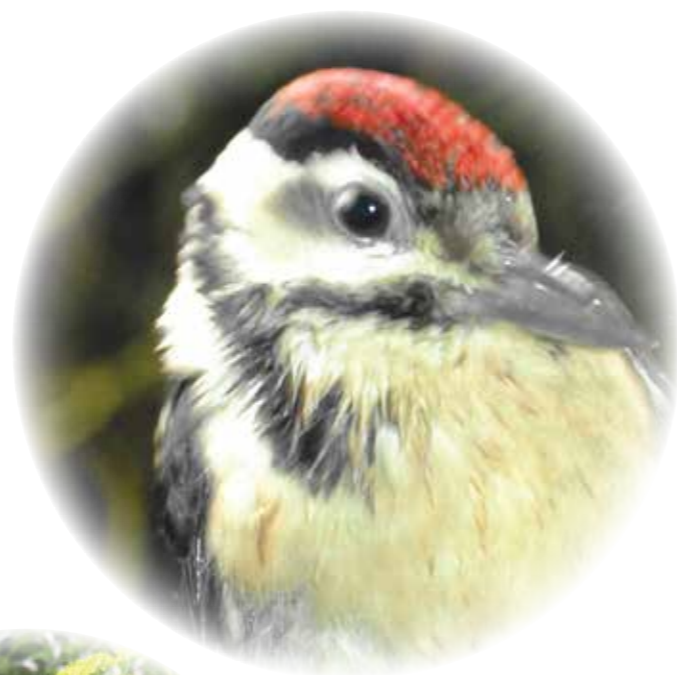
More of Steve Taylor's stunning garden photos...

In our Winter issue, we published a few of the stunning photos that SDR tenant Steve Taylor took in his garden at Dartington.

In this special wildlife Spring into Summer issue, we're showing a few more of Steve's splendid shots, including of course a relatively rare sighting of a Greater Spotted Woodpecker. Just what the RSPB ordered!

If you've enjoyed seeing Steve's photos, why not share some photos from YOUR garden? Please send them to us at:
info@southdevonrural.com

top right: Greater Spotted Woodpecker,
below: Clematis, right: Fennel,
bottom right: Allium



How does your garden grow?

Send us your bloom photos!



SDR monitor performance in a number of ways, to ensure quality of customer service and value for money is achieved. One of the ways we monitor performance is by using Key Performance Indicators (KPI's). Results from these regular checks on key areas are monitored, analysed and acted on by the management team, and also reported to SDR's Board.

These indicators cover a number of operational areas, such as repairs, allocations, rent arrears and anti-social behaviour.

Please see table below on how SDR are doing on some of the main KPI's. Green indicators show we are meeting or exceeding targets.

Performance Dashboard

	Performance 2020/21	QTR 1 (Apr - Jun)	QTR 2 (July - Sep)	QTR 3 (Oct - Dec)	QTR 4 (Jan - Mar)	Target 2021-22
ASSET MANAGEMENT						
Annual Gas Safety Checks Completed	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Emergency Repairs	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
Urgent Repairs	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	95%
Repairs/Contractor Satisfaction	100%				100%	90%
RENT ARREARS						
GN Tenant Rent arrears as % of annual debit	0.52%	0.45%	0.58%	0.93%	0.58%	1.00%
ALLOCATION AND VOID MANAGEMENT						
Void loss on homes as a % of gross rent	0.07%	0.37%	0.36%	0.56%	0.44%	1.00%
Average relet time (excluding major works)	36	N/A	44	74	78	14

Out of target: 1 property due to complex legal termination after death; 1 property, tenant delayed in signing up due to Covid; delays with contractors on void works.