

Caerphilly Homes Directorate Performance Assessment

2020 - 2021 Six Month Update (April to September)

Please select a section of your choice:

Summary & Priorities



Performance 1



Performance 2



Performance 3



Additional Public Accountability Measures



Customer Intelligence



Resources



Risk



Well-being Objectives



Conclusion





Six Month Update (March - September 20/21)

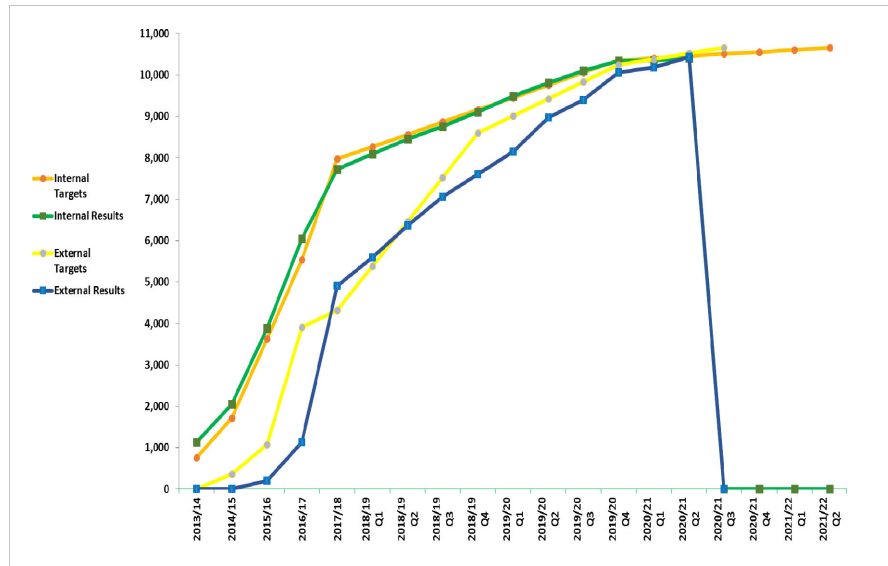
Despite the ongoing Covid pandemic throughout 2020, good progress has been made in a number of areas, whilst the service has also supported wider community aims and objectives to support the most vulnerable within our communities during these difficult times. Although the completion of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard programme remains a priority, this has unavoidably been delayed as a consequence of the pandemic, which has been recognised by WG with the deadline now having been extended to December 2021 as other authorities are experiencing the same problems. The provision of new affordable housing by Caerphilly Homes continues to be work in progress and a number of feasibility schemes are being undertaken, including a number whereby additional grant funding bids will be submitted. Commissioning work is also ongoing to undertake an appraisal of all our Housing Revenue Account land assets and consultation ongoing with the Health Board and Housing Justice on another two potential development sites. Partnership working with our Registered Social Landlord organisations also continues to deliver new affordable homes within the borough and this partnership will be further strengthened with the signing of an Memorandum Of Understanding which is planned for later this year. The adaptations team have focussed efforts on the higher priority essential cases due to the risks associated with delivering core services to this vulnerable client group. The Private Sector team have however been actively looking at improving ways of supporting the Welsh Government's aim of bringing empty homes back into use and a report will be presented on proposals for Cabinets consideration later in the year. Homelessness has been a particular issue this year with the pandemic resulting in an increase in the number of presentations which coincided with the Manager taking early retirement. The recruitment of a replacement manager has been delayed during this time, but the team has responded positively and professionally to not only maintain services, but react to the increased pressures and demands that they have faced. This has resulted in new emergency temporary accommodation being sourced with the additional support required to manage such facilities to avoid rough sleeping within our county borough.. As the pandemic continues however, this is a problem that will increase unless additional suitable accommodation can be sourced. At an early stage of the pandemic a dedicated financial crisis line was set up by our Rents Team, which has not only assisted and advised our tenants, but also assisted other members of the public including residents and businesses by referring them to the correct teams to provide financial advice. This has been a worrying time for many who face financial hardship for different reasons with our team being a life line for many. This has included the reassurance calls that have been undertaken by our staff to numerous tenants some who are known to be vulnerable e.g. older persons which has often been the only contact some may have had with others outside of their homes. Where required these calls have been followed up with visits or referrals to those in need. Maintaining services whilst operating under the limitations imposed by the Covid guidance has been difficult, but the commitment and support provided by our staff has been excellent and has clearly been appreciated by our customers, although this has also highlighted a need for changes to working practices and the provision of the necessary IT equipment to support agile working and the provision of satisfactory levels of service whilst this crisis continues

Service Priorities	Completion Date	RAG	Progress - Achievements - Comments
To identify savings proposals to ensure that a balanced budget for the 2020/21 financial year can be approved by Council in February 2020. (Corporate Priority)	Dec-21	3	The required savings to contribute towards the Mid Term Financial Plan have been accounted for in the current year, but ongoing savings for such a small budget will be extremely difficult to achieve
1a. All council housing is improved to meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard by 2020.	Dec-20	3	The programme has encountered unavoidable delays due to the Covid pandemic which has been recognised by Welsh Government and an extension to the deadline agreed for December 2021. We are on track to complete in advance of the revised deadline
1b. Implement an asset management strategy to maintain the condition of the housing stock following WHQS (Welsh Housing Quality Standard) attainment (December 2020).	01/04/2020	3	The Planned Asset management Strategy has been agreed, but it's implementation delayed due to the Covid pandemic and extension of the Welsh Housing Quality Standard programme
2. Increase the provision of new, affordable, social housing that meet the 'Lifetime Homes' principles and identified needs, whilst supporting the governments' housing programme.	Ongoing	2	New schemes ongoing with our Registered Social Landlord partners utilising Social Housing Grant, including a number of energy efficient passive Haus schemes. In addition a number of feasibility studies have been undertaken to commence new council house building on existing HRA sites and agreement reached to purchase 8 new properties via Section 106

Service Priorities	Completion Date	RAG	Progress - Achievements - Comments
3. Deliver adaptations to support the health and well-being of people in their homes and maximise the delivery and appropriate use of accessible homes.	Ongoing	2	Due to the Covid pandemic the focus has been on the provision of essential adaptations to assist with hospital discharges and address health and safety issues. More routine works have been temporarily suspended due to the vulnerability of this client group.
4. Increase the supply of housing by supporting opportunities to bring long-term, empty homes back into use.	Ongoing	2	Service Level Agreement signed for Caerphilly homes to participate in Phase 2 of the Valleys Task Force initiative with funding support agreed by Cabinet to contribute towards the work to bring empty homes back into use and also to establish an empty homes team. A successful bid for homelessness funding has also resulted in us looking to purchase 6 properties to add to our housing stock to provide much needed small units of accommodation.
5. Tackle the determinants of poor health and well-being by improving housing conditions in the private sector.	Ongoing	2	Inspections and enforcement activities have been limited to higher priority issues impacting on property conditions due to the ongoing pandemic
6. Prevent homelessness and tackle rough sleeping.	Ongoing	2	On going pressure in this area of the service due to increased demand as a consequence of the pandemic and a lack of suitable emergency accommodation. Regular meetings being held with WG and successful funding bid resulting in £1m approx. for revenue and capital projects
7. Sustaining tenancies by providing a range of housing related services.	Ongoing	3	Ongoing support being provided remotely in addition to setting up a financial crisis line to assist
8. Help reduce fuel poverty by making homes more energy efficient and providing people with advice on how best to heat their homes.	Ongoing	2	Energy advice continues to be provided and opportunities to access energy funding provided by WG is continually being sought. Success in accessing Arbed funding for the Blackwood area has been achieved this year and a decision still awaited on Arbed funding for Landsbury Park

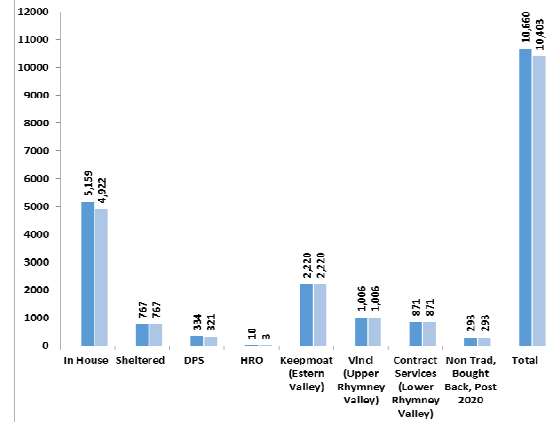
Status	
Black	Not yet started or too early to report any progress (achievements/changes)
Red	Started but not progressing well
Amber	Started with reasonable progress achieved
Green	Going well with good progress

1. All Council Housing is improved to meet the Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS)



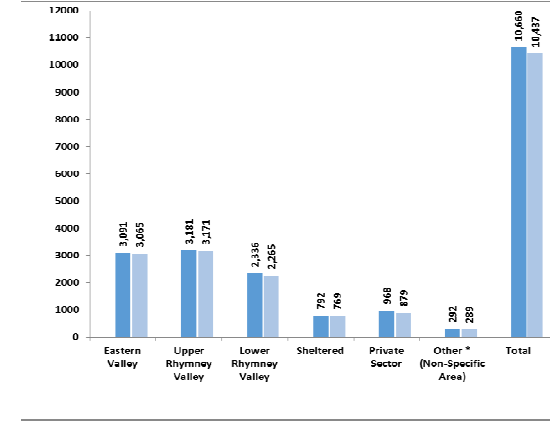
WBO 3 (1a) PAM/038

Reporting Period	02/10/2020
Internal Target 31/08/2021	100.00%
Internal Components (% of stock)	97.59%



WBO 3 (Outcome 1a)

Reporting Period	02/10/2020
External Target 31/03/2021	100.00%
External Components (% of stock)	97.91%



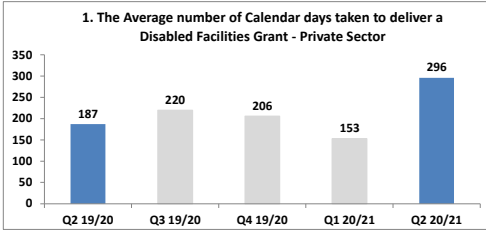
WBO 3 (Outcome 1a)

What is WHQS performance telling us?

Internal works - The internal WHQS programme was suspended in March due to lockdown and work re-commenced in August with enhanced risk assessments to adhere to Government guidance. Since the recommencement of the programme 66 internal properties have been made complaint with 257 outstanding. It is anticipated that work will take on average 3 times longer to complete under social distancing regulations and early projections indicate internal compliance will be achieved by August 2021 pending no further delays from future lockdowns etc). Welsh Government has extended the deadline for WHQS completion to December 2021

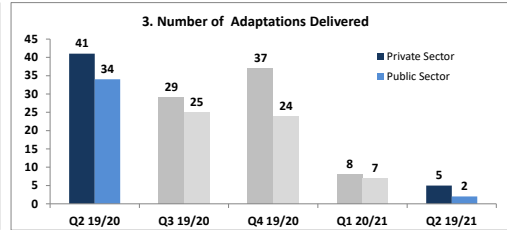
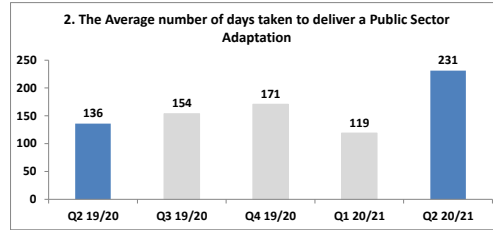
External works - External work re-started in Mid May and 2 contractors worked throughout lockdown with detailed risk assessment issued to Contractors. 376 properties have been made compliant this year on external works with 223 properties outstanding. Early indications suggest external compliance will be achieved by March 2021 (pending no further delays from future lockdowns or adverse weather) ahead of the Welsh Government extended deadline of December 2021. It is important to note that WHQS would have been fully achieved by June 2020, ahead of the original deadline of December 2020, if the global pandemic had not occurred.

3. Deliver adaptations to support the health and well-being of people in their homes & maximise the delivery and appropriate use of accessible homes

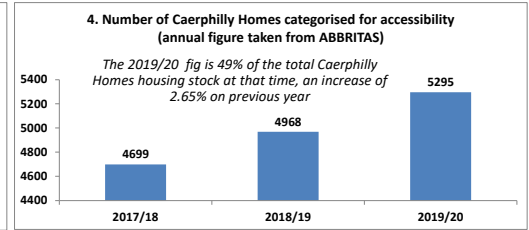


2019/20 Annual Average figure was 199 (PAM015)

PAM/015

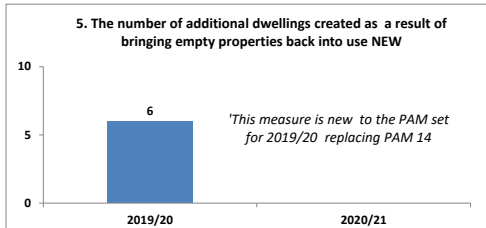


WBO 3 (Outcome 3)



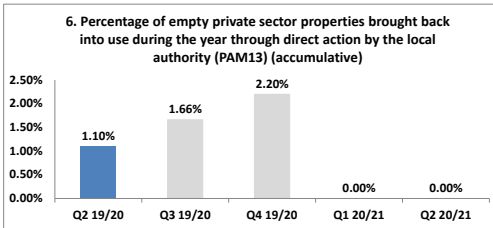
WBO 3 (Outcome 3)

4. Increase the supply of housing by supporting opportunities to bring long-term, empty homes back into use



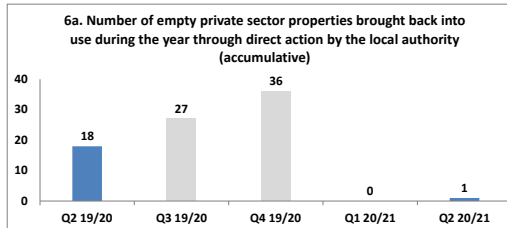
This measure is a part of the PAM set for contextual information only and is not used for comparison across Wales

PAM/045



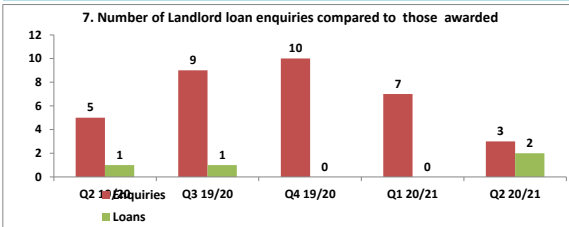
WBO 3 (Outcome 4)

PAM/013

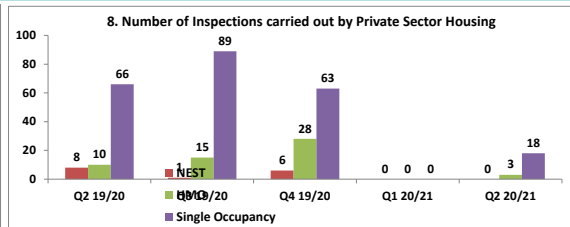


The total number of empty private sector properties in the LA, which were empty for more than 6 months 1,575 in 2018/19 and 1,624 in 2019/20. the figure for 20/21 is 1,441

5. Tackle the determinants of poor health and well-being by improving housing conditions in the private sector

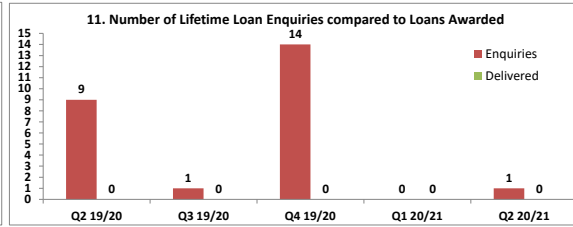
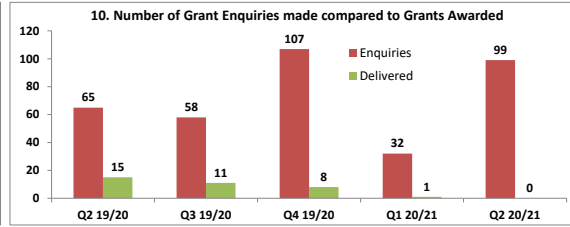
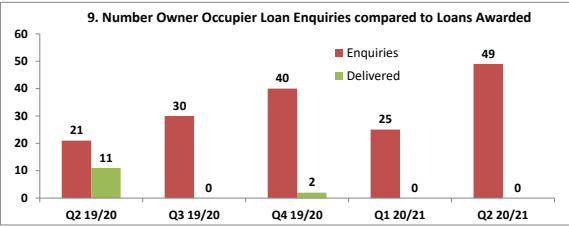


WBO 3 (Outcome5)



WBO 3 (Outcome 5)

WBO 3 (Outcome 5)



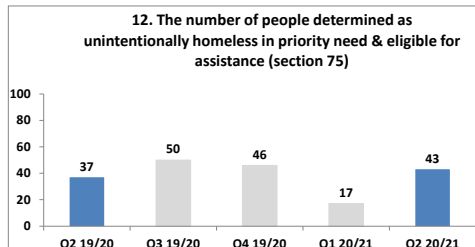
What is the performance telling us?

Performance has been significantly impacted during this financial year as a consequence of the Covid pandemic, with staff being unable to undertake a number of core activities in order to comply with Welsh Government guidelines. A number of staff were also redeployed to assist with corporate duties and support the most vulnerable within our communities.

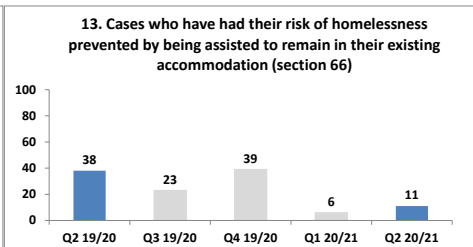
Measures:

- 1 & 2) Routine works of adaptation were not considered to be essential, in accordance with WG Covid guidance and due to risks associated with vulnerable client group. The small number of essential schemes able to be completed were largely to facilitate hospital discharge and required extensive works, including extensions. Also, the PI is very limited and not sufficient to enable a full evaluation of performance. Work to replace the PI is ongoing with WG and in the meantime remains for reporting purposes. Adaptations vary in size and scale and a single application may include multiple adaptations and contracts. We offer a comprehensive agency service to support applicants with adaptation delivered. This takes time but ensures those who would be unable to manage the process themselves get the adaptations they need. Members have recently supported our approach to delivering DFGs which focusses on outcomes for the customer rather than speed of delivery. The impact of the lockdown will be evidenced in future quarters as resulting backlogs are addressed.
- 3) Impact of Lockdown. Ceased processing routine jobs.
- 5) Empty homes work was initially considered non-essential and, therefore, no work was permitted during the first few months of lockdown. This work can often relate to loans and grants which had ceased due to them being deemed not essential and no grants were completed within the remaining time period to the end of the quarter.
- 6) 1 property was returned to use in Q2. 1441 properties are recorded as empty for 20/21. Empty Homes work suspended due to WG guidance. Nationally empties work on grants via Valleys Taskforce recommenced 7/2020 but Cabinet Approval not obtained until mid-September for CCBC to participate in Phase 2. No Valleys Task Force grants were able to be completed within the time period to the end of the quarter.
- 7) The processing of Landlord loans was suspended during Lockdown. 2 Landlord loans and 1 Home Repair Grant have been delivered. Loans and Home Repair Grants were not considered essential in the first lockdown and were not progressed until the guidance changed in August allowing staff to enter homes for routine work. The system re-opened in September but little progress made before the end of September due to timescale, requirements of WG - contractor issues - supply issues - staff returning from informal redeployment, social distancing restrictions.
- 8) Q1 and Q2 - Impact of Covid Lockdown. We are actively working in connection with the Private Rental Sector to develop the Caerphilly Landlord Forum. In line with WG we are also working in connection with other local authorities to re-establish a PRS information sharing network.
- 9, 10 & 11) The processing of owner occupier loans were suspended during Lockdown.

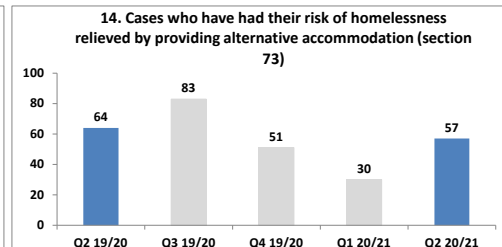
6. Prevent Homelessness and tackle rough sleeping



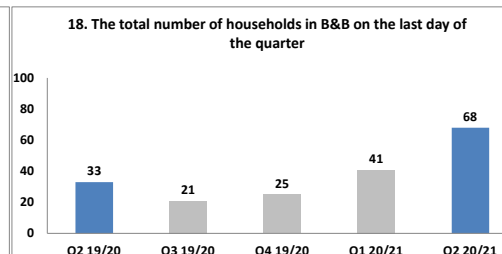
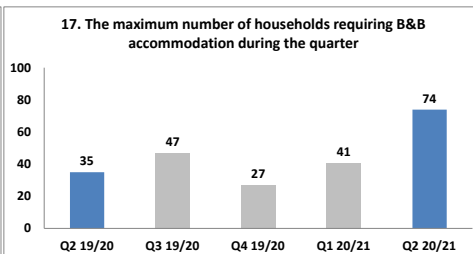
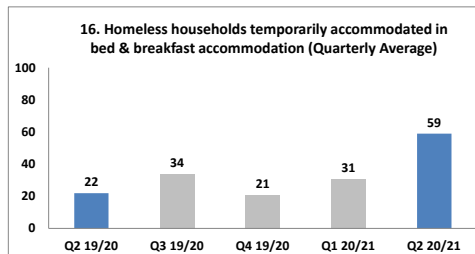
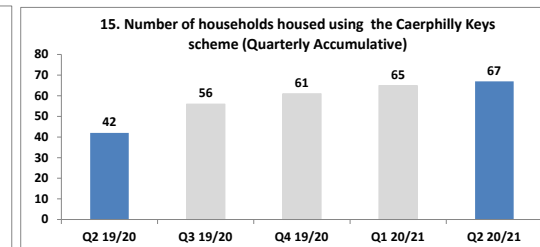
WBO 3 (Outcome 6)



WBO 3 (Outcome 6)



WBO 3 (Outcome 6)

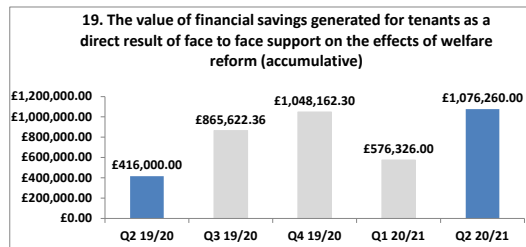


These two measures show the movement of people in and out of B&B over the quarter

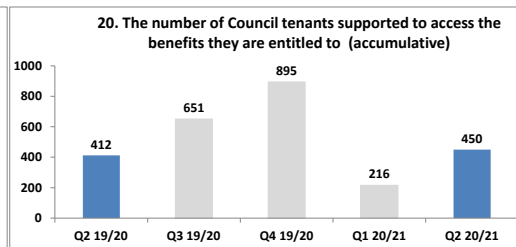
15. Caerphilly Keys Households housed by type to date

Couple with dependant Child(ren)	9
Single parent household with dependant children - Male applicants	1
Single parent household with dependant children - Female applicants	10
Single person household - Male applicant	20
Single person household - Female applicant	12
All other household groups	9
No. Homeless or A&P case	6
Total	67

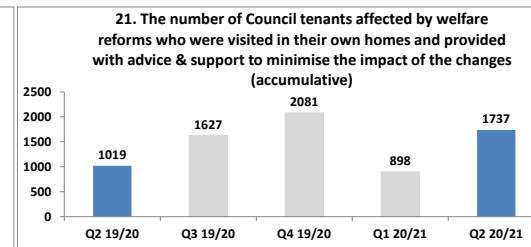
7. Sustaining tenancies by providing a range of housing related services.



WBO 3 (Outcome 7)



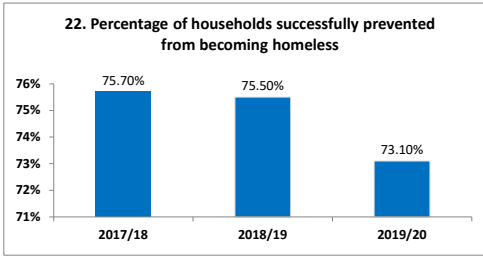
WBO 3 (Outcome 7)



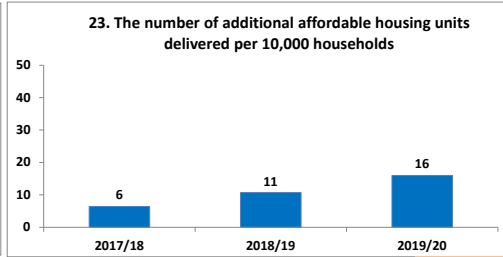
WBO 3 (Outcome 7)

What is the performance telling us?

As a consequence of Covid the service has seen a significant increase in demand for our homelessness services. This has seen higher numbers of presentations and placements in emergency temporary accommodation. There has also been an unavoidable increase in the use of hotels and Bed & Breakfast accommodation in order to comply with new guidance issued by WG. The team has performed extremely well in addressing rough sleeping within our borough and supporting this vulnerable client group. A second Welfare Benefits advisor was appointed in September 2019 who, after a period of training and transitions, commenced supporting tenants in November 2019. Due to the Department of Work and Pensions delays in administering benefit claims the results of this additional support investment was not realised until the first quarter this financial year but the additional appointment has had a huge positive impact for our tenants. The provision of remote advice by the team since the March lockdown has proven to be a huge success as they are able to support more tenants. An additional benefit has been the move by the Department of Work & Pensions to telephone hearings for tribunal cases, enabling conference calls to be held, and a large amount of backdates of benefits have been achieved for our tenants at these hearings. The additional financial savings are split between additional welfare benefits and water savings through reduced tariffs. Although the total numbers of tenants supported to access the savings they are entitled to has remained static the numbers supported to access the welfare benefits elements have more than doubled hence the realisation of higher financial benefits for our tenants this year. Since lockdown no home visits have been carried out and telephone support has been provided to tenants. We have been able to support a larger number of tenants remotely. However we need to ensure the service we deliver is accessible and valued by our tenants. We have worked closely with the Tenant and Community Involvement Team to develop a questionnaire survey that they will undertake with a sample of our support engagements. We can then use the results to ensure our remote service is tailored and developed taking tenants views into account.

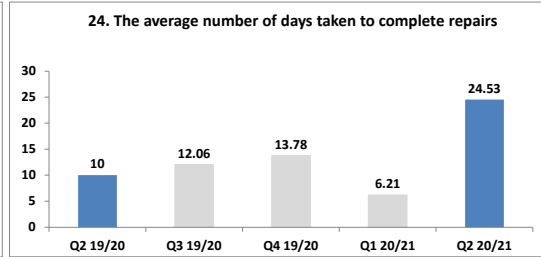


PAM/012



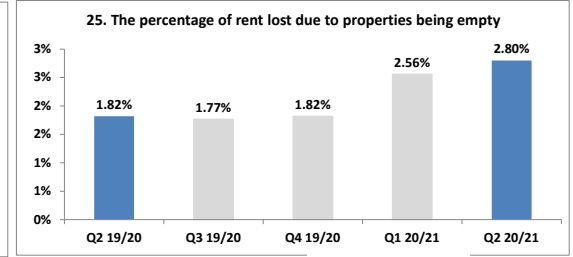
2019/20 Data is draft and subject to change

PAM/036



Annual 2019/20 figure is 12.18 days (stand alone quarters)

PAM/037



Annual 2019/20 figure is 1.82%

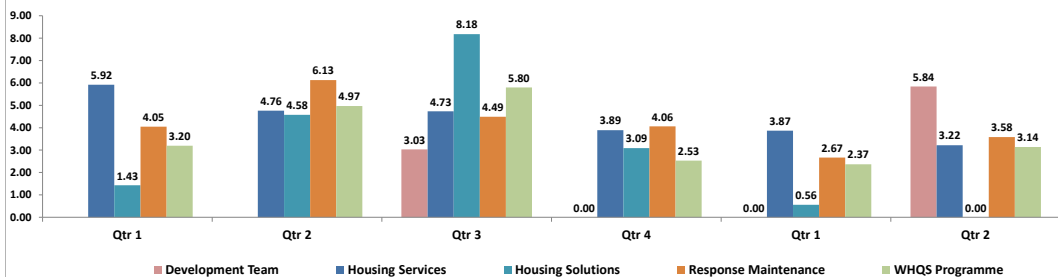
(stand alone quarters)

PAM/039

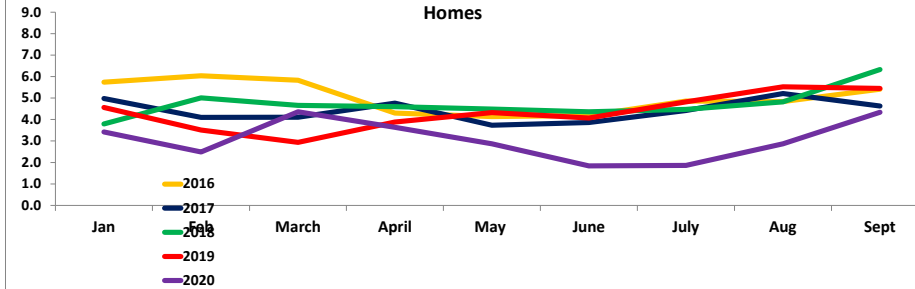
What is the performance telling us?

The Public Accountability Measures upto quarter 2 highlights the detrimental impact the Covid pandemic and lockdown restrictions has had on some of our key indicators. However the focus has been on the delivery of essential services in the main during this time, aimed at supporting our most vulnerable clients e.g. homelessness, elderly, financial support, emergency repairs, adaptations, works to void properties, and allocations.

Percentage Quarterly Sickness - Caerphilly Homes



Percentage Year on Year Monthly Sickness Absence Comparison trend - Caerphilly Homes



Q1 Monthly Breakdown	April 2020			May 2020			June 2020		
% Sickness Absence	Short	Long	Overall	Short	Long	Overall	Short	Long	Overall
Development Team	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Housing Services	0.68%	4.72%	5.58%	0.00%	3.94%	3.94%	0.48%	1.72%	2.20%
Housing Solutions	1.28%	0.00%	1.28%	0.15%	0.00%	0.15%	0.23%	0.00%	0.23%
Response Maintenance	42.91%	2.52%	2.94%	1.05%	1.91%	2.96%	0.86%	1.27%	2.13%
WHQS Programme	0.00%	3.19%	3.19%	0.03%	2.32%	2.36%	0.37%	1.20%	1.56%

Q2 Monthly Breakdown	July 2020			August 2020			September 2020		
% Sickness Absence	Short	Long	Overall	Short	Long	Overall	Short	Long	Overall
Development Team	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	13.64%	0.00%	13.64%
Housing Services	0.02%	1.70%	1.73%	0.15%	2.25%	2.40%	1.54%	3.37%	4.88%
Housing Solutions	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Response Maintenance	0.85%	1.21%	2.06%	1.20%	2.50%	3.70%	1.68%	3.15%	4.83%
WHQS Programme	0.81%	1.44%	2.25%	0.83%	2.35%	3.17%	1.92%	2.16%	4.07%

Housing Workforce Information	Qtr. 2	Qtr. 3	Qtr. 4	Qtr. 1	Qtr. 2
Voluntary Leavers*	5	5	4	6	4
Other Leavers**	1	1	0	1	2
Total Leavers	6	6	4	7	6
New Entrants	22	2	2	0	0
Headcount	501	501	502	495	488
55 and Over	135	141	143	139	137
% of headcount	26.94%	28.41%	28.48%	28.08%	28.07%
Agency	50	25	20	20	18

*Voluntary Reasons: Flexible retirement, retirement, settlement agreement, voluntary resignation & severance, Early retirement, Personal reasons, Transfer, VER release of Pension Benefits, Early retirement by mutual consent on grounds of business.

**Other Leaver Reasons: Death in service, Dismissal, Dismissal on ill health grounds, End of fixed term contract, End of relief employment, Gross Misconduct, Sickness Absence Management, Frustrated Contract, Compulsory Redundancy, failed Probation.

What is our Workforce Information telling us?

There has been an increase in voluntary leavers during the first 2 quarters and this has been managed as there was a requirement to reduce the workforce within our WHQS team as the programme is nearing its conclusion. Despite operating in a pandemic situation, sickness absence has actually reduced in the first 2 quarters. There is however a significant increase in absence for the Development team which is a result of one member of staff within a small team.

Housing Services	Original Estimate	Actuals	Commitments	Projected Outturn
Period 6 2020/21				
Housing Revenue Account (HRA)				
Public Sector	5,750,762	2,640,216	2,702,164	5,342,380
Building Maintenance	13,678,244	8,884,888	3,896,531	12,781,419
WHQS Support	490,138	216,940	261,448	478,388
WHQS PROGRAMME	29,678,935	4,334,415	14,129,589	18,464,004
GENERAL FUND HOUSING				
Housing Advice & Allocations	631,562	308,584	250,291	558,876
Preventing Homelessness	565,163	103,121	462,042	565,163
PRIVATE HOUSING	294,625	537,194	-96,577	440,617

What is our financial information telling us?

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget for 2020/21 is £52m and variances are typical of a budget this size especially with over 500 staff employed within the service. The HRA remains a viable account although it has a much lower projected surplus for 2020/21 compared to previous years. This is due to the impact of Covid-19, where although expenditure has reduced in major service areas such as WHQS and Housing Repair Operations (HRO) due to the inability to enter tenants homes (essential work remained), unforeseen costs to accommodate working under Covid-19 conditions has impacted the budget detrimentally (eg Personal Protective Equipment, IT set up for home working, increase on rent allowances, voids, rent arrears and bad debt provisions). Welsh Government has offered financial assistance to Local Authorities for Covid-19 expenditure but the HRA does not qualify. The WHQS programme did not meet its target of June 2020 although it was on target to achieve this date before Covid-19. Welsh Government (WG) has extended this deadline to December 2021, so any expenditure that has been delayed due to lockdown will be spent up to this timeline. Currently we project our internal deadline to be August 2021. The HRA business plan submitted to WG in March did not account for Covid-19 but high-level updates have been run through the plan to consider additional costs associated with social distancing measures and rent arrears, and the plan remains viable with the possibility of additional borrowing. The borrowing cap agreed by Council was £85m in total.

HRA surpluses are generally utilised towards funding the WHQS Programme and then earmarked for potential new build options and decarbonisation works once the programme has been achieved. This is still the case albeit the timeline has moved on.

General Fund Housing is utilising its Homelessness Prevention funding in an attempt to reduce homelessness, evictions and Bed & breakfast accommodation as well as providing temporary accommodation as part of its statutory duty. During Covid-19, pressure was placed on this service to accommodate homeless persons and on average 60 people per month continue to be accommodated. This is funded by the WG Covid-19 hardship fund. Typical Bed & Breakfast placements have however reduced due to the restriction of actioning any evictions during lockdown but will be expected to rise sharply when that restriction is lifted.


Private Housing agency fee income remains a concern at this stage, even more so now that officers were unable to enter properties to process applications and carry out any work such as disabled adaptations and home repairs during lockdown. This means the fee income could not be generated and currently this is a cause for concern with budget monitoring reports projecting a high overspend this financial year. No financial assistance has been received as yet from WG for loss of fee income.

What is our Assets information telling us?

Our housing stock is now in a good condition and nearing full compliance with WHQS with about 3% of our stock outstanding as at 1.4.20. Our financial position also ensures that the standard can be maintained going forward and there is scope to contribute towards meeting the WG decarbonisation agenda and the provision of new affordable housing, although this will need to be reviewed on an ongoing basis as projects come forward. The post asset management programme (PAM) has been agreed and was due to start mid year, however the delay on the WHQS Programme has set this back. On a positive note, to ensure continuity of the workforce during lockdown, some work that was earmarked for the PAM programme due to timing issues (eg buy backs) has now been completed.

Office accommodation is also being reviewed along with new ways of delivering our services and this could result in efficiency being achieved through staff relocation and agile working. Plans are already being progressed to relocate staff from Cherry Tree House to Tiryberth and staff have been agile working successfully since March 2020.

There is a requirement for an increase in the provision of temporary or move on accommodation to assist with increasing levels of homelessness and this is actively being pursued.

Ref & Links	Topic (& Service)	Risks, Opportunities & Impacts	Mitigating Actions (What Actions can we take to address the risks or realise the opportunity)	Progress Update (Are the mitigating actions reducing the risk or realising the opportunity?)	Risk Level	Risk Level	Risk Level	Risk Level	Risk Level	Does the risk affect the Well-being of our Communities?	Well-being Risk Level
					2019-20 Q2	2019-20 Q3	2019-20 Q4	2020-21 Q1	2020-21 Q2		
 CMT	Brexit	<p>The decision to leave the EU and the looming deadline to secure an exit deal has created considerable uncertainty.</p> <p>Moving forward it is difficult to determine what impact the exit from the EU will have in the medium to longer-term for Caerphilly CBC and our communities. However, in the short-term possible negative impacts from a no deal scenario include the potential for workforce supply shortages in some areas and the possibility of some disruption to the supply of goods and services.</p>	Housing is participating in the Corporate Brexit Working Group and undertaking service specific analysis in preparation for the various Brexit scenarios.	There remains a great deal of uncertainty around the potential positive or negative impacts of the decision to leave the EU. The position is being monitored closely and CMT has established a Brexit Working Group to further consider and monitor the potential consequences of Brexit and the mitigating actions that will be required to assist in managing risks. In relation to Housing, we are working closely with our supply partner to limit the impact of Brexit on future material supplies and we also look to engage local business where possible, however the supply of core products to assist in the manufacture of our materials may be an issue. The impact of workforce is not currently a concern	Potential impacts are not yet fully understood but they are likely to be felt over the short, medium and longer-term.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Unable to assess currently due to the level of uncertainty.	Unable to assess currently due to the level of uncertainty.
CMT	Medium Term Financial Plan	Insufficient resources to deliver services at expected level. Negative impact on staff morale. Budget pressures will have an impact upon service delivery.	The Authority has a strong track record of delivering balanced budgets and planning is underway to ensure that the 2021/22 Draft Budget Proposals are presented to Cabinet on the 13th January 2021. <i>Housing requires a budget review to align its financial resources more effectively with its current service delivery</i>	<p>We have faced an unprecedented situation this year with details of the 2021/22 Provisional LG Financial Settlement not being released by the Welsh Government until the 22nd December 2020 (normally received in October each year). The Provisional Settlement included a 3.1% uplift in WG funding for Caerphilly CBC and the 2021/22 Draft Budget Proposals were endorsed by Cabinet at its meeting on the 13th January 2021. The 3.1% uplift in WG funding along with a proposed increase of 3.9% in the Council Tax will mean that no new savings will be required to balance the budget for the 2021/22 financial year. The Provisional Settlement does not cover the financial implications of the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, both in terms of additional costs that continue to be incurred and income losses. These will continue to be funded through grants and the position will be kept under close review as we move into the new financial year. The future funding situation for Local Government is likely to be challenging due to the unprecedented fiscal impact of the pandemic and the strain that this will put on public finances for years to come.</p> <p>An updated indicative Medium-Term Financial Plan shows a potential savings requirement for the council of £20.7m for the four-year period 2022/23 to 2025/26. The council's transformation programme will be a key driver in ensuring that financial resilience is maintained in future years. <i>The remaining savings identified for Housing (£52k) are not expected to be achieved this year because they are focussed on Private Sector Housing activity which has been unable to progress due to the lockdown, particularly when access to residents homes are needed to complete works. In addition there has been a high level of recurring long term sickness absences within the department, and also some staff were redeployed to more critical services such as the buddy scheme and contact tracing. Committed work will become backlogs for the following year which will need adequate resources to manage and complete.</i></p>	Medium	Green	Green	Green	Green	Effective financial planning is a key element in ensuring that the Well-being Goals within the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015 are met.	High (Short to Medium term)
		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). Failure to meet WHQS for all our social housing stock by 2020.	<p>The WHQS programme has its own specific risk register which is reviewed and updated by the Project Board quarterly.</p> <p>The highest risks are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Failure to achieve programme objectives - the probability level has reduced as we enter the final year of the programme despite delays being incurred as a consequence of the Covid pandemic. This is due to the progress already made on the programme and the announcement made by WG that local authorities would be provided with an extension of the deadline to December 2021 	The programme is now constantly being reviewed and more work undertaken in-house to provide us with a level of certainty and control as we move towards the final stages of the programme. There are some concerns in relation to contracts which include leasehold properties as these are incurring significant delays due to the need to follow legal consultation processes and subsequent challenges from leaseholders. This situation is currently being closely monitored and has been raised with WG who advise that other authorities have encountered similar problems.							

Ref & Links	Topic (& Service)	Risks, Opportunities & Impacts	Mitigating Actions (What Actions can we take to address the risks or realise the opportunity)	Progress Update (Are the mitigating actions reducing the risk or realising the opportunity?)	Risk Level 2019-20 Q2	Risk Level 2019-20 Q3	Risk Level 2019-20 Q4	Risk Level 2020-21 Q1	Risk Level 2020-21 Q2	Does the risk affect the Well-being of our Communities?	Well-being Risk Level
CMT	Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) programme		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrangements have been implemented whereby the in-house workforce will pick up the majority of the remaining workload by moving resources from other contract areas. This includes a recent transfer of contracts from the Dynamic Purchasing System (DPS) of approximately 150 properties to ensure continuity of our in-house workforce and to take advantage of the better performance and tenants satisfaction levels that are being experienced via our in-house workforce. Some external works will continue to be undertaken by external contractors, but these are being closely monitored and nearing a conclusion. This has been reflected in a recent progress report which was made available to members of H&R Scrutiny committee. Monthly Project Board meetings will continue to be held to monitor ongoing performance and to assist with the decision making process. The completion date for full compliance is currently projecting August 2021 which is still within the revised WG deadline date. 	<p>A significant percentage of work to the sheltered housing schemes is being undertaken by the in-house workforce. The programme is progressing with works on track to be completed by the revised 2021 deadline, however due to work content and asbestos issues, three schemes will require full decants which may delay completion, but discussions with WG indicate that these can be categorised as acceptable fails. Internal work was originally suspended as a consequence of the Covid pandemic but reinstated following further guidance from WG. External works have continued although progress has been affected due to material supplies, social distancing and some households preferring not to have work undertaken at this time. Further lockdown arrangements could obviously impact on our performance, but regular meetings are taking place with WG and indications are that we will still complete the programme in advance of the revised deadline of December 2021.</p> <p>The Housing Revenue Account business plan submitted to WG in March did not account for Covid-19 but high-level updates have been run through the plan to consider additional costs associated with social distancing measures and rent arrears, and the plan remains viable with the possibility of additional borrowing. The borrowing cap agreed by Council was £85m in total.</p> <p>HRA surpluses are generally utilised towards funding the WHQS Programme and then earmarked for potential new build options and decarbonisation works once the programme has been achieved. This is still the case albeit the timeline has moved on. General Fund Housing is utilising its Homelessness Prevention funding in an attempt to reduce homelessness, evictions and Bed & breakfast accommodation as well as providing temporary accommodation as part of its statutory duty. During Covid-19, pressure was placed on this service to accommodate homeless persons and on average 60 people per month continue to be accommodated. This is funded by the WG Covid-19 hardship fund.</p>	Medium	Green	Green	Green	Green	Yes	Medium
	Homelessness	Demand for homelessness fluctuates considerably based on demand, demographics and changing legislation and the Covid pandemic. The service needs to be flexible to adapt to these changes and have a number of options available to be able to support individuals and where necessary provide suitable accommodation to discharge the homelessness duty.	Support providers and specialists used to provide support to assist those that are homeless and to sustain tenancies to avoid homelessness occurring. Homelessness strategy developed in collaboration with neighbouring authorities. The availability of temporary accommodation to be reviewed to reduce/avoid use of Bed & Breakfasts. Look at opportunities to increase the availability of properties in the private sector as an alternative means of accommodating homeless persons. Work closely with the police and probation service to plan accommodation for prison leavers.	The Covid pandemic has resulted in increased pressures on this service, however this will be an ongoing process due to lockdown arrangements, policy and legislative changes. Cornerstone, The Wallich and Gofal are main support providers, but additional support provided by in-house Occupational Therapy and mental health provision. Regional Homelessness Strategy has been completed and agreed actions being progressed. Use of Bed & Breakfast has seen an increase this year, therefore additional temporary accommodation is actively being sourced. Good success has been achieved in the private sector, with approximately 65 properties currently being used to assist with homelessness via the Caerphilly Keys initiative. The prison leavers pathway has been implemented and is assisting in the forward planning of suitable accommodation for relevant persons. Out of county placements have been necessary to provide emergency accommodation following the closure of in county hotel and B&B businesses. Success achieved for additional funding from WG of approx £1m. Difficulty in recruiting a new Housing Solutions Manager following the retirement of the previous postholder.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Yes	Medium
	Universal Credit (U.C.)	Following central governments welfare reform, Universal credit was introduced in CCBC for all new claimants in September 2018. This combines potentially 6 benefit claims into one monthly payment which is made in arrears to the claimant. This payment could include housing costs. The risk to the housing service is the financial impact this system could have on the tenant, the impact on sustaining tenancies and increased rent arrears	Additional support has been provided to Universal Credit claimants via Tenant Support and Floating Support Officers including assistance with claim completions, budgeting and basic debt advice, warm homes discount scheme, subsidised water tariffs, applications for charitable assistance, food parcels, Personal Independent Payment applications and referrals to employability programmes. Due to the potential impact on individuals as well as rental income, quarterly reports are presented to PDM. Resources regularly reviewed and impact on rents is closely monitored.	Rent arrears have continued to increase with the roll out of U.C. and partly due to the ongoing pandemic situation and as a consequence a Financial Crisis helpline has been opened and additional support staff have been appointed. However this will not be sustainable, as households move onto U.C. If the current pattern continues then rent arrears will increase and it will not be financially viable to provide additional resources. WG have commissioned a study into the impact of U.C. in Wales and we will contribute to this exercise. Regular update reports are being provided to PDM. Discretionary Housing Payments continue to be used to provide temporary financial support to those who meet the criteria and advice provided in relation to rehousing options as a means of reducing rent costs. Face to face support has been replaced with remote support, which has been successful in maximising income, however formal rent recovery processes, including possession actions have been withdrawn and replaced with attempts to support, in line with WG guidance.	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	Yes	Medium



Five Ways of Working - 1. Involvement 2. Collaboration 3. Long Term 4. Integration 5. Prevention

1. Highlights - Is there anything that went particularly well this quarter?

10,560 of the 10,660 Council Homes in Caerphilly are now fully compliant both externally and internally with Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) requirements.

91% of Council tenants said they were satisfied with the internal WHQS works in their homes.

83% of Council tenants said they were satisfied with the external works completed on their homes.

5,378 of Caerphilly's Council Homes have been categorised as compliant with 'accessibility standards' as outlined in guidance for people with physical disability and/or sensory impairment.

1,737 tenants were visited and provided with advice and support, to help them mitigate the effects of welfare reform.

450 tenants were supported to access the benefits they are entitled to.

A significant increase in financial savings of £1,076,260 was generated for Council tenants through targeted support at Q2 2020/21.

An application by the Council for IHP funding to deliver 20 new Passivhaus certified homes on two sites was submitted (since approved).

Purchase of a further 6 properties to bring back into Council housing stock is progressing using Homelessness Phase 2 funding.

1 new joint sheltered housing scheme with ABUHB will be developed to allow 3 schemes to be decommissioned. Another will be improved under the WHQS and 2 more will be remodelled.

We have successfully prevented 67% cases of homelessness in 2020/21, by providing alternative accommodation.

The Supporting People programme based on wider determinants of homelessness prevention helped an average of 3,090 individuals manage their accommodation and an average of 3,642 individuals manage their money.

We have entered into an agreement to enable us to target the return to use of empty homes by offering grants in Quarters 3 and 4 via the Valleys Task Force Phase 2 initiative.

Despite the ongoing restrictions we have continued to provide priority minor and major adaptations to prevent hospital admissions and to enable vulnerable residents to be discharged from hospital.

Following the reopening of housing markets we have successfully amended our allocations procedures and processes in line with WG guidance to enable us to safely allocate 179 properties.

Reassurance calls have been made to all Council tenants by Housing staff to offer housing support and assistance during the pandemic.

2. Is there anything that did not go well this quarter and what have we learnt?

In some instances the actions we have undertaken have either exceeded their target date for completion and/or not reached the expected level of performance:-

Due to delays experienced with carrying out works due to Covid-19, the WHQS investment programme has been extended by Welsh Government for 12 months to December 2021, although, we expect to complete all works by August 2021.

The construction of new, affordable home (housing associations) has, in some instances, been delayed due to a shortage of materials and social distancing guidelines.

With staff time being refocused on essential services, we have been unable to focus on increasing the percentage of social housing stock that has an accessibility code.

There has been a significant reduction in the number of adaptations provided to disabled people due to Welsh Government guidelines and the need to protect vulnerable clients.

There has been a significant reduction in the number of grants/loans provided to improve housing in the private sector due to Welsh Government guidelines and the redeployment of staff to work on the Buddy Scheme.

Only one long-term, private sector empty home was brought back into beneficial use as the work was initially deemed non-essential.

No inspections of Houses in Multiple Occupation have been carried out, with all inspections being suspended due to the pandemic.

3. Address the availability, condition and sustainability of homes throughout the county borough and provide advice, assistance or support to help improve people's well-being



Please see this DPA for an update on the performance measures

3. What impact are we making?

Our objective is to help improve people's wellbeing through a range of targeted housing-related interventions. Although a five year objective, for some the improvement will be noticed sooner as some of our actions are annually repetitive in nature, e.g. the provision of adaptation or the building of new homes. National research shows that good quality housing, located in sustainable communities is known to have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of its occupants. Therefore, our objective, our aims and our actions are intrinsically linked to the seven wellbeing goals of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. As such we are increasingly using the five ways of working to ensure that we take into account the impact of our intended actions on the wellbeing of future generations.

4. What are we focusing on for the next quarter?

Our focus for the next quarter will be on the delivery of essential services with particular emphasis on supporting our most vulnerable during the ongoing pandemic, whilst operating in line with WG guidance. In addition we will continue to deliver the WHQS programme to meet the revised deadline and progress our aims to deliver new affordable housing, both directly and via our Registered Social Landlord partners.

We expect our progress in the next quarter to be dictated by the longevity of Covid-19 and the duration of the national lockdown. In order to protect vulnerable people and communities the Council has reprioritised many of its services. As a result we expect this to have an impact on many of our intended actions. At this stage it is too early to say what the level of impact may be.



• Highlights coming out of the information

The Covid pandemic has clearly had a significant impact on services this year with core services being considerably reduced and staff redeployed to support wider Corporate community initiatives. performance has also been impacted as a consequence but essential services have continued to be provided as well as assistance to our most vulnerable groups of clients. There have been some staffing issues with some deciding to terminate their employment, which has assisted in some areas but also resulted in the loss of key staff in other areas. Financially we continue to be in a good position and have been successful in accessing various grant funded opportunities from WG. Good progress continues to be made in some of our key project areas including the WHQS programme and our new build strategy, whilst essential services in other areas including priority adaptations, homelessness, older persons housing, repairs and tenancy support have continued and have been well received.

Services that we provide that have been deemed non-essential have been suspended in line with WG guidance and/or at the request of our clients, thereby impacting on our performance e.g. processing of routine adaptations, private sector property inspections, grants and loans, internal WHQS works with many staff redeployed to support critical services across the Authority. However, performance in other areas has improved, e.g. support provided to tenants to assist them in sustaining their tenancies, due to our targeted response to recognised response to the impacts of Covid.

• What have we learnt and what needs improving and why?

During the ongoing pandemic it has been apparent that we were not sufficiently equipped to deliver all our services remotely, although it has also shown that where staff have been equipped this has resulted in significant benefits for the staff and our customers. Generally staff have responded extremely well in the circumstances and been committed and supported in continuing to deliver Housing related services or being willing to be redeployed to support other areas of the authority. The situation has also highlighted the importance of having our own in-house workforce that we can directly manage and utilise to best meet our and customers needs. There is now a move to ensure that we have the required IT equipment and systems in place for the future which support agile working and a need to review our existing systems and processes to ensure they are suitable for a change in working practices. The impact of Covid will be demonstrated in future performance reports as backlogs resulting for the consequences of lockdown are addressed and reinstated services are prioritised in line with capacity e.g. number of days taken to provide adaptations.

Progress against priority actions from last quarter	By Whom	By when
Limited progress made as a result of the Covid pandemic which has impacted services across the board. However it is considered that in the circumstances essential services have been delivered safely and efficiently and a number of core services have also continued.		
Priority Actions for next quarter	By Whom	By when
Reprofile the WHQS programme in light of the revised deadline issued by WG and review options for addressing the backlog of services accumulated during the pandemic		
Continue to source alternatives for the provision of emergency accommodation to address increasing homelessness demand, to include move on accommodation		
Review support and methods of rent recovery to address the increase in rent arrears		
Feedback / Recognition / Actions from Corporate Management Team	By Whom	By when