

Tristarhomes

Part of the **Vela Group**

Delivering against offer promises



Executive Summary

In December 2010 Stockton Council transferred its housing to Tristar Homes whilst at the same time a new group was formed, The Vela Group, with Tristar Homes and Housing Hartlepool as the two partners.

As part of the Vela Group, Tristar Homes has ownership of and accountability to the Vela Business Strategy that was agreed in April 2012. This is attached to this report so that the reader can see the extent of ambition for the Group, encompassing responsibilities through transfer promises but also the additional benefit being part of the group brings.

The additional value created by the new group has seen major improvements in service and acceleration towards completing the promises ahead of the target. It has also enabled Tristar Homes under the Vela Group banner deliver new homes in the Borough with a significant contribution to the regeneration of the area.

The organisation continues to work in a partnership approach with the Council but also other stakeholders. It has built on the strength of the involvement framework allowing customers to hold the organisation to account at the same time as contributing to service improvements.

The investment programme is now in full flow making improvements in homes beyond the decent standard that Tristar Homes, the ALMO was aspiring to achieve.

Testament to the success of the organisation is performance in key areas and the views of customers. This report shows that improvements have been made and we are continue towards further improvements.

Communication of what we are doing to stakeholders and customers is important to us and a number of diverse ways of getting our message across are used, some are included as an appendix to this report.

As we are close to finishing the promises an impact assessment is about to start to look at the social value created due to the delivery of the promises and other additional works and investment.

Delivery of Offer Promises

SUMMARY

The report is provided to the Council's scrutiny group as a summary of progress made by Tristar Homes against the promises that were made as part of the Council's Stock Transfer Offer to Tenants in 2010. The "Offer" document focuses on addressing both the investment needs of our housing stock, and improving the range of services to be provided to our customers, including environmental and neighbourhood enhancements. The focus of this report is to provide an update on key areas and how we have improved our services and the positive impact that these have had on our new and existing customers.

Overview

There are over 200 promises within the offer document to deliver over a 5 year period. In delivering the promises we have looked at ways in which we can exceed our customers' expectations and establish innovative new services as well as improve existing ones.

The offer promises are currently monitored through the Tristar Board as well as our customers through the Customer Panel. We have set timescales for delivering against key projects and prioritised these following customer consultations after transfer. We utilise "clearview" a project management software system to track progress against each of the objectives, setting clear timescales for delivery. Where projects are behind the timescales that we have set they are reported through to Board with actions to move us towards completion.

Please see **Appendix 1** which by way of example indicates the standards which are currently being monitored and we have to focus on.

Monitoring progress

The Tristar Homes Board receives quarterly updates on projects through our performance management framework alongside some more detailed reports. In addition, Ward Councillors have received formal annual presentations by the Executive Team which have provided an update and opportunity for questions and feedback. **Appendix 2** is a copy of June 2012 full Board report on the offer documents along with supporting documentation. A full report is also due in September 2013 which will include an update on projects

outstanding. It should also be noted that regular updates by the Group Director for Operations and Property Services provide regular reassurances around progress made against the offers made as well as services and projects which have provided additional value over and above the offer document process.

In meeting our regulatory requirements we have established a co-regulatory approach involving customers through our involvement framework. We have agreed with our customers, the Customer Panel (the hub of our involvement framework) that they are a key mechanism by which our customers can hold their landlord to account in regard to the delivery of the Offer promises. As part of this process an annual update is provided to them. Initially in September 2011, progress was provided to the Customer Panel via a formal presentation and it was noted that they were impressed with the extent of service improvements and the impact that these improvements were having on our customers, many of whom cited positive examples themselves. Subsequent annual updates have been provided in May 2012, and more recently in May 2013. We have also produced annual reports to customers which are on our website and are currently producing a more interactive annual report this year to support the work that we are doing with customers around digital inclusion.

We have also developed a Tenants Scrutiny Panel and aspects of the service promises have been reviewed through the Tenant Scrutiny Group in summer 2012. This piece of audit work commissioned by the Customer Panel aimed to validate promises which had been delivered and provided challenge based on customers experiences of services. Managers provided feedback to the Tenant Scrutiny Panel on a list of queries and the tenants went through each in turn, considering the manager's comments and deciding whether they wanted further investigation of explanation or perhaps an area of future scrutiny.

The significant areas which received further challenge included:-

- Communication with tenants about planned improvement works citing the excessive amount of letters sent during the process.
- Publicising easy to understand service standards – more promotion was felt needed in an easy to access format.
- New tenants' rents would be charged at the same rate as existing tenants – An explanation was given that due to a shift in government policy since the stock transfer had taken place, with the introduction of

Affordable rents to help support the development programme and the building and acquisition of new homes in the Borough then this could no longer be achieved.

Delivery against the service promises

In this section we look at some of the headline promises and progress made against them.

Rents and Rights

Two of the important issues for customers at the time of stock transfer were ensuring that rents were affordable and that their existing rights were protected. We have delivered this through a protected assured tenancy agreement being provided to all existing customers and in addition clear rent setting information provided to customers around the rent increases each year.

Going beyond the promises, our customer focus can also be seen in the 2,188 home visits and 13,457 telephone calls which have been completed in helping to support customers with their money worries in the last financial year. Our Money Advice service has gone from strength to strength with 768 customers benefitting via office and home visits with £132,649 additional housing benefit being claimed on behalf of our customers. We have also provided financial and professional support to Tees Credit Union which provides a range of new services and working in partnership with Five Lamps, offers low cost loans and a saving scheme encouraging customers to utilise alternative sources of finance.

To further support customers household finances we are working with other social landlords in the Tees Valley to procure an energy solution to offer a market leading tariff for electricity and gas which will be available to all tenants, irrespective of their payment method for energy. It is envisaged that tenants who subscribe to the new deal will save up to £200 (likely to be around £100 for most) per annum on their energy bills. In addition, community energy champions will be employed to help tenants reduce bills further through behaviour change and achieve switching levels to reduce household expenditure and tackle fuel poverty.

Customer Service

Tristar Homes has a very customer centred approach, recognising the importance of personal contact in supporting its customers. We have achieved the **Customer Service Excellence Accreditation** across the Vela group in 2013 providing external challenge and highlighted good practice within the Company in particular around our Customer Service centre, customer centred empty property approach and how we have utilised customer insight to help inform preparations for welfare reform.

We are committed to ensuring that our employees provide the best possible customer experience and employees have received “Going Beyond” customer service training. Colleagues are supported through an individual Performance Appraisal System which sets objectives and identifies learning and development needs. Last year we received the reaccreditation of the **Investors in People Award**.

During 2012/13 we carried out 2413 customer contact home visits promoting our new and existing services and also obtaining customer’s views on our services and neighbourhood. These visits help us to identify areas for improvement which feed into our 43 Neighbourhood plans. Progress against these plans is provided via 6 monthly neighbourhood newsletters.

We have focussed on ensuring that customers receive information that they need, and have updated our website, newsletters provided new on-line access to rent accounts and introduced a repairs text messaging service advising of the repair appointments, resulting in fewer calls to the Customer Service centre and less missed repair appointments. Telephone contact and telephone remains our most popular way to contact us and we take a first contact resolution approach. We have reduced call waiting times significantly; have a Contact Relation Management system to help track calls and responses. We are recognised by the Northern Housing Consortium as a best practice Contact centre and have received visits from other organisations to learn from our best practice.

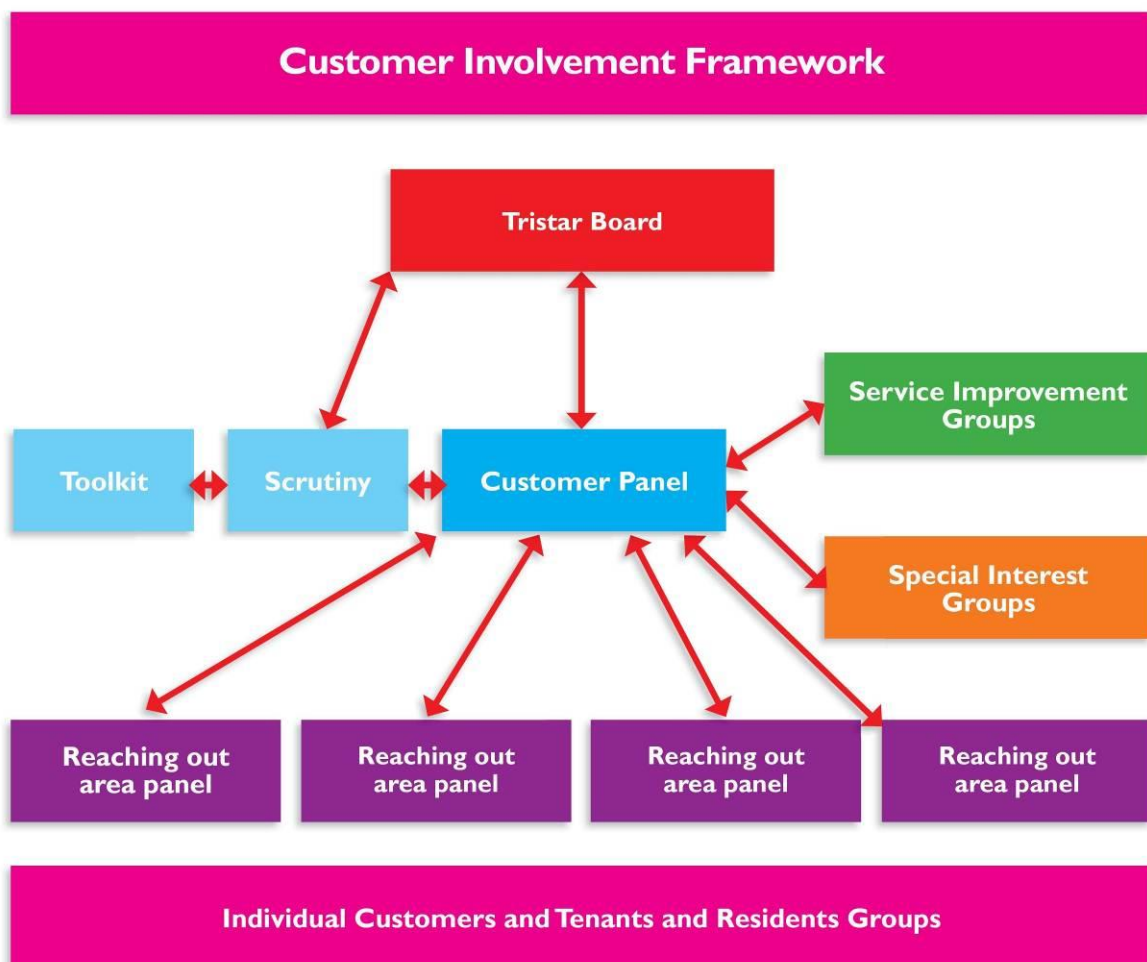
Delivering local standards

Through our new Customer Involvement framework, and as part of our Co-Regulatory approach, we have agreed and delivered seven local standards covering Customer Empowerment, Money Matters, Employability, Repairs and maintenance, Choice Based Lettings, ASB and also a new Neighbourhoods

standard. Each standard, agreed in consultation with customers, has helped us to focus on the things that matter most to our them and our regular Keep In Touch (KIT) events and consultative mechanisms have enabled customers to receive feedback on these standards and challenge to improve services further.

Customer Involvement

We now have a more varied suite of activities that customers can be involved in to improve places and services; hold their landlord to account, and to enhance their individual confidence and empowerment through our learning and development programme.



We now provide opportunities for more “hands on” practical methods of engagement like mystery shopping and estate/works inspections; customer and colleague telephone and face to face interviews, and focus groups facilitated to customers by customers. We are driving forward our digital inclusion agenda through our involvement service and are using short films via you tube, facebook and our website to inform our wider customer base of how

they can engage with us in different forums. Naturally, we have kept some of our traditional meeting and discussion mechanisms as these are popular with our involved people and give us immediate feedback in regard to a whole range of services we provide. We keep these meetings across our framework vibrant with our targeted recruitment process supported through our Customer Contact Visit programme and a model of involvement that shows clear accountability up to the Board of Directors.

A key involvement mechanism for Tristar Homes is our Reaching Out Area Panels, these 4 locally based groups work in partnership with our neighbourhood teams to drive up improvements in the places and communities where our customers live. The Offer document promised that these panels would have an annual devolved budget of £25k each. These budgets have been agreed and allocated year on year. Customers base their spend against the devolved budgets on our neighbourhood plans that take into account the needs of the wider customer base. A varied range of projects have been supported through this resource including youth diversionary activities, environmental and community safety improvements and community engagement events. Customers are now made aware of the ROAPs fund, how to bid for it and what the resource has been spent on through our ROAPs newsletters delivered to all of our tenants in the locality.

Customers, and in particular young people are at heart of our decision making process regarding “positive youth” engagement activities. A £40k per year fund as promised is being distributed to fund community youth projects and initiatives across Stockton. Customers agreed that this resource would be best used to support a mixture of existing larger scale youth projects, and some smaller grass roots schemes, At Tristar we have branded this participatory budget our “Buzzin” fund after feedback from young people. Schemes that have been supported include “beat the boredom” events during school holidays, mobile skate parks, “Fighting Chance” using sport to get young males interested in positive activity, and supporting the national citizenship service (NCS) programme that amongst a host of other initiatives engaged young people to develop a facility for a local charity for autistic children; developed a community allotment; designed and installed sculptures in one of our areas and created several short films that helped young people become more aware of social problems including domestic violence This project was shortlisted for a national TPAS award. Young people now are responsible for evaluating the Buzzin projects.

At the other end of the spectrum, we are providing opportunities for older people to become more active through our “full of life” initiative. These encourage older people to take part in community or leisure activities including Stockton cycling festival, jubilee style parties and trips out for older people.

Day to Day Repairs

Our repairs service has seen the introduction of 2 repair categories; same-day emergencies and mutually agreed appointments for all other repairs, including those covered under the Right to Repair. Appointments are also available on evenings and Saturday mornings. We also provide a 24-hr emergency service, 365 days per year.

During the last financial year we completed 99.25% of emergencies within timescale and kept 97.65% of appointments; 86.28% of all jobs were completed on first visit. We have introduced a priority repairs service for our more elderly and vulnerable customers. Last year we completed 1582 bespoke repairs within a day of the fault being logged.

Although not yet fully introduced, Tristar Homes Contract Services team are about to initiate/implement a pilot Handyperson scheme covering High Rise properties initially. This will be introduced by the end of July, and the pilot will run for 3 months.

The introduction of a compensation scheme for missed second repair appointments was not recognised by the Home customer group as a high priority immediately after transfer. However, as part of our continued effort to improve our services to customers, the Contract Services Responsive Repairs team are undertaking a business process review in 2013, as well as redefining the overall service in line with customer requirements, including this aspect.

We continue to support local initiatives relating to our communities and employability. We provide work experience through Know How North East and Urban Blitz. Over the last two years we have been able to provide training opportunities for around 62 local young people, in fencing and environmental services (litter picking, graffiti removal etc.).

Those apprentices with Know How North East will gain an NVQ in Fencing. The Urban Blitz apprentices are part of a training/developmental programme whereby the apprentices will gain a NVQ Level 1 qualification in Environmental Conservation. As a result of this, one Urban Blitz apprentice

was successful in securing a full time Bricklaying apprenticeship with Vela Group.

Neighbourhood Services

On neighbourhood services we have agreed improved grounds maintenance and cleaning specifications in consultation with customers and continue to work alongside Stockton Council's Care for Your Area team to improve service standards to the benefit of our customers.

Our neighbourhood activities are linked to priorities identified by our customers and captured within our 43 Neighbourhood plans. Our Patch Managers provide feedback to customers via Neighbourhood newsletters, via Customer champions for the area and resident groups of their achievements and progress against issues raised. We undertake quarterly walkabouts and monthly checks of all internal communal areas and quarterly checks of all garage sites. Any issues established such as fly tipping is responded to quickly via our Estate Caretaker service.

We have also provided 84 young people (18-25) with the skills and advice needed to successfully manage a tenancy during 2012/13 through the new Tenancy Sustainment service. We recognise that this customer group is more at risk of losing their home in the first 12 months and acknowledge that low levels of support may be appropriate. The outcome of this initiative has seen a positive impact on the numbers of failed tenancies as a result of arrears or tenant behaviour, and an increase in tenants making informed decisions about their future housing.

Tackling anti-social behaviour is a key customer priority, and our ASB local standard has received commendation in the Social Landlords Crime and Nuisance Group best practice award. Our partners include Safe at Stockton Partnership, Stockton Council ASB team, Unite, Harbour, Cleveland Constabulary, Fire Brigade etc. We have also worked in partnership with Tees Valley Housing Group to develop and fund a project worker to support families with complex needs who are at risk of losing their homes due to persistent anti-social behaviour. This service has supported 26 families and as a result none of these families have had their homes put at risk. We have also supported 217 homes through target hardening home security improvements via the Safe at Home scheme.

Choice Based Lettings / Adaptations

A key priority for customers has been around ensuring enhanced verification checking prior to letting and our Home Choice restructure has enabled officers to carry out home and office visits to verify the information that applicants have provided. We also provide additional support for our older and vulnerable customers especially seeking a transfer as well as those customers who are under occupying their home due to welfare reforms. So far we have moved 91 customers identified as being adversely affected by changes to the benefit system, the prospect of moving from a much loved family home is a sensitive matter and customers appreciate the support provided through a dedicated officer.

Additional support to customers has been provided via our Adaptation service where there was a commitment of £1M fund each year to help support customers remain in their homes and improve the quality of life. In 2012/13 we have carried out 902 minor adaptations by our in-house team and £826K worth of major adaptations including level entry showers, stair lifts and an extension during 2012/13. This does not include the cost of the officers managing the service. These adaptations have had a positive impact on the lives of our customers and the high levels of customer satisfaction reflect this.

Additional services – Employability and Health

We have also focussed on the personal services which we provide customers such as our Employability service which received Chartered institute of Housing Award recognition. During 2012/13 we have worked with 301 customers including 92 customers who are under occupying their homes and at risk of welfare reform changes. We have also helped over 64 people into employment and 86 people into training.

We are also supported the delivery of the Health Watch contract in the Stockton area in partnership with Pioneering care partnership. Tristar Homes comes together with SRCGA, MIND and Know How North East who as part of the contract are local delivery partners and we have utilised our customer engagement framework to provide important feedback on health service provision.

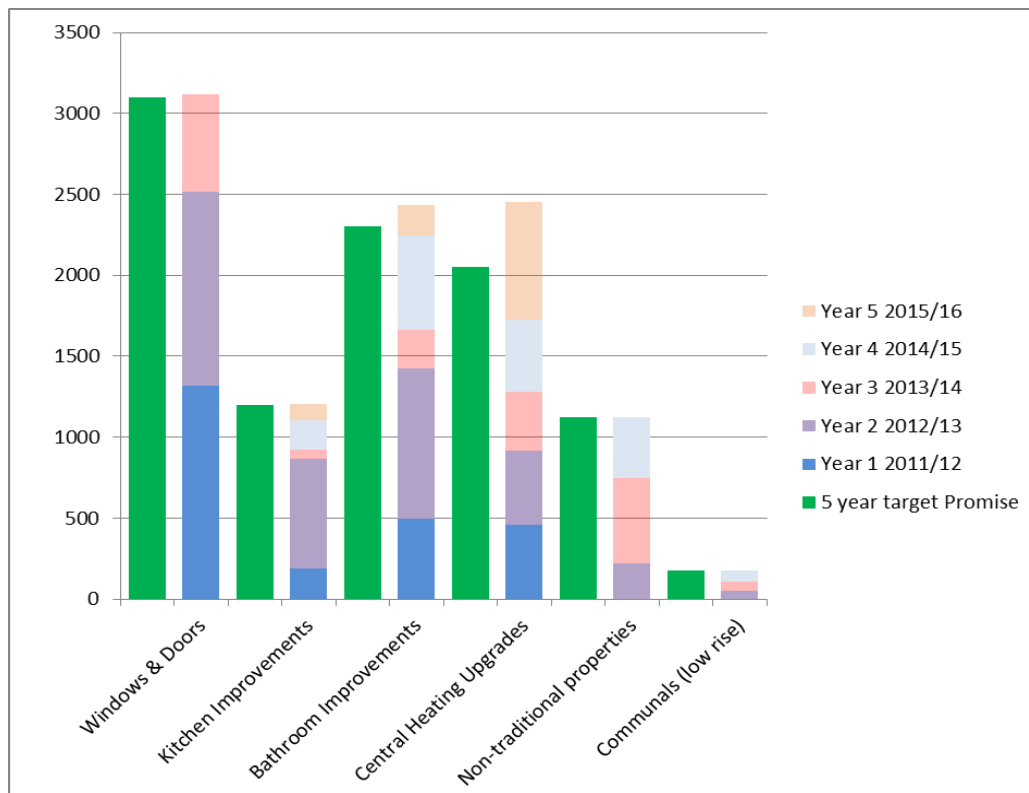
As an employer we are also committed to our Apprenticeship programme and currently have 34 apprentices working for the Vela group. In 2012 we retained 15 apprentices on permanent or fixed term contracts, of the 9 which left, 5 have now secured employment elsewhere and 2 have gone back to college.

Regeneration

Since transfer we have delivered on our commitment to continue to drive forward key regeneration projects across the Borough. Managing site assembly, resident relocations and demolitions activity has been largely successfully completed at Mandale, and also in Swainby Road, where Tristar Homes is looking to provide all of any affordable housing that is provided on the redeveloped site. We have agreed a phased delivery strategy with Stockton Borough Council to implement site assembly and resident relocations on the Victoria estate, and are currently looking to prepare a detailed master plan and development framework which will help guide the future redevelopment of this key strategic town centre regeneration priority. We are also working with the Council to help deliver on the strategy for dealing with empty homes across the Borough, and are developing a project that aims to bring long term vacant and often problematic private sector properties back into use as affordable housing within the management of Tristar Homes.

Investment

Year 2013/14 sees the mid-way point of the 5-year “promises” and £103M investment plan for the major investment programmes to customers. The chart below shows our progress against the Offer Promises;



As the bar chart demonstrates at the mid-way point, we are more than half-way through investment programme. The solid green bars show the anticipated number of component replacements at the time of transfer. The bars with the blue, purple and pink sections show our progress in each of the 3 years since transfer, and therefore where we are against those promises. For example, it was anticipated that circa 3000 window/door replacements would be required and we promised to complete these within 3 years of transfer. By the end of Year 2 we had completed 2500, with the remaining works to be completed by the end of this year. This confirms that we are on target to achieve the promises made in advance of the full 5 year programme.

Non Traditional Properties

The Radburn Estate in Billingham has seen the completion of the pilot properties for the external and environmental works. The pictures below show the properties before and after the external cladding, windows & doors, roofline works, as well as the addition of porches to the Shepherd “No Fines” (non-traditional property classification) properties.

Following the completion of the building works, the environmental works will enhance the estate, with soft landscaping discouraging unwanted access through the estate.

In order to ensure that these works benefit not just Tristar Homes tenants, but the communities as a whole, we have undertaken a proactive approach to consultation with private residents on this estate. This has seen all but 1 private resident agreeing to have the cladding works completed, which will be fully funded and undertaken by our strategic partner through a CESP/CERT grant, greatly enhancing the aesthetics of the estate. Several private residents have also asked to buy into the window replacement scheme, thus improving the aesthetics of the estate as a whole.



Radburn Estate, before works



Radburn Estate, on completion

Environmental Programme

In developing the Environmental Programme priorities we have sought the views of ward councillors, customers and colleagues. We have completed our first 2 communal environmental schemes – Campbell & Walton Courts and Wrensfild Court. These two projects denote the start of Tristar's £13m environmental investment programme promise, and have seen us work closely with Groundworks North East, a local 3rd sector organisation and local schools during the design process, ensuring that the design brief identified by residents was not only met, but greatly exceeded.

Campbell & Walton Courts (on completion)



Wrensfield Court



Before

After

Our 2012/13 Environmental works included:-

- Stillington – paving and planting areas
- Longbeck Way – traffic management of green areas
- Oxbridge Bungalows – parking
- Primrose Hill – boundary works
- Hardwick
- Campbell & Walton
- Wrensfield
- Newham Grange – off street parking
- Redbrooke Villa – boundary works

2013/2014 Planned Environmental works

- Gilpin Road flats
- Wrensfield
- Fairfield
- Radburn
- Primrose Hill – boundary works
- Kennedy Gardens
- Hume & Nolan
- Anson & Hudson
- Holmes V
- Appleton Road Flats
- Other minor works yet to be agreed

High Rise

Kennedy Gardens is a major £8m project, to undertake external wall improvements including the repairs to defective cladding and replacement of all balconies, replacement windows and bathrooms and re-roofing. In addition the opportunity was taken to design additional accommodation by infilling the under crofts to provide an additional 12 units and access £250,000 of grant from the Homes and Communities Agency. Following a major tendering exercise the contract was awarded to Wates with the project starting on site in March and will be completed in 2014.

Kennedy gardens prior to work



The image below is the architect's impression of what the completed building will look like.



New Build Homes

Tristar Homes, part of the Vela group has enabled a significant number of new build development sites within Stockton which are summarised below.

Scheme	No of properties	Area	Affordable Rent
College Gardens	12	Billingham	12
Meadow Rise	10	Hardwick Stockton	10
Parkfield	19	Stockton	19
Queensgate	10	Stockton	10
Redbrooke	28	Stockton	20
St Johns Way	3	Stockton	3
Victoria Park Phase 1	16	Stockton	16
Victoria Park Phase 2	17	Stockton	17
Total	115		

Redbrook, Roseworth



College Gardens, Billingham



Meadow Rise



Victoria Park,
Stockton



Queensgate, Stockton



C

Parkfield Road, Stockton



Kennedy Gardens, Stockton

In addition, the Property Services are undertaking a significant investment scheme here, as part of which Vela has been able to secure some HCA grant funding to deliver 12 additional flats by building at ground level beneath the existing first floors of these three blocks.

The flats will be a mixture of 1 and 2 bedroomed units, all meeting HCA Design and Quality standards.

Governance

Tristar is governed by a board made up of 4 Local Authority nominated board directors, 4 independent board directors and 4 tenant board directors. Following a recruitment process last year, 3 new tenant board directors were appointed (Denise Ross, Glen Rudd and Michelle Bendelow), and this year we have welcomed a new LA board director - Norma Stephenson OBE - to replace Bill Woodhead, who had reached the end of his term of office. The Company complies with the National Housing Federation's Code of Governance.

Tristar is registered with, and regulated by, the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA), who carry out an annual assessment of our governance arrangements and financial viability. As part of our assessment earlier this year, representatives from the HCA attended a Tristar Board meeting, interviewed senior members of staff, and reviewed reports, strategies and other documentation. As a result we have received the highest accreditation from the HCA - G1 and V1 - confirming their satisfaction with our governance arrangements and financial viability.

Service Reviews

During 2012/13 Tristar Homes has undertaken a range of service reviews with a value for money and customer centred focus. Key services reviewed and outcomes achieved include:-

- Adaptations Review - Operational management savings and further savings through delivering adaptations through new in-house delivery model. Added value has been driven through this review due to a Tenant Scrutiny review of the "Customer Journey" for customers receiving the adaptations service.

- Concierge review – Reduced service charges for customers. Rebranded service to High Rise Support teams.
- Tenancy support service – Additional resources to be introduced to support new tenants in their home, extension of landlord furniture package and further resources secured to improve access to furniture and white goods reducing reliance on high cost credit options.
- Income Management service – Introduced new Landlord discretionary housing fund created to assist customers impacted by bedroom tax.
- Empty Property management – Revised marketing strategies and new performance management framework to help drive approach and focus in a new environment following changes

How well are we doing?

Satisfaction continues to improve as outlined in our 2012 STAR survey results which enable a comparator against other housing organisations. This is a 3 year independent survey completed by BMG Research (BMG). A postal survey was sent to 2,000 tenants and an overall response rate of 44.15% was achieved. In total 883 general needs tenants' questionnaires were returned.

Survey results show that:-

- 'Overall service provided' is above the national average.
- 'Repairs and maintenance' is above the national average
- 'Taking views into account' is below the national average.

Question	THL 2008	THL 2012	Upper quartile	National Comparison Average
Overall satisfaction with landlord	83.1%	86%	88.05%	84.60%
Satisfaction that views are taken into account	67.2%	62%	69.24%	65.90%
Satisfaction with the quality of the home	81.3%	84%	86.00%	82.70%
Satisfaction with the	76.4%	81%	86.20%	83.00%

neighbourhood as a place to live				
Satisfaction with repairs and maintenance	76.3%	80%	84.0%	79.00%





We are taking action to do further work with our customers to understand why satisfaction that views are taken into account has fallen; the results of this consultation will inform our customer involvement framework review planned for 2014.




We have achieved excellent satisfaction survey results with:-

- Enhanced service – 9.20 out of 10 customers satisfied with our enhanced garden service
- 9.4 out of 10 of customers satisfied with their new home
- 9.5 out of 10 of customers satisfied with improvement works to their new home (satisfaction with improvement work
- 8.7 out of 10 customers satisfied with repairs service
- 8.5 out of 10 customers satisfied with the ASB service
- 9.7 out of 10 satisfaction with Adaptations service

Key Performance Indicators

We continue to deliver against the standards set by the social housing regulator and agreed with our customers. The self-assessment which has been carried out in partnership with our customers indicates that we are meeting the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) national standards and the locally agreed offers. Feedback to customers has been provided to customers via our Annual Customer reports.

KPI	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13 Q4	Target	At Target?
Total Amount of Rent Arrears Outstanding	972,435	1,063,438	911,606	1,050,000	
Average Time to Relet a Property (Days)	25.82	21.77	19.94	20.00	
% ASB Incidents Responded to Within 24 Hours	89.62%	99.80%	99.14%	100%	
% Appointments made and kept	95.50%	97.28%	97.65%	97%	

% Emergency repairs completed in target time	99.01%	99.28%	99.24%	99%	
% Repairs Appointments made within 20 days of Request	73.28%	77.12%	83.90%	100%	
Current CP12s issued as % of total properties that require a certificate	100%	100%	100%	100%	

Welfare reform impact on delivering upon our promises

We continue to monitor progress against the offer document commitments through Board and also our Customer Involvement framework. Where we have been unable to adhere to a promise as a result of a Government change then this has been discussed with Stockton Council.

We have had some initial discussions with Stockton Council and also our engaged customers through our Customer Panel with regard to the offer document promise around the collection of rent over a 48/49 week period. With the introduction of Universal Credit and benefit payments being received calendar monthly in the future then we have concerns around how customers will be able to pay their rent over a different payment cycle. Customers will receive short fall payments each calendar month and therefore are more likely to go into arrears as their benefit payment will be paid to them over a 52 week period. Tristar Homes Customer Panel is in agreement that it would seem sensible to remove the non-payment weeks from April 2014 when it is likely that Universal Credit payments will be received.

Conclusion

We are well on the way to delivering the offer promises and are looking at a final report on this showing what we have done but also the impact of the service changes and investment for tenants and communities. Beyond the plans to deliver the promises many existing and new services have taken us even further reflecting our ambition.

As part of the Vela group then the additional much needed new homes to the Borough is welcomed. These new homes not only help many families but also add value to the regeneration of Stockton.

Our vision is “Shaping Places, Creating Communities and Changing Lives”. It is this vision supported by our Business plan that has provided the sense of direction and has enabled the Company to achieve great things on behalf of

our customers. We continue to look at ways in which we can deliver exceptional service, learning from our customers experience and listening to all of our customer views.

We are passionate about making a difference to the lives of our customers which is witnessed through our inclusion activities and the positive feedback received from our customers around how this has made a real impact to their lives. We recognise that there are challenging times ahead and were moving forward into a different operating environment as a result of the impact of welfare reform but we remain committed to providing exceptional customer experiences and quality homes and services which meet the needs of our customers.

We continue to work alongside the Council and other partners in a collaborative way recognising the major contribution we can play and the partnership approach needed.