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**HOUSING INVESTMENT PROGRAMME 2013/14**

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**Responsible Cabinet Member - Councillor Veronica Copeland,  
Adult Social Care and Housing Portfolio**

**Responsible Director - Richard Alty, Director of Place**

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**SUMMARY REPORT**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to advise Members of the resources available for housing capital investment during 2013/14 and to recommend a programme to utilise these resources.

**Summary**

2. The annual Housing Investment Programme delivers essential home improvements for council tenants to ensure their homes meet their longer term expectations, create a safe and secure environment and meet quality standards over and above Decent Homes. The programme also includes the funding of private sector Disabled Facilities Grants.

**Recommendation**

3. It is recommended that the annual Housing Investment Programme as set out in Table 2 for 2013/14 be agreed and the funding released.

**Reason**

4. The recommendation is supported to enable the works and projects identified in the annual Housing Investment Programme for 2013/14 to proceed.

**Richard Alty  
Director of Place**

**Background Papers**

Capital Medium Term Financial Plan Report to Council 28 February 2013.  
Housing Business Plan

Chris Harris : Extension 2312

S17 Crime and Disorder	The contents of this report have been considered in the context of the requirements placed on the Council by Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, namely, the duty on the Council to exercise its functions with due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of those functions on, and the need to do all that it reasonably can to prevent, crime and disorder in its area. It is considered that some of the improvement works identified in this report will be beneficial in reducing crime.
Health and Well Being	The annual Housing Investment Programme will improve the health and well being of residents.
Carbon Impact	The implementation of the Housing Capital Investment Programme will reduce energy usage and provide higher levels of thermal comfort for dwellings benefitting from these measures thus reducing carbon emissions.
Diversity	The annual Housing Capital Improvement programme will improve the accessibility of council owned property.
Wards Affected	All wards with Council Housing.
Groups Affected	Council tenants and Disabled Facilities Grant applicants.
Budget and Policy Framework	This report does not recommend any changes to the budget and policy framework
Key Decision	This is a key decision because agreement to the recommendation will result in the Council incurring expenditure that is significant. There will also be a significant effect on the communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards within the area of the Local Authority.
Urgent Decision	For the purpose of the 'call-in' procedure this is not an urgent matter.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	The annual housing capital programme contributes to the delivery of the Sustainable Community Strategy through each of the theme areas.
Efficiency	Planned investment through the annual Housing Investment Programme will reduce the frequency and cost of reactive repairs and maintenance.

## MAIN REPORT

### Information and Analysis

5. Members will be considering the Council's 2013/14 Capital Medium Term Financial Plan on 28 February 2013, including the Housing Capital Investment Programme. Prior to works commencing this detailed report is required to approve the physical works and formally release the Capital resources. Table 1 below details the estimated housing capital resources for 2013/14.

6. **Table 1: Estimated Capital Resources 2013/14**

	<b>2012/13</b>
<b>Resources</b>	<b>£000's</b>
Capital Receipts <sup>(a)</sup>	164
Disabled Facilities Grant <sup>(b)</sup>	343
RCCO <sup>(c)</sup>	5,648
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,155</b>

- (a) Comprising 25% of usable capital receipts from the anticipated sale of Council houses in respect of the Right to Buy scheme.
- (b) The Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) has confirmed that allocations for Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) will be sustained at least 2012/13 levels but a new formula based allocation process will be introduced. Details of this formula have yet to be released to allow Darlington to fully assess all of the implications.
- (c) The Revenue Capital Contribution is funding from the Housing Revenue Account used to fund major capital works.
7. The priorities identified through the Housing Business Plan to be funded from the estimated capital resources for 2013/14 are shown in Table 2 overleaf:-

8. **Table 2: Housing Investment Programme 2013/14**

Programme	£000's	2013/14 Total
<b>Planned Maintenance &amp; Renewals</b>		
Adaptations <sup>(a)</sup>	300	
Heating Replacement <sup>(b)</sup>	1,060	
Internal Planned Maintenance <sup>(c)</sup>	2,270	
Energy Efficiency <sup>(d)</sup>	572	
Structural Repairs <sup>(e)</sup>	50	
Smoke Detectors <sup>(f)</sup>	50	
Roof work <sup>(g)</sup>	400	
Lifeline Services <sup>(h)</sup>	80	4,782
<b>Estates &amp; Community Improvements</b>		
Garage Improvements <sup>(i)</sup>	75	
Repairs Before Painting <sup>(j)</sup>	100	
External Works <sup>(k)</sup>	500	
Pavement crossings <sup>(l)</sup>	25	
Door Entry Systems <sup>(m)</sup>	30	
Communal Works <sup>(n)</sup>	50	
Fees	250	1,030
<b>Private Sector</b>		
DFG Grants <sup>(o)</sup>	343	343
<b>Total</b>		<b>6,155</b>

- (a) The adaptations budget is to deliver adaptations within the Council's housing stock to enable tenants with a disability to remain in their own home and live independently across the Borough.
- (b) New condensing boiler and central heating upgrades will be completed to around 360 properties in accordance with the policy to upgrade every 15 years. This work will predominantly be completed in:-  
Cockerton East, Cockerton West, Haughton East, Heighington, Hurworth and Lingfield.

There will also be some miscellaneous properties which will be included in the programme and we will be running a "just in time" programme of replacement for those boilers that fail before their due replacement date within the financial year.

- (c) Internal planned maintenance will include replacement kitchens and bathrooms, rewiring of electrical systems and heating system upgrades where required to around 270 properties in accordance with the policy to upgrade every 20 years. This work will predominantly be completed in:-  
Cockerton West, Haughton West, Heighington and Coniscliffe, Hurworth, Middleton St George, Park East, Sadberge & Whessoe.

There will also be some miscellaneous properties which will be included in the programme and we will incorporate additions to the programme when void

properties which have been omitted from previous years' programmes become available.

- (d) £572,000 has been set aside for 2013/14 to invest in a 2 year energy efficiency programme, focusing on improving the efficiency of homes and reducing tenants' energy costs to around 110 properties, initially in the Hundens Area but subsequently moving to Harrowgate Hill. The work will include the replacement PVCu windows and the installation of composite doors to properties identified as the hardest to treat in relation to other basic retro fit measures.
- (e) A small budget of £50,000 has been set aside to address any structural issues that may be identified within the year.
- (f) £50,000 is required to replace around 220 existing hard wired smoke and heat detectors where systems are now 10 years old and reached the end of their recommended lifespan.
- (g) £400,000 is required to commence a programme to replace ageing and defective roofs to around 110 properties to compliment the work detailed in 8(d) above. Properties will be selected based on current asset management data relating to their age, the material lifespan, a condition survey and the analysis of current disrepair and maintenance costs.
- (h) £80,000 is set aside to continue to provide upgrades to the Lifeline equipment. There will also be investment to replace the existing telecommunications equipment to improve the level of service that can be provided to residents.
- (i) £75,000 will be invested in improvements to the Council's garage blocks in areas to be determined.
- (j) £100,000 will be invested in joinery repair works in anticipation of the cyclical external painting programme in areas throughout the Borough.
- (k) £500,000 has been set aside for External Works to around 250 properties including fencing replacement and external footpath improvements in areas to be confirmed throughout the Borough. The funds will also pay for the just in time replacement of rotten and defective external doors with new Composite doors on a Borough wide basis.
- (l) £25,000 has been identified to fund pavement crossings across the Borough.
- (m) Failing door entry systems to communal blocks will be replaced and upgraded at a cost of £30,000.
- (n) £50,000 will be spent on the upgrade and improvement of flooring and electrical systems to communal blocks of flats across the borough.
- (o) DFG grants will continue to be offered according to the mandatory limit of £30,000.

The total budget for mandatory DFG grants is yet to be confirmed by the Department of Communities and Local Government (CLG) but announcements have confirmed that the allocation for 2013/14 will be no less than the allocation in 2012/13.

### **Aims and objectives of the Housing Investment Programme**

9. The aims and objectives of the Housing Investment Programme are:
  - (a) To meet the increasing expectations of local authority tenants.
  - (b) To ensure that Darlington continues to meet an “Enhanced Decent Homes” standard.
  - (c) To improve the thermal comfort, safety and well being of local authority tenants.
  - (d) Provide a cyclical programme of improvement works.
10. The programme is not designed to remain static and priorities will be continually reviewed in the light of updated information such as public sector stock condition information. In accordance with best practice guidelines the ratio of planned to responsive works remains within the 70/30 ratio.

### **Outcome of Consultation**

11. The proposed programme is in line with Housing Business Plan priorities as agreed with tenants during the stock option appraisal process, and is aligned with the priorities for investment that have been identified since that time. The work being undertaken reflects their aspirations as far as possible.
12. A report in respect of the Housing Investment Programme was agreed and approved by the Council’s Asset Management Board on 8 January 2013 and the Tenants Board on 11 February 2013. The annual housing investment priorities follow a strict cycle of replacement and renewal as agreed with the Tenants Board.