

# Improvement Objectives

## IO5 - Investment in Council homes to transform lives and communities.

### Outcomes:

Everyone in Wales should have the opportunity to live in a good quality home within a safe and secure community. To help achieve this, the physical standard and condition of existing housing must be maintained and improved to the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS). The WHQS is a minimum standard for homes. The core elements are that homes:

- are in a good state of repair
- are safe and secure
- are adequately heated
- fuel efficient and well insulated
- contain up-to-date kitchens and bathrooms
- are well managed (for rented housing)
- are located in attractive and safe environments
- as far as possible suit the specific requirements of the household, for example, catering for specific disabilities.

We will aim to ensure all council homes meet WHQS, which will improve the quality of life for people who live in those homes. We will develop long-term arrangements, which will help sustain local jobs, offer skills development and training opportunities and deliver wider community benefits. By 2020 we want our communities to know:

- We delivered the best quality home improvements scheme to our tenants as promised in the Offer Document.
- We did it with them and not to them
- Their homes created real jobs in our communities
- We delivered the whole project on time and in budget

These ambitions can only be achieved with the entire council and tenants and other key stakeholders working together and we are confident that with their support this programme will transform council homes, the lives of our citizens and our communities.

A greener place to live, work and visit  
Man gwyrddach i fyw, gweithio ac ymweld



# Improvement Objectives

## End of year Summary

In terms of overall performance made throughout the year against this Objective we have made steady progress.

Although the figure for the number of homes that have achieved WHQS standards during the year will not be available until the end of July, in excess of 600 properties have benefitted from internal improvements undertaken by the in house workforce. There has been some slippage into April/May 2014, but additional properties were added to the original 2013/14 programme.

Experience over the year has shown that only limited reliance can be placed on the stock condition database and that the individual property survey is the only means to determine the full scope of work. The timing of the surveys are therefore critical to maintaining continuity of work for both the in house work force and contractors. The demand for Occupational Therapy referrals has been significantly underestimated causing a potential bottleneck in planning the work programme.

Customer Satisfaction reached 92% over the year, well above our target of 80%. We have also set up the Caerphilly Homes Task Group (CHTG) which is now well established and ensures that tenants are actively involved.

In June 2013 the supply partner contract was awarded to local SME Robert Price. This is a 10-year managed service contract to supply all materials for the in house workforce and key components for contractors. Community benefits and targeted recruitment and training is a key element of this contract. Robert Price have taken on several young people from the council's Passport Programme, taking one through to permanent employment. The next 12 months will see more changes, which includes supplying all products for reactive maintenance within the housing service. There are challenging times ahead, but Robert Price are committed to working with the council to achieve the targets set.

Unfortunately uncertainty arose over the Environmental Programme and it was deferred to 2019/20. As a result 7 actions connected to the programme were unable to be carried out.

Of the remaining actions 7 were completed and a further 5 actions are either partially completed or in progress, as detailed in the following tables.

A full monitoring report on the 2013/14 financial year will be presented to the Caerphilly Homes Tasks Group (CHTG) and a special P&R Scrutiny Committee in July 2014.

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### Risks

Period	Title	Original Date	Original RAG	Original Likelihood of occurrence	Original Impact	RAG	Likelihood of occurrence	Impact	Comment
Q4 13/14	01. Government policy changes may result in loss of income to HRA and affect the ability to fund the WHQS Programme.		◆	4	5	◆	4	5	There has been an increase in debt but this has not exceeded the % increase that was incorporated in the updated WHQS business plan for 2013/14. Discussions are ongoing in respect of the HRAS buyout which is anticipated to happen in April 2015.
Q4 13/14	02. Asbestos surveys must be completed prior to works being undertaken in order that appropriate arrangements can be made to deal with asbestos content.		◆	5	5	◆	5	5	Delay in receipt of surveys will disrupt programme. Interim arrangements in place pending procurement of new framework for asbestos surveys anticipated late 2014.
Q4 13/14	03. Failure of relationships with stakeholder groups may result in conflict and adverse publicity.		◆	4	5	◆	3	4	Revised terms of reference for Caerphilly Homes Task Group approved at Council in April 2014.
Q4 13/14	04. Organisation structure / delivery has to be fit for purpose and aligned to programme.		◆	5	4	◆	5	4	Slippage to the property surveying programme has identified a new risk area within the organisation structure. Project Board has taken action to address this risk. Demand for Occupational Therapy referrals has become a programming problem.
Q4 13/14	05. Culture could hold back introduction of customer-focused service.		◆	5	4	◆	4	3	HR workplan introduced. Strategic HR support in place and training modules delivered on equalities, change management and PDRs.
Q4 13/14	06. Changes to Business Plan may affect viability and adversely affect the target date for compliance with WHQS.		◆	4	5	◆	4	5	Meeting with Welsh Government on MRA application for 2014/15 has made clear the business plan must remain viable and deliver WHQS by 2019/20. MRA at risk if it cannot be demonstrated the timetable will be met. MRA approval for 2014/15 outstanding.
Q4 13/14	07. Challenges to tender process – (New) will cause delays to procurement of new contracts.		◆	4	5	◆	4	5	Any challenges or claims could cause delays. Subject to consideration of Cabinet report internal works contracts may commence October 2014 resulting in 6 months slippage. Slippage on external works anticipated to be longer and course of action being recommended to CHTG/Cabinet May/June 2014.
Q4 13/14	08. IT development – (New) is required to improve efficiency of processes and if not advanced will set back programme.		◆	5	5	◆	3	3	Approval given to recruit additional IT post. Slow progress on IT developments is ongoing concern to efficient delivery of programme. IT Manager now attending Project Board to report progress.
Q4 13/14	09. Keystone and its use for contract management – (New) ambitious target set for use of Keystone as management tool but reliability is dependant on buy in from whole team.		◆	5	5	◆	2	4	Inputting of external works contracts within keystone have been delayed. There are technical issues that remain unresolved and timescale is unknown.

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### Actions

Period	Title	Comment	Overall Status	% Complete	RAG
Q4 13/14	01. The WHQS programme is subject to management and monitoring at a number of levels including work stream lead officers, WHQS project managers, project board, Caerphilly Homes task group / Cabinet sub committee.	Action completed. A programme structure is in place and needs to be sustained.	Complete	100	🟢
Q4 13/14	02a. Procure and award works contracts - Internal and external works contracts at tender stage due to be awarded by December 2013	This action is incomplete. Contract awards remain on hold causing ongoing programme slippage. Report to CHTG (May 2014) and Cabinet (June 2014)	In Progress	95	🔴
Q4 13/14	02b. Procure and award works contracts - DLO Sub Contract Framework to be awarded Sept 2013	Action completed, Sub Contract Framework is operational.	Complete	100	🟢
Q4 13/14	02c. Procure and award works contracts - small lots arrangements are under consideration	Action partially completed. PQQ completed, contractors awarded to value bands - first tender anticipated May 2014.	In Progress	70	🟡
Q4 13/14	03. Develop an engagement plan as prelude to environmental programme working with residents on the council's housing estates. Commitment has been given to develop priorities for environmental improvements working with residents on the council's housing estates	Action incomplete. No progress due to environmental programme being deferred to 2019/20.	Not Started	0	🔴
Q4 13/14	04. Additional staff resources need to be recruited to strengthen the WHQS team and manage the large increase in the volume of works which will double from April 2014.	Action partially completed. Staff resources remain under review. Approval given to appoint additional OT Officer. Appointment of environmental officers deferred. New critical areas are TLO's, COW, Surveyors.	In Progress	50	🟡
Q4 13/14	05. We will work with tenants to actively involve them in WHQS by running Caerphilly Homes Task Group and other key work groups.	<p>Action completed. Tenants are actively involved through the CHTG, the Repairs and Improvement Group, the CSIMS and the Older Persons Group. They have all met on a number of occasions during 13/14.</p> <p>The CHTG meets every 6 weeks to review and make recommendations on the overall strategic direction and allocation of WHQS and Housing Service resources. The group is a consultative group relating to all public housing services, monitors WHQS progress and service improvement commitments, ensures WHQS is consistent with the council's regeneration strategy. The group makes recommendations to Policy and Resources/ Cabinet as appropriate. The documents the group reviews include Sheltered Housing Review, Community Improvement Fund, Housing Improvement Partnership, welfare reform etc.</p> <p>The Repairs and Improvements Group is split into two groups – (1) Repairs and (2) Improvements. The group meets every two weeks has been established to ensure that all repairs and WHQS improvement work is carried out to a high standard and that tenants are getting value for money. Members are involved in the planning, programming, procurement, design, specification, selection and monitoring for all repair and improvement works.</p> <p>Caerphilly Service Improvement Monitors (CSIMS) was set up to monitor the service provided to tenants and feedback the results. The CSIMS are looking at the experience tenants have had with their WHQS</p>	Complete	100	🟢

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Period	Title	Comment	Overall Status	% Complete	RAG
Q4 13/14	06. Implement actions from Communications Strategy, which is designed to cover the first three-year period with monitoring and evaluation of its achievements. It will also set in place development of a clear brand identity.	Action completed. A communications strategy action plan is required for 2014. Actions implemented during the year included activities to increase methods of engaging informally with tenants, e.g. community events, social media etc. Work is also ongoing to develop consistent brand for Caerphilly Homes, with the production of numerous communications materials to support work of housing service, e.g. tenant information packs to support the work of TLO function, materials to promote tenant involvement activities. Work has also commenced in reviewing existing structure and content of Caerphilly Homes Internet pages.	Complete	100	🟢
Q4 13/14	07. The community will benefit from clauses in contracts that will help local people receive training and gain employment. Contracts given to improve the standards of housing will include targeted recruitment and training to create employment and training opportunities for local people.	Action partially completed. Progress made in respect of supply partner contract. Further action dependant on decisions regarding internal and external works contracts. Reports on the latter to CHTG (May 2014) and Cabinet (June 2014).	In Progress	50	🟡
Q4 13/14	08. We will implement environmental improvement programmes that will mean that our Council estates will be safe and attractive environments to live in, complimenting quality houses.	Action incomplete. No progress was made due to the uncertainty that arose over the environmental programme. The timing of the latter has been put back to 2019/20 and the related actions are now likely to be deferred to later in the programme.	Not Started	0	🔴
Q4 13/14	09. We will select one supplier on a 10-year contract to supply materials ensuring improved efficiency and our commitment to the local economy. This will enable a long-term relationship to be developed, helping to sustain local jobs and provide consistent high quality materials for our homes.	Action completed. The supply partner contract was implemented in June 2013 following a competitive tender process. Robert Price, a local SME was awarded the 10-year contract, and have implemented a local supply chain (for many product ranges) providing local jobs for local people. Community benefits and targeted recruitment and training is a key element of this contract. Robert Price have taken on several young people from the council's Passport Programme, taking one through to permanent employment. This contract is supplying all materials required for the WHQS programme and is an integral part of the programme, a partner at the heart of our delivery. Many new processes and procedures have been implemented in order to achieve a much more streamlined operation, working towards Just-In-Time principles. Since implementing the contract, some 300 properties have been updated using materials purchased via the supply partner, thus supporting the council in continuing to ensure that once the standard is met, it is maintained. The next 12 months will see more changes, which includes supplying all products for reactive maintenance. There are challenging times ahead, but Robert Price are committed to working with the council to achieve the targets set.	Complete	100	🟢
Q4 13/14	10. Following the appointment of the supply partner, we will review the systems and invest in technology to maximise efficiencies.	Action incomplete. Action will need to be rolled forward into 2014/15.	In Progress	50	🟡
Q4 13/14	11. We will develop a programme of community engagement with residents to identify the priorities for improvement from the resident's point of view.	Action incomplete. No progress was made due to the uncertainty that arose over the environmental programme. The timing of the latter has been put back to 2019/20 and the related actions are now likely to be deferred to later in the programme.	Not Started	0	🔴

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Period	Title	Comment	Overall Status	% Complete	RAG
Q4 13/14	12. We will launch a Community Improvement Fund of up to £5000 per project to support local people to make environmental improvements.	Action completed. The fund was launched in April 2013. Since its launch, over 15 applications have been received from community groups and voluntary organisations. The CHTG has approved only 3 in total because some of the applications required planning permission or failed to demonstrate that their activities would benefit the wider population of tenants and residents. In order to promote the availability of the fund to communities, new promotional material has been developed in order to encourage applications. A feature on the fund was included in the Caerphilly Homes Tenants' Newsletter and regular posts have been made on social media. Members of the team will become more proactive during 2014/15 in promoting the fund at community events and helping organisations complete the application forms in attempt to ensure greater take up. The creation of the fund was a commitment contained in the Offer Document hence there would be an annual commitment of £50,000 to the fund from the HRA over 5 years.	Complete	100	➔
Q4 13/14	13. Ensure Council estates are linked to the wider countryside areas of open green space by enhancing public rights of way or the creation of new access routes. The access issues will be incorporated as part of the development of the environmental programme.	Action incomplete. No progress was made due to the uncertainty that arose over the environmental programme. The timing of the latter has been put back to 2019/20 and the related actions are now likely to be deferred to later in the programme.	Not Started	0	➔
Q4 13/14	14. Encourage residents to volunteer to assist in the maintenance of environmental improvements. This will be part of the engagement process with residents to secure active involvement in project implementation and ongoing maintenance.	Action incomplete. No progress was made due to the uncertainty that arose over the environmental programme. The timing of the latter has been put back to 2019/20 and the related actions are now likely to be deferred to later in the programme.	Not Started	0	➔
Q4 13/14	15. Provide training for tenant liaison officers so they are able to signpost tenants to other support and benefits.	Action completed. A series of awareness and training sessions have been held for the tenant liaison officers throughout the year in order to enhance their ability to help support and sign post tenants to services that may help meet their needs. 3 days of intensive awareness sessions were held in April 2013 and a further 2 days in June 2013. Topics covered included benefits, mental health, disabilities, drug and alcohol abuse, debt, POVA, Safeguarding Children, Home Safety, Communities First, the Family Information Service, Team around the Family and Health Improvement. Further awareness sessions will be scheduled throughout 2014/15 to ensure that TLO's are able to offer a holistic support and sign posting service to tenants based on the most up to date information.	Complete	100	➔
Q4 13/14	16. Ensure there is greater alignment and coordination between WG programmes such as Communities First, Families First and Supporting People and key strategic CCBC initiatives such as the Caerphilly Passport Programme to maximise the social and economic impact.	Action partially completed. Informal linkages developed but a new working group unlikely to be established due to deferment of environmental programme.	Partially Completed	25	➔
Q4 13/14	17. A "Lives and Communications" working group will be established with input needed from a number of sources, such as Communities First, Families First, Groundwork Caerphilly, GAVO etc to help ensure increased resources are ploughed into those areas that need it the most.	Terms of Reference considered at WHQS Project Board on 12.11.13. No further progress made due to the uncertainty that arose over the environmental programme. The timing of the latter has been put back to 2019/20 and the related actions are now likely to be deferred to later in the programme.	In Progress	25	➔



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### Evidence

Period	Title	Actual	Target	Intervention	RAG	Result 12 Months Ago	Comment
Q4 13/14	01. The number of houses that have achieved WHQS standard in the year		891.00	800.00		63	The 2013/14 figure will not be available until July 2014.
Q4 13/14	02. Number of local residents who use the Community Improvement Fund which will make environmental improvements to their external surroundings	3.00	10.00	7.00	-	N/A	Annual Target = 10. PI may have to be removed if environmental programme is deferred.
Q4 13/14	03. The number of local people that have received training as a result of a contract containing a community benefit clause	5.00	5.00	3.00	-	N/A	Only one contract awarded to date for supply partner that requires training opportunities as part of as community benefits plan. Similar requirements will be imposed on the works contracts currently subject to due diligence.  This figure includes the number of Jobs Growth Wales opportunities and unwaged work experience opportunities.
Q4 13/14	04. The percentage of tenants who's house meets the WHQS standard that are satisfied	92.00	80.00	70.00	-	N/A	Customer satisfaction surveys have recommenced for the 2013/14 programme. Survey form finalised following consultation with tenants and the tenant liaison officers. Postal survey and C.SIMS face-to-face surveys.
Q4 13/14	05. The number of local people who have gained employment as a result of a community benefit clause	1.00	10.00	7.00	-	N/A	Only one contract awarded to date for supply partner that requires training opportunities as part of as community benefits plan. Similar requirements will be imposed on the works contracts currently subject to due diligence.  This figure includes the number of Jobs Growth Wales opportunities and unwaged work experience opportunities.
Q4 13/14	06. The number of residents who volunteer to assist in the maintenance of environmental improvements to compliment quality housing	1.00	10.00	7.00	-	N/A	12 applications have been received for grant support under the Community Improvement Fund. Two CIF applications approved at CHTG 5.9.13. A third application approved 5.12.13. However, two of the three approved applications cannot be delivered.