

# **ST LEGER HOMES OF DONCASTER LIMITED**

## **VALUE FOR MONEY (VFM)**

### **STATEMENT**

#### **FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED**

**31 MARCH 2021**

*“Providing homes in neighbourhoods that people are proud to live in”*

*Our strategic objectives :*

- *Ensure all our homes are modern, decent and energy efficient;*
- *Support our tenants to lead successful and fulfilling lives;*
- *Be a nationally recognised housing services provider; and*
- *Deliver the aims of Doncaster Growing Together through innovation and partnership.*

## **ST LEGER HOMES OF DONCASTER LIMITED**

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## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. St Leger Homes of Doncaster (St Leger) defines value for money as: **“Achieving the best balance between service cost and the benefit to the customer and business”**.
- 1.2. A balanced scorecard of priorities and targets were developed for each strategic objective and were agreed with Doncaster Council (DC) to reflect plans and risks. It should be noted here that priorities, targets and budgets were approved before Covid19 took full effect.
- 1.3. An Annual Development Plan (ADP) and a suite of Key Performance Indicator (KPIs) for the year was also approved by the Board, based on our strategic objectives and also Mayoral priorities. Key themes for 2020/21 were :
  - Responding to emerging building and fire safety regulations;
  - Using technology to modernise and transform the business and service delivery;
  - Helping tenants to sustain their tenancies;
  - Reviewing the Asset Management strategy and making best use of DC’s assets;
  - Customer access - engaging with tenants, residents and communities;
  - Expanding our World of Work programme (WoW);
  - Delivering the ICT strategy and digital transformation;
  - Reducing and preventing homelessness within the borough;
  - Reducing the number of empty properties in the borough; and
  - Embedding a positive health, safety and wellbeing culture.
- 1.4. Operationally, the main challenges in 2020/21 were to maintain core services within the constraints of Covid19 restrictions (**see Section 3 below**), develop and implement a new integrated housing management system, further rollout of Universal Credit (UC), Building Safer Futures consultation and publication of the social housing White Paper.
- 1.5. Doncaster has the lowest rents within South Yorkshire and tenant satisfaction levels that rent provides value for money is top quartile with our peers and nationally. 2020/21 provided many challenges to this and St Leger met these within limited budgets.
- 1.6. At this highest level, increased performance targets have mostly been met, but not meeting some was unavoidable due to Covid19 implications, and we operated within budget, whilst budgets and staffing levels have largely stayed the same. The statement expands on this by looking at cost and performance by service and how these compare with other organisations.
- 1.7. Despite the significant restrictions, particularly in April and May 2020, SLHD ensured business critical services were delivered, before a phased return to full service in early June, and which remained in place for the rest of the year, even with more disruption with further lockdown and tier restrictions in Quarters 2 and 3. SLHD also played a significant role in working with our stakeholders to provide much needed support to vulnerable residents across the borough during these restrictions.
- 1.8. Performance was strong in a number of areas and St Leger operated within budget, whilst staffing levels and budgets have stayed the same or reduced, except where there had been agreed cost or inflationary increases with DC.
- 1.9. Some targets were not met, which was unavoidable given the constraints of the Covid19 pandemic. However, despite these significant operational and financial challenges, the majority of targets were exceeded, met or within tolerances, and was the best ever in one instance (sickness).
- 1.10. The statement also shows that St Leger is again, in general, a low cost, mid to high performing organisation when benchmarked with our peers (25 organisations – ALMOs, Metropolitan Boroughs and Unitary Authorities) and also all housing providers nationally (120 organisations).

- 1.11. The majority of our cost and performance indicators are in the upper quartiles (above median) compared to our peers. Benchmarking shows there are areas of good performance and also some areas for improvement, which will be followed up and acted on.

## 2. VFM environment

- 2.1. St Leger is income led, receiving management fees to manage and maintain Doncaster Council's (DC) housing related assets; around 20,000 homes, 100 shops, 2,000 garages and sites and some Housing Revenue Account (HRA) land, and a number of other key housing services. It is therefore imperative that St Leger achieves VFM in all of its activities.
- 2.2. Annual management fee incomes for 2020/21 only increased in relation to specific cost of living awards, pay scale increments, pension cost increases, growth or specifically agreed elements, and therefore robust budgetary control was required and achieved in the year.
- 2.3. Our VFM strategy contains six objectives :
- **Culture** : maximise staff involvement in VFM and embed a VFM culture;
  - **Customers** : maximise customers, leaseholders and stakeholders' VFM engagement;
  - **Comparison** : expand the performance management framework and benchmarking;
  - **Communication** : improve the quality, range and use of VFM reporting;
  - **Commercial**: ensure best use of all assets for which St Leger is responsible; and
  - **Collaboration** : strengthen the role of Support Services to the business.
- 2.4. St Leger has again followed the Regulator for Social Housing framework in producing this document. The VFM standard states that a registered housing provider must clearly articulate its strategic objectives and have an approach agreed by board to achieving VFM in meeting these objectives. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards>
- 2.5. We validate our performance with employee and customer surveys and we actively benchmark our services with other organisations. As in previous years, the main method of benchmarking is through our membership of Housemark (see Section 6 below), but we also carry out more tailored benchmarking with specific organisations.

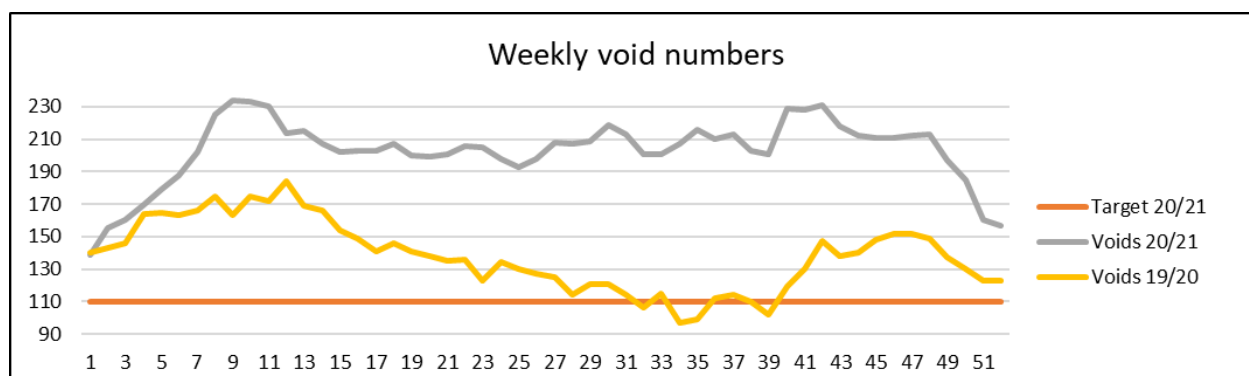
## 3. Covid19

- 3.1. 2020/21 was an exceptional year with the Covid19 pandemic providing numerous challenges, and to provide the required context for this VFM statement, the main challenges are listed below. Further details appear throughout the statement as appropriate :
- Business critical services only were delivered in April and May 2020 and normal services started to resume from June, as lockdown restrictions were eased. Covid19 continued to impact as there were further lockdown and tier restrictions in Q2 and Q3;
  - St Leger offices were closed and all office based staff were working from home throughout 2020/21;
  - No employees on furlough in the year;
  - Reduced capital income of £2.4m mainly due to quarter 1 restrictions. Bottom line adverse impact of £1.2m;
  - Court closures, eviction bans and no enforcement action available on tenants;
  - Mayoral option of a three month rent payment holiday in Q1;
  - Additional PPE required for employees costing nearly £100k more than budget;
  - New Covid-safe systems of work introduced, eg. one tradesperson per van, 'shift' arrangements on site to minimise contact, increased hygiene requirements;
  - Significant, unbudgeted investment in IT equipment, primarily laptops, to enable employees to work from home;
  - Full year expenditure commitment on some Service Level Agreement budgets, eg Grounds Maintenance, Cleaning, compared to some Housing Associations who would reduce expenditure due to Covid19 restrictions; and
  - Additional temporary accommodation costs of £1.6m to meet government instructions and providing increased demands on employee capacity.

## PERFORMANCE

### 4. Company performance - Key Performance Indicators (KPI)

- 4.1. Annually, the Board approve the ADP, budget and Key Performance Indicator (KPI) targets aligned with our strategic objectives. Budgets and KPIs are monitored monthly.
- 4.2. The budgets and targets were approved before the Covid19 pandemic restrictions were put in place (March 2020) and they had a material impact on all services, particularly in Quarter 1.
- 4.3. Void levels in the year reflect this and the chart below plots void numbers throughout the year compared to target and also 2019/20. It shows an increase in the first quarter and again towards the end of quarter 3 in line with Government tier and lockdown instructions, but were heading towards target towards again by year end.



- 4.4. The table below shows the KPIs for 2020/21 and whether targets were met, with comparatives.

| KPI | KPI description                             | 20/21<br>Outturn | 20/21<br>Target | 19/20<br>Outturn | 18/19<br>Outturn |
|-----|---|------------------|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| 1   | Current rent arrears % against annual rent  | 2.75%            | 2.80%           | 2.79%            | 2.61%            |
| 2   | Void rent loss % of annual rent             | 1.00%            | 0.50%           | 0.59%            | 0.49%            |
| 3   | Average no. of days to re-let a property    | 46.11            | 20.0            | 22.7             | 20.9             |
| 5   | Full Duty homelessness acceptances          | 398              | 160             | 228              | 130              |
| 6   | Homeless preventions                        | 604              | 800             | 965              | n/a              |
| 7   | Complaints upheld as a % of interactions    | 0.065%           | 0.075%          | 0.061%           | 0.070%           |
| 8   | Tenancies sustained post support            | 97.25%           | 90.00%          | 93.80%           | n/a              |
| 9   | Repairs – First visit complete              | 90.92%           | 92.00%          | 90.24%           | n/a              |
| 10  | Gas servicing - % of properties attended    | 100.00%          | 100.00%         | 100.00%          | 100.00%          |
| 11  | Days lost through sickness per FTE          | 6.60             | 7.90            | 8.22             | 8.90             |
| 12  | Percentage of local expenditure             | 52%              | 70%             | 59%              | 58%              |
| 13  | Anti-Social Behaviour % of resolved cases   | 95.19%           | 95.00%          | 95.55%           | 92.99%           |
| 14a | Tenants & residents undertaking training    | 30               | 56              | 53               | n/a              |
| 14b | Tenants & residents into employment         | 28               | 25              | 31               | n/a              |
| 15  | Tenant satisfaction overall                 | 87.00%           | 89.00%          | 87.00%           | n/a              |
| 16  | Homes meeting Decent Standard               | 99.99%           | 100.00%         | 100.00%          | n/a              |
| 17  | Tenant satisfaction with property condition | 89.40%           | 89.00%          | 89.40%           | n/a              |
| 18  | Energy efficiency of properties – new       | 64.74%           | 42.00%          | 99.96%           | n/a              |

Key :

|                     |                  |                |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------|
| Target met/exceeded | Within tolerance | Target not met |
|---------------------|------------------|----------------|

- 4.5. The table shows twelve KPIs meeting or within tolerance of target and six not meeting target, two of which are voids related, due to lettings suspensions during the year, and two due to homelessness as a result of following government's 'everyone in' instructions.

- 4.6. Despite the Covid19 constraints, there was some exceptional performance areas :
- Rent arrears ended the year at 2.75%, below target and also below 2019/20 levels, even with restrictions on evictions and legal action, and also rent holidays on offer to tenants at the start of the year;
  - Tenancies sustained exceeded target at 97.25%;
  - All gas appliances were serviced and had a valid gas safety certificate; and
  - Sickness levels were better than target and the lowest ever.
- 4.7. Detailed commentary appears at **Section 7** below.

## 5. Customer Service standards

- 5.1. To complement our corporate KPIs, St Leger has developed Service Standards with our customers. These are operational indicators to ensure we provide the highest levels of customer service. They are reported quarterly with actions generated to improve performance. The table below summarises our performance:

| Service standards         | 20/21 | 19/20 | 18/19 |
|---------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Compliant with target     | 7     | 8     | 8     |
| Within target tolerance   | 1     | 3     | 2     |
| Not compliant with target | 3     | 2     | 3     |
| Total                     | 11    | 13    | 13    |

- 5.2. The three standards where we weren't meeting target were:
- Increasing the number of tenants in the Get Involved Group (GIG);
  - Resolve/respond to enquiries, compliments and complaints within 10 working days; and
  - Answering calls within 20 seconds.

## **BENCHMARKING**

### 6. Benchmarking – how we compare with others

- 6.1. We actively benchmark our services with other organisations, because a key element of being able to claim whether VFM is being achieved is how we compare with other organisations.
- 6.2. The main method of benchmarking is through our membership of Housemark. One outcome of benchmarking is grading our costs and performance into four bands or quartiles, ie Quartile 1 for top performers or lowest cost, etc. We submit performance information quarterly and more comprehensive performance information on annual basis, together with detailed financial analysis (see below).
- 6.3. We also carry out more tailored benchmarking with specific organisations, where appropriate. This was limited in 2020/21 due to restrictions on travel and focus on core services during the pandemic, but some benchmarking was undertaken involving:
- Universal Credit (UC) – working with the DWP national policy team to develop year-end processes for all social housing landlords
  - Income Management (IM) – participation in a regional (northern) benchmarking group;
  - Income Management (IM) – talking to other organisations to review systems;
  - Part of the National Early Adopter programme for High Rise Buildings (HRRB);
  - Participated in a regional health, safety and compliance benchmarking group;
  - Member of a national Former Tenant Arrears forum;

## HOUSEMARK

- 6.4. The benchmarking information from Housemark for 2020/21 compares our performance to a peer group of 25 ALMOs, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary authorities and similar organisations, and also around 120 housing providers nationally.
- 6.5. All benchmarking results must consider that differences exist between housing providers – size, geography, demographic, timing, etc. - and should serve as an introduction for further investigation and detailed discussions.
- 6.6. Some organisations would have had employees on furlough in the year and therefore received government income. Housemark have accounted for this by treating it as income rather than netting off employee costs, so all cost comparisons will be consistent
- 6.7. **In summary, for all benchmarking information submitted, it shows that St Leger remains a low cost, mid performing organisation** (see below).

### Housemark - VFM dashboard

- 6.8. At an overview level, VFM dashboards can be produced by plotting a selection of cost and performance indicators in a 2x2 matrix to show how an organisation compares with its peer group, geographically or nationally, for core service areas. The aim is to have as many indicators as possible in the low cost, high performance green area and as few as possible in the high cost, poor performance red area.
- 6.9. The dashboard is intended to give a VFM snapshot and generate further investigation. The dashboards for 2020/21 and 2019/20 comparatives are shown below.
- 6.10. The tables below shows the cost and performance indicators selected with the dashboards for 2020/21 and 2019/20, for both our Peer Group and Nationally.

## PEER GROUP VFM DASHBOARDS

| Key | Service                   | Cost indicator                   | Performance indicator                                 |
|-----|---------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| 1   | Responsive repairs        | CPP * of responsive repairs      | STAR satisfaction with repairs service                |
| 2   | Void repairs and lettings | CPP of void repairs              | Void rent loss %                                      |
| 3   | Rent arrears & collection | CPP of rent arrears & collection | Current arrears %                                     |
| 4   | Tenancy Management        | CPP of tenancy management        | STAR satisfaction with service overall                |
| 5   | Customer involvement      | CPP of customer involvement      | STAR satisfaction with views being listened and acted |
| 6   | Customer services         | CPP of housing management        | Average days to respond to complaints                 |
| 7   | Neighbourhood m'ment      | CPP of estate services           | STAR satisfaction with neighbourhood as place to live |
| 8   | Community investment      | CPP of community investment      | Residents supported into employment                   |

\* CPP = Cost Per Property

### Peer group 2020/21 - 25 ALMOs, Metropolitan Boroughs and Unitary authorities



### Peer group 2019/20 - 25 ALMOs, Metropolitan Boroughs and Unitary authorities





## NATIONAL DASHBOARDS

| Key | Service                   | Cost indicator                   | Performance indicator                                 |
|-----|---------------------------|----------------------------------|---|
| 1   | Responsive repairs        | CPP * of responsive repairs      | STAR satisfaction with repairs service                |
| 2   | Void repairs and lettings | CPP of void repairs              | Void rent loss %                                      |
| 3   | Rent arrears & collection | CPP of rent arrears & collection | Current arrears %                                     |
| 4   | Tenancy Management        | CPP of tenancy management        | STAR satisfaction with service overall                |
| 5   | Customer involvement      | CPP of customer involvement      | STAR satisfaction with views being listened and acted |
| 6   | Customer services         | CPP of housing management        | Average days to respond to complaints                 |
| 7   | Neighbourhood m'ment      | CPP of estate services           | STAR satisfaction with neighbourhood as place to live |
| 8   | Community investment      | CPP of community investment      | Residents supported into employment                   |

\* CPP = Cost Per Property

### Nationally 2020/21 – approx. 120 housing providers



### Nationally 2019/20 - approx. 90 housing providers



## Housemark - Optimising service costs

- 6.11. Total expenditure is analysed into Housemark service areas to give headline and detailed costs per service. The table below summarises our headline **costs per property (CPP)** together with comparatives and peer and national group benchmarks from Housemark.

| Cost Category                  | 18/19<br>Outturn<br>CPP<br>£ | 19/20<br>Outturn<br>CPP<br>£ | 20/21<br>Outturn<br>CPP<br>£ | Peer<br>Median<br>CPP<br>£ | Peer<br>Quartile | National<br>Quartile |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| <u>Repairs</u>                 |                              |                              |                              |                            |                  |                      |
| Major Works                    | 1,815                        | 1,134                        | <b>1,101</b>                 | 1,163                      | Q2               | Q3                   |
| Cyclical Maintenance           | 129                          | 127                          | <b>138</b>                   | 266                        | Q1               | Q1                   |
| Responsive Repairs             | 571                          | 571                          | <b>583</b>                   | 535                        | Q3               | Q2                   |
| Void Works                     | 200                          | 193                          | <b>214</b>                   | 233                        | Q2               | Q2                   |
| <u>Housing</u>                 |                              |                              |                              |                            |                  |                      |
| Rent arrears collection        | 76                           | 78                           | <b>88</b>                    | 112                        | ↓Q2              | Q1                   |
| Resident Involvement           | 14                           | 16                           | <b>19</b>                    | 30                         | ↓Q2              | Q1                   |
| Tenancy Management             | 89                           | 90                           | <b>104</b>                   | 129                        | Q2               | ↓Q2                  |
| Lettings                       | 30                           | 36                           | <b>39</b>                    | 64                         | ↓Q2              | Q1                   |
| Anti Social Behaviour          | 56                           | 58                           | <b>62</b>                    | 63                         | ↑Q2              | ↑Q2                  |
| Estate Services                | 115                          | 128                          | <b>130</b>                   | 179                        | ↑Q2              | Q2                   |
| Housing – total                | 380                          | 406                          | <b>442</b>                   | 577                        | Q2               | Q1                   |
| <b>Total Cost Per Property</b> | 3,095                        | 2,431                        | <b>2,478</b>                 | <b>2,774</b>               |                  |                      |

Overheads are allocated by Housemark into each service categories

↑ ↓ arrows indicate any quartile movements compared to 2019/20

## Housemark - Cost and Performance indicator quartile summaries

- 6.12. The tables below show the banding of our quartile positions for all cost and all performance indicators submitted.. Over the past four years, small majorities of our Cost (~60%) and Performance (~60%) indicators are in Quartiles 1 and 2:

| <b>COST</b>         |           | <b>20/21</b> |   | 19/20 |     | 18/19 |     | 17/18 |     |
|---------------------|-----------|--------------|---|-------|-----|-------|-----|-------|-----|
|                     |           | no.          | % | no.   | %   | no.   | %   | no.   | %   |
| Quartile 1          | <b>2</b>  | 6            |   | 9     | 28  | 9     | 28  | 6     | 19  |
| Quartile 2 / Median | <b>19</b> | 56           |   | 10    | 31  | 8     | 25  | 10    | 31  |
| Quartile 3          | <b>8</b>  | 24           |   | 7     | 22  | 9     | 28  | 11    | 34  |
| Quartile 4          | <b>5</b>  | 14           |   | 6     | 19  | 6     | 9   | 5     | 16  |
| Totals              | <b>34</b> | 100          |   | 32    | 100 | 32    | 100 | 32    | 100 |
| <b>PERFORMANCE</b>  |           | <b>20/21</b> |   | 19/20 |     | 18/19 |     | 17/18 |     |
|                     |           | no.          | % | no.   | %   | no.   | %   | no.   | %   |
| Quartile 1          | <b>9</b>  | 28           |   | 15    | 47  | 14    | 42  | 10    | 36  |
| Quartile 2 / Median | <b>8</b>  | 27           |   | 7     | 22  | 7     | 22  | 5     | 18  |
| Quartile 3          | <b>10</b> | 30           |   | 6     | 19  | 11    | 33  | 7     | 25  |
| Quartile 4          | <b>5</b>  | 15           |   | 4     | 12  | 1     | 3   | 6     | 21  |
| Totals              | <b>34</b> | 100          |   | 32    | 100 | 33    | 100 | 28    | 100 |

- 6.13. All Quartiles 3 and 4 indicators will again be reviewed to understand why these positions were achieved and put actions in place to move us into the higher quartiles.

## Housemark - Detailed Cost and Performance indicator quartile position

6.14. The tables below show the indicators submitted and comparatives from the previous two financial years with our Peer Group. The tables also shows the quartile positions for 2020/21 and 2019/20. Tables have been separated into two sections – Upper Quartiles (Q1, Q2) and Lower Quartiles (Q3, Q4). These indicators provide further detail behind the VFM dashboards and tables above.

### **Housemark - Quartile position table – UPPER QUARTILES 1 and 2**

|                         |  | 18/19   | 19/20   | 20/21   | Peer   | 20/21    | 19/20    |
|-------------------------|--|---------|---------|---------|--------|----------|----------|
| Service area            | Indicator Description                  | Outturn | Outturn | Outturn | Median | Quartile | Quartile |
| Corporate               | Staff turnover in the year %           | 7.20%   | 7.5%    | 5.0%    | 7.5%   | Q1       | Q1       |
| Cyclical Maintenance    | Total CPP                              | £129    | £127    | £111    | £266   | Q1       | Q1       |
| Cyclical Maintenance    | Gas servicing - % valid certificate    | 100.00% | 100.00% | 100.00% | 99.96% | Q1       | Q1       |
| Cyclical Maintenance    | % gas safety checks by annivers date   | 100.00% | 100.00% | 100.00% | 99.89% | Q1       | Q1       |
| Lettings                | Dwellings vacant unavailable to let %  | 0.00%   | 0.00%   | 0.04%   | 0.54%  | Q1       | Q1       |
| Lettings                | Void rent loss % of rent loss          | 0.49%   | 0.59%   | 1.00%   | 1.45%  | Q1       | Q1       |
| Major Works             | % of dwellings that are non-decent     | 0%      | 0.0%    | 0.0%    | 0.4%   | Q1       | Q1       |
| Rent arrears&collection | Write offs %                           | 0.47%   | 0.35%   | 0.04%   | 0.31%  | Q1       | Q3       |
| Responsive repairs      | Appointments kept % of apps made       | 98.90%  | 99.3%   | 99.3%   | 96.5%  | Q1       | Q1       |
| Responsive repairs      | Satisfaction repairs service (STAR)    | 85.90%  | 90.1%   | 86.3%   | 78.7%  | Q1       | Q1       |
| Total Housing M'ment    | Total CPP                              | £265    | £278    | £311    | £385   | Q1       | Q1       |
| Anti Social Behaviour   | Total CPP                              | £56     | £58     | £62     | £63    | Q2       | Q3       |
| Corporate               | Days lost through sickness per FTE     | 9       | 8.3     | 6.6     | 8.6    | Q2       | Q1       |
| Corporate               | Finance Costs CPP                      | £6      | £7      | £8      | £11    | Q2       | Q1       |
| Corporate               | Direct revenue costs - finance costs % | 2.20%   | 2.3%    | 2.5%    | 2.5%   | Q2       | Q2       |
| Corporate               | Central Overheads and HR CPP           | £30     | £31     | £33     | £48    | Q2       | Q2       |
| Estate Services         | Direct employees per 1000 props        | 0.42    | 0.68    | 0.78    | 1.06   | Q2       | Q2       |
| Estate Services         | Total CPP                              | £115    | £127    | £130    | £179   | Q2       | Median   |
| Lettings                | Average re-let time (major works)days  | 43.2    | 54.0    | 96.7    | 98.3   | Q2       | Q2       |
| Lettings                | Average re-let time (all re-lets) days | 24.2    | 27.6    | 54.7    | 70.0   | Q2       | Q1       |
| Lettings                | Total CPP                              | £30     | £36     | £39     | £64    | Q2       | Q1       |
| Lettings                | Direct employees per 1000 props        | 0.67    | 0.85    | 0.78    | 0.94   | Q2       | Q1       |
| Lettings                | Average re-let time in days (standard) | 21      | 23.0    | 46.1    | 49.9   | Q2       | Q2       |
| Lettings                | Dwellings vacant & available to let %  | 0.58%   | 0.61%   | 0.74%   | 0.76%  | Q2       | Median   |
| Major Works             | Total CPP                              | £1,815  | £1,134  | £1,001  | £1,163 | Q2       | Q2       |
| Rent arrears&collection | Total CPP                              | £76     | £78     | £88     | £112   | Q2       | Q1       |
| Rent arrears&collection | Current rent arrears %                 | 2.62%   | 2.79%   | 2.75%   | 2.76%  | Q2       | Q2       |
| Rent arrears&collection | Percentage of Rent collected %         | 98.91%  | 99.58%  | 99.68%  | 98.06% | Q2       | Median   |
| Rent arrears&collection | Direct employees per 1000 props        | 1.78    | 1.88    | 1.72    | 1.76   | Q2       | Q3       |
| Resident Involvement    | Total CPP                              | £14     | £16     | £19     | £30    | Q2       | Q1       |
| Resident Involvement    | Direct employees per 1000 props        | 0.29    | 0.33    | 0.34    | 0.47   | Q2       | Q1       |
| Responsive repairs      | Average cost of responsive repair £    | £128    | £121    | £140    | £150   | Q2       | Q2       |
| Tenancy Management      | Average days to respond to complaints  | 7.0     | 7.0     | 9.0     | 10.09  | Q2       | Q1       |
| Tenancy Management      | Total CPP                              | £89     | £90     | £104    | £129   | Q2       | Q2       |
| Tenancy Management      | Direct employees per 1000 props        | 1.99    | 1.89    | 1.94    | 1.96   | Q2       | Q2       |
| Total Housing M'ment    | Direct employees per 1000 props        | 5.73    | 6.03    | 5.85    | 6.12   | Q2       | Q2       |
| Void repairs            | Average cost of void repair £          | £2,259  | £2,197  | £2,879  | £3,712 | Q2       | Q1       |
| Void repairs            | Total CPP                              | £200    | £193    | £214    | £233   | Q2       | Q2       |

### Housemark - Quartile position table – QUARTILES 3 and 4

| Service area           | Indicator Description                   | 18/19<br>Outturn | 19/20<br>Outturn | 20/21<br>Outturn | Peer<br>Median | 20/21<br>Quartile | 19/20<br>Quartile |
|------------------------|---|------------------|------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Anti Social Behaviour  | Direct employees per 1000 props         | 1.00             | 1.08             | <b>1.08</b>      | 0.92           | <b>Q3</b>         | Q2                |
| Corporate              | IT & Comms CPP                          | £15              | £15              | <b>£41</b>       | £36            | <b>Q3</b>         | Q1                |
| Corporate              | Overheads as % of Revenue costs         | 20.73%           | 20.5%            | <b>22.0%</b>     | 19.6%          | <b>Q3</b>         | Q3                |
| Corporate              | Direct revenue costs - IT&comms costs % | 5.01%            | 4.7%             | <b>5.9%</b>      | 4.8%           | <b>Q3</b>         | Q3                |
| Corporate              | Premises costs CPP                      | £20              | £24              | <b>£21</b>       | £14            | <b>Q3</b>         | Q3                |
| Corporate              | Direct revenue costs - premises costs % | 3.08%            | 3.4%             | <b>3.1%</b>      | 1.9%           | <b>Q3</b>         | Q4                |
| Major Works            | Average SAP rating                      | 66.3             | 68.6             | <b>68.6</b>      | 70.6           | <b>Q3</b>         | Q3                |
| Rent arrears & collect | Former tenant arrears %                 | 1.50%            | 1.72%            | <b>1.93%</b>     | 1.54%          | <b>Q3</b>         | Q3                |
| Rent arrears & collect | UC tenants in arrears %                 | no data          | 66.22%           | <b>58.64%</b>    | 58.14%         | <b>Q3</b>         | Q3                |
| Rent arrears & collect | Non- UC tenants in arrears%             | no data          | 21.89%           | <b>20.47%</b>    | 19.41%         | <b>Q3</b>         | Q2                |
| Resident Involvement   | RI in consultation groups %             | 5.60%            | 10.2%            | <b>4.0%</b>      | 4.4%           | <b>Q3</b>         | Q1                |
| Resident Involvement   | % residents regd. for online access     | 10.56%           | 9.3%             | <b>11.2%</b>     | 19.0%          | <b>Q3</b>         | Q4                |
| Resident Involvement   | Requests made online/1,000 props        | 106              | 93               | <b>112</b>       | 574            | <b>Q3</b>         | Q4                |
| Responsive repairs     | Repairs completed at the first visit %  | 88.20%           | 90.2%            | <b>90.9%</b>     | 91.8%          | <b>Q3</b>         | Q2                |
| Responsive repairs     | Total CPP                               | £571             | £571             | <b>£584</b>      | £535           | <b>Q3</b>         | Q3                |
| Responsive repairs     | Direct employees per 1000 props         | 8.4              | 8.60             | <b>8.22</b>      | 5.75           | <b>Q3</b>         | Q4                |
| Tenancy M'ment         | % of complaints responded to target     | 89.30%           | 86.8%            | <b>74.7%</b>     | 80.4%          | <b>Q3</b>         | Q2                |
| Tenancy M'ment         | Tenancy turnover                        | 7.43%            | 7.41%            | <b>6.16%</b>     | 5.84%          | <b>Q3</b>         | Q3                |
| Anti Social Behaviour  | ASB cases per 1,000 properties          | 75               | 84               | <b>85</b>        | 67             | <b>Q4</b>         | Q3                |
| Corporate              | Direct revenue costs - central o'heads% | 10.41%           | 10.1%            | <b>10.6%</b>     | 7.1%           | <b>Q4</b>         | Q3                |
| Corporate              | Overheads as % of turnover              | 10.67%           | 10.6%            | <b>11.3%</b>     | 9.6%           | <b>Q4</b>         | Q4                |
| Cyclical Maintenance   | Direct employees per 1000 props         | 2.58             | 2.54             | <b>1.96</b>      | 0.02           | <b>Q4</b>         | Q4                |
| Major Works            | Direct employees per 1000 props         | 7.79             | 8.06             | <b>6.23</b>      | 0.39           | <b>Q4</b>         | Q4                |
| Resident Involvement   | Number of services changed              | 8                | 15               | <b>4</b>         | 8              | <b>Q4</b>         | Q2                |
| Resident Involvement   | Number of unique website hits           | 75,228           | no data          | <b>19,949</b>    | 109,538        | <b>Q4</b>         |                   |
| Responsive repairs     | Ave. responsive repairs per prop.       | 3.6              | 3.9              | <b>3.4</b>       | 2.6            | <b>Q4</b>         | Q4                |
| Responsive repairs     | Average days to complete repairs        | 16.33            | 17.29            | <b>16.75</b>     | 8.52           | <b>Q4</b>         | Q4                |
| Void repairs           | Direct employees per 1000 props         | 4.14             | 3.76             | <b>3.57</b>      | 1.61           | <b>Q4</b>         | Q4                |
| Anti Social Behaviour  | Satisfaction with case handling %       | no data          | no data          | <b>no data</b>   |                |                   |                   |
| Anti Social Behaviour  | Satisfaction with case outcome %        | no data          | no data          | <b>no data</b>   |                |                   |                   |
| Major Works            | Quality of your home (STAR)             | 89.20%           | 89.4%            | <b>no data</b>   |                |                   | Q1                |
| Corporate              | Satisfaction overall (STAR)             | 88.80%           | 87.0%            | <b>no data</b>   |                |                   | Q2                |
| Corporate              | Rent provides VFM (STAR)                | 92.80%           | 94.2%            | <b>no data</b>   |                |                   | Q1                |
| Estate Services        | Satisfaction with n'hood (STAR)         | 81.30%           | 81.2%            | <b>no data</b>   |                |                   | Q3                |
| Resident Involvement   | Views taken into account % (STAR)       | 83.50%           | 83.1%            | <b>no data</b>   |                |                   | Q1                |
| Tenancy Management     | Evictions                               | 0.23%            | 0.19%            | <b>no data</b>   |                |                   | Q2                |
| Void repairs           | Average days to complete repairs        | 10.1             | 11.1             | <b>no data</b>   | 17.0           |                   | Q1                |

### Satisfaction surveys

- 6.15. The main customer survey is an annual Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR), and a survey was planned to be undertaken in January 2021. However, given the Covid19 challenges nationally throughout the year, the decision was taken to defer this survey until July 2021.
- 6.16. Results from the July 2021 survey are being analysed and a review of the quartile markers for 2020/21 shows St Leger is in the upper quartiles compared to our peers and nationally for the main core questions. These core questions are around satisfaction levels overall, repairs, property condition, engagement, neighbourhood and VFM.

## **7. Key VFM achievements 2020/21**

- 7.1. Core services were unchanged during 2020/21 whilst St Leger addressed the Covid19 constraints listed in Section 3 above, as well as managing the impact of Brexit, which affected availability of contractors and building materials, implementing a new IT system and all office based staff working from home.
- 7.2. There were achievements in VFM in a number of areas, both strategically and operationally in the year, and are summarised below.

### **Systems**

- 7.3. As with 2019/20, the main focus in 2020/21 was the development and implementation of a new integrated housing management system for implementation in 2020/21. Phase 1 was successfully delivered in November 2020 (and Phase 2 successful in October 2021)
- 7.4. The new system rationalises a number of separate systems (TotalRepairs, Universal Housing and Keystone) to give a much more comprehensive single view of a tenant and will also deliver savings around software licencing.
- 7.5. There has also been investment in other software and also in server architecture and equipment for agile working, all of which will generate operational efficiencies.
- 7.6. In turn, agile working has led to reduced use/need of premises, which will mean savings on rent and utilities, plus travel time and cost for employees and improving our carbon footprint.
- 7.7. This investment in 2019/20 and 2020/21 will lead to even bigger savings in 2021/22 as the systems and agile working become embedded.
- 7.8. The Business Intelligence Tool ('Qlik') continued to be developed in the year and interrogates core systems, providing timely and accurate performance information to Managers across the business.

### **Investment**

- 7.9. Despite the early Covid19 disruptions, St Leger managed and maintained DC's housing and related stock also effectively managed £17.4m of DC's £19.1m capital programme, and £8m of this was delivered by the St Leger in-house tradesteam.
- 7.10. This investment in the housing stock sustained and enhanced decency works already carried out. Improvements to over 5,000 homes were delivered and included an external improvement programme, heating conversions and upgrades, communal hall works, estate works and structural repairs.
- 7.11. The year saw continued investment in health and safety compliance works in all properties under our management and also saw continued focus on strengthening and improving fire safety in our high rise buildings. This included delivering a range of fire safety improvements identified from extensive intrusive fire surveys and fire risk assessments.
- 7.12. As well as our programme of capital works we continue to carry out responsive and scheduled repair work and cyclical testing of heating and electrics to ensure the continued maintenance of our housing stock. We operate a 24/7 contact service.
- 7.13. Implementation of the new IT system includes an industry standard Schedule of Rates (SORs), which was purchased in late 2019/20 for implementation in Phase 2 2021/22 (see below).

### **Procurement/cost savings**

- 7.14. St Leger has a dedicated Procurement team with performance targets, including contracted spend levels, and maintains a contract log and efficiency register.

- 7.15. The efficiency register captures savings as contracts are renewed and managed, and for 2019/20, effective procurement and contract management generated savings of approximately £0.8m compared to previous years or contracts.
- 7.16. We have robust Financial Regulations and Contract Standing Orders and these documents ensure we operate in a legal, ethical and inclusive manner whilst achieving best value for money. We utilise OJEU compliant frameworks operated by procurement consortia and all contract evaluations consider cost and quality assessment criteria.
- 7.17. One of the corporate KPIs for the year was a target of 70% of expenditure being local to Doncaster. The outturn was below target at 52%, largely as a result of having to use a contractor outside of Doncaster, but within South Yorkshire.
- 7.18. In addition to this, we changed our payment arrangements with suppliers to maintain positive cashflow within the local markets and we delivered a very good performance of paying suppliers within target timescales.
- 7.19. New, industry standard Schedule of Rate (SORs) from the National Housing Federation (NHF) will be implemented in 2021/22 and will ensure our in-house works are charged appropriately, enable effective performance monitoring and allow accurate benchmarking with external suppliers to ensure VFM is achieved with suppliers.
- 7.20. 'Social Value' assessments were introduced in 2020/21 whereby 10% of all contract assessments are based on the social value of the contract. These consider factors such jobs created, carbon footprint, community groups and local expenditure, and Targets/Outputs/Measures (TOMs) are built in to every contract.

## **Employees**

- 7.21. 2020/21 saw a fundamental shift in ways of working for all employees. Government instructions on 23 March 2020 meant all offices were immediately closed and office based staff worked from home for the year. Customer facing staff had to work in new Covid19 compliant ways.
- 7.22. Business critical services only were delivered in April and May and then all core services resumed from June 2020, and as referred to above, performance was strong throughout the year with any targets not being met mainly as result of the pandemic and related restrictions.
- 7.23. Employee wellbeing was at the forefront of a number of initiatives in the year.
- 7.24. Three staff pulse surveys were undertaken, specifically aimed at assessing employees' wellbeing, issues with new home working arrangements and capturing thoughts for possible changes post restrictions. They have now become the regular ongoing way we monitor employee voice and opinion across the whole organisation.
- 7.25. Sickness levels reduced to 6.6 days per FTE, the lowest ever, and is above median when compared to our peer group and nationally.
- 7.26. Staff turnover was very low at 5.0% and is top quartile against our peer group and nationally.
- 7.27. Corporately, a People Strategy is in place with an action plan aligned with our strategic objectives and Corporate Plan.
- 7.28. Despite the enforced new working arrangements, we continue to involve and invest in our staff, delivering a comprehensive learning and development programme for all staff during 2020/21 offering over 200 training courses and learning events, providing over seven learning hours per full time equivalent employee.
- 7.29. There were some realignments in year, most notably in HR and OD, and strengthening the Health and Safety Compliance Team commenced in the year, which will conclude in 2021/22.

- 7.30. The Customer Access Team (CAT), implemented in 2019/20, continued its phased development. The CAT deals with first point of contact enquiries, including by phone, email, video and in person at our office receptions. The CAT brings together all our customer access channels to deliver a single, whole organisation customer access service.
- 7.31. This is changing the way customers access our services for first point of contact enquiries and, means we are able to deal with enquiries at the first point of contact without passing the customer on to other teams, providing a better service for tenants.
- 7.32. In 2020/21 we continued our wellbeing activity, following achievement of the Silver level in the Public Health Bewell@Work Award in 2019/20, and are developing our plan to achieve Gold by March 2022.
- 7.33. St Leger Homes again achieved the maximum five star rating in the British Safety Council's Occupational Health and Safety Audit scheme for the last ten years, and achieved the international ISO45001 health and safety standard during 2019/20.

## **Customers**

- 7.34. Customers will be the ultimate beneficiaries from all VFM work. Despite the numerous constraints resulting from the Covid19 pandemic, St Leger Homes maintained our commitment to providing suitable homes, maintaining independence, tackling social and financial exclusion and empowering people to have a better quality of life.
- 7.35. We achieved reaccreditation for the Government Standard for Customer Service Excellence (CSE) for the eleventh year running. The standard is awarded to public service organisations which meet strict criteria demonstrating that they focus on the needs and preferences of their customers, and all elements are considered either 'Compliant' or 'Compliance Plus'.
- 7.36. Addressing homelessness is one of the key priorities of Doncaster Growing Together and our own Corporate Plan, and three of the KPIs for the past three years are related to this. This service had an exceptionally busy year, primarily as a result of responding to Covid19 and the government's 'everyone in' instruction in March 2020, ensuring a bed for the night for everyone presenting as homeless during the pandemic.
- 7.37. This was in addition to the usual high demand in general service approaches for access to the housing register, housing advice and homeless applications, statutory rehousing and use of homeless temporary accommodation.
- 7.38. Successful bids to Government in recent years for funding initiatives such as the Rapid Rehousing Pathway, Private Rented and Rough Sleeper Initiative, secured funding for 2020/21 and this provided much needed resources and capacity to further reduce homelessness in Doncaster.
- 7.39. The severe weather emergency protocol (SWEP) remained in place during the year and was activated on several occasions. SWEP ensures normal operational service is maintained and increased measures to prevent rough sleeping during these periods. In conjunction with our partners, we were able to ensure a bed was available for every rough sleeper who wanted one during the severe weather.
- 7.40. Our Tenants and Residents Improvement Panel (TRIP) undertake a number of tasks and reviews each year to inform service improvements. TRIP play a key role in our work on consultation, customer engagement, mystery shopping and reality checking.
- 7.41. We have effective partnerships with numerous organisations, in particular the DWP, CAB, and South Yorkshire Credit Union to deliver solutions to our tenants.
- 7.42. Helping our tenants with the impact of benefit reform is key to sustaining tenancies. Our dedicated tenancy sustainment team ensures tenants have the financial capability and skills to manage their money.



- 7.43. Full roll-out of UC is expected to conclude in 2021/22, affecting over 7,500 tenants by then and totalling over £24million of income per annum. For 2020/21, this meant approximately £4million more rent to collect than the previous financial year. Our work with partner organisations to date has minimised the impact of UC and welfare reform, and again proved very effective in 2020/21 with an exceptional performance in managing rent arrears, being better than target and comparing favourably with other housing providers.

## **8. Plans for 2021/22 onwards**

- 8.1. St Leger's plans for 2021/22 onwards are to embed the new integrated housing management system and deliver its projected efficiency savings. This new system is central to VFM gains going forward. It replaces a number of separate systems to give one view of a customer and therefore much more efficient processes for employees, service benefits for our customers, and will change the way everyone works across the company.
- 8.2. Financially, challenging one year and medium term budgets have been set and performance targets have either been maintained or are more challenging, demanding and driving efficiency and effectiveness improvements in the organisation. Operating within these budgets whilst maintaining the high performance levels and meeting targets will evidence VFM.
- 8.3. The Social Housing White Paper provides additional challenges, not least the regulatory framework, part of which is the VFM standard, so plans from 2021/22 are heavily influenced by this.
- 8.4. A new employee performance monitoring framework has been introduced in 2021/22 that contains individual targets aligned with KPIs and the ADP and embedding this will contribute significantly to achieving company-wide VFM.
- 8.5. In summary, the main priorities for 2021/22 are :
- implement and embed the new integrated housing management system;
  - develop the workforce; and
  - health and safety compliance.

## **9. Summary**

- 9.1. The 2020/21 financial year was an exceptional year with numerous challenges facing St Leger. Primarily this was managing the impact of Covid19, but this became business as usual as the year progressed. St Leger also developed and implemented a new integrated housing management system and addressed the actions from building safer futures and social housing white paper requirements.
- 9.2. The above all provided significant budget challenges but the company operated within budget and core operating costs remain stable. There was some exceptional areas of performance in the year, notably around rent arrears and sickness levels, the latter set against the pandemic and the wellbeing challenges of all staff having to change ways of working, with the large majority working from home almost overnight. This in turn provided numerous IT challenges and all were addressed to ensure core services were maintained.
- 9.3. We continue to be a low cost, mid to high performing organisation compared to other housing providers. Performance wise, our levels are generally equivalent or better than most, but again there are areas where our costs and performance could be improved, and our plans will improve our VFM performance.