

# **ST LEGER HOMES OF DONCASTER LIMITED**

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

### **STATEMENT**

#### **FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED**

**31 MARCH 2022**

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

***Our strategic objectives :***

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

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## 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. The most simple definition of VFM is “**getting your money’s worth**”. It is not necessarily about buying the cheapest, it is about getting the most out (performance) from what you put in (cost).
- 1.2. It is about ensuring our customers obtain maximum benefit from the resources available. St Leger Homes of Doncaster (St Leger) therefore defines VFM as: “**Achieving the best balance between service cost and the benefit to the customer and business**”.
- 1.3. There are many other definitions for VFM – academic and informal – two of which are relevant here; “getting more for the same” and “the same for less”.
- 1.4. Both phrases should be considered throughout this statement as there are examples in 2021/22, but aren’t easy to quantify. Inputs for 2021/22 were generally the same, or less in some areas, as in 2020/21, but comparing outputs is not straightforward due to Covid constraints.
- 1.5. Operationally, 2021/22 was about returning to pre pandemic core services, to develop and implement a new integrated housing management system, further rollout of Universal Credit (UC), Building Safer Futures consultation and social housing White Paper requirements.
- 1.6. Doncaster has the lowest rents within South Yorkshire, and 9<sup>th</sup> lowest of all Housing Revenue Accounts (HRAs), which drives our management fee income and therefore provides many budget challenges to the services we strive to deliver.
- 1.7. Performance against a suite of challenging targets was again good or improving in a number of areas. Staffing levels have largely stayed the same and we again operated within budgets. The statement expands on this by looking at cost and performance by service and how these compare with other organisations (benchmarking).
- 1.8. Benchmarking is a key element of assessing VFM. For 2021/22, this was positive overall with more cost and performance indicators in the upper quartiles (above median). We also have improved VFM dashboards when benchmarked with our peers (20 organisations – ALMOs, Metropolitan Boroughs and Unitary Authorities) and also all housing providers nationally (90 organisations). (see Section 10 below).
- 1.9. This benchmarking work shows that **St Leger is a low cost, high performing organisation**.
- 1.10. It also shows the areas of good performance and also some areas for improvement or further investigation, which will be followed up and acted on. **Appendix A** details 80+ cost and performance indicators and how we compare with our peers.
- 1.11. ‘Social Value’ as a concept has had an increasing profile in recent years and actions appear in the 2022 updated VFM strategy. We have always considered social value in the form of social accounts and annual social statements. The latter has been included as an appendix to the VFM statement and the increased social work ongoing or planned will be included within VFM statements. Our Social Statement for 2021/22 is attached at **Appendix B**.

## 2. VFM environment

- 2.1. 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>
- 2.2. 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.

- 2.3. Annual management fee incomes for 2021/22 only increased in relation to specific cost of living awards, pay scale increments, pension cost increases, growth/specifically approved elements, and therefore robust budgetary control was required and achieved in the year.
- 2.4. 2021/22 was the third year of the five year corporate plan and everything we do is linked to its four objectives:
- 1 Ensure all our homes are modern, decent and energy efficient;**
  - 2 Support our tenants to lead successful and fulfilling lives;**
  - 3 Be a nationally recognised housing services provider; and**
  - 4 Deliver the aims of Doncaster Growing Together through innovation and partnership.**
- 2.5. A balanced scorecard of priorities and targets were developed for each strategic objective and agreed with Doncaster Council (DC) to reflect plans and risks. Each of the above objectives has performance measures which are detailed below.
- 2.6. An Annual Development Plan (ADP) and a suite of annual Key Performance Indicator (KPIs) for the year is also approved, based on our strategic objectives and Mayoral priorities. Key themes for 2021/22 were :
- building and fire safety regulations;
  - digital transformation;
  - agile working;
  - tenancy sustainability;
  - allocation policies;
  - improving communications with tenants and residents;
  - stock condition information, investment and making best use of DC's assets;
  - improving customer access and engagement;
  - delivering the Environmental strategy;
  - an efficient and effective repairs and maintenance service;
  - reducing and preventing homelessness;
  - reducing the number of empty properties; and
  - a positive health, safety and wellbeing culture.
- 2.7. Our VFM strategy has been in place since 2018 and is being updated in 2022. The existing 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.
- 2.8. The updated strategy for 2022 has revised but very similar objectives :
- **Commercially aware**: enable DC to make best use of all assets which SLHD manage;
  - **Customers** : maximise customers, leaseholders and stakeholders' VFM engagement;
  - **Culture** : maximise staff involvement in VFM and embed a VFM culture; and
  - **Collaboration** : be an efficient and effective provider of, or contributor to, services to residents and stakeholders of the borough
- 2.9. 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 10 below), but we also carry out more tailored benchmarking with specific organisations.

## **COSTS AND PERFORMANCE**

### **3. Operations**

- 3.1. Core services were delivered fully during 2021/22, following the Covid19 disruptions and restrictions in both 2019/20 and 2020/21. A number of areas had been adversely affected by the disruptions and 2021/22 focussed on returning performance to pre-pandemic levels.
- 3.2. The main project in the year was the continued, company-wide implementation of a new integrated housing management ICT system, with Phase 2 going live in October 2021 after the first phase going live in November 2020. The successful implementation means the new system will mean more efficient and effective ways of working and improved services to customers.

### **4. Company performance - Costs**

- 4.1. As stated above, annual management fee incomes for 2021/22 only increased in relation to specific cost of living awards, pay scale increments, pension cost increases, and growth/specifically approved elements. Therefore robust budgetary control was required, and achieved, in the year.
- 4.2. Detailed budget reports are presented monthly to EMT and quarterly to Board or Audit Committee, containing explanations of variances to budget, key risks and actions taken and commentary from Heads of Service as budget holders.
- 4.3. Comparing 2021/22 spend levels with the previous year is not easy as the majority of Quarter 1 (April to June) in 2020/21, plus several other periods in that year, were in various states of lockdown, reducing outputs.
- 4.4. At the highest level employee numbers (WTEs) for both years were virtually the same, and with a small increase in agency numbers in 2021/22, so inputs in terms of employee resources were broadly the same.
- 4.5. So at this highest level, increased activity (outputs) in 2021/22 will indicate VFM and this was the case in most areas. The commentary in the various sections below expands on this.

### **5. Company performance - Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and Service Standard**

- 5.1. A suite of challenging targets were set as KPIs. These are reported monthly, quarterly or annually to numerous groups, including Heads of Service, EMT, Committees, Board and to DC, and on our website. In addition weekly schedules of a selection of KPIs are published to all employees, the Board and to DC.
- 5.2. The table below summarises whether or not the KPIs were met, with comparatives.

	<b>21/22</b>	20/21	19/20
Green (meeting target)	<b>7</b>	8	10
Amber (within tolerance)	<b>4</b>	2	4
Red (not meeting target)	<b>5</b>	7	4
No target (homelessness)	<b>3</b>	0	0
Total	<b>19</b>	17	18

- 5.3. Although some targets were not met, 13 of the 19 indicators had improved or maintained on the performance from the previous year.
- 5.4. The detailed KPIs are reported and commented on within the separate corporate objectives sections they relate to below, whether targets were met and with comparatives from previous years.

## CORPORATE OBJECTIVES

### 6. **OBJECTIVE 1 : ALL OUR HOMES ARE MODERN, DECENT AND ENERGY EFFICIENT**

- 6.1. The objective has a number of cross cutting measures, including
- Percentage of homes maintaining Decent Homes standard
  - Repairs completed at first visit
  - Gas servicing percentage of properties attended
  - Number of properties managed
  - Level of tenant satisfaction with property condition
  - Energy efficiency of properties

- 6.2. The table below summarises the **related KPIs** for 2021/22 and comparatives :

KPI	KPI description	Trend	21/22 Outturn	21/22 Target	20/21 Outturn	19/20 Outturn
9	Repairs – First visit complete	↓	90.2%	92.0%	90.9%	90.2%
10	Gas servicing - % of properties attended	↔	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
16	Homes meeting Decent Standard	↔	99.99%	100.00%	99.99%	100.00%
17	Tenant satisfaction with property condition	↓	86.5%	89.0%	89.4%	89.4%
18	Energy efficiency of properties	↑	70.3%	68.0%	64.7%	n/a

Keys :

Target met/exceeded	Within tolerance	Target not met
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- ↑ Improving trend  
↓ Deteriorating trend  
↔ Unchanged performance

#### **Achievements in year**

- 6.3. St Leger managed and maintained DC's housing and related stock also effectively managed £18.5m of DC's £24.2m capital programme, and £9m of this was delivered by the St Leger in-house tradesteam. These were higher than in 2020/21 but from similar levels of resource.
- 6.4. Operational performance was strong with all KPIs either meeting or within tolerance of targets. Significant in roads were made in addressing backlogs arising for the Covid disrupted services from 2020/21.
- 6.5. Investment in the housing stock continued to sustain and further enhance decency works already carried out. The programme included an external improvement scheme, heating conversions and upgrades, estate works and structural repairs.
- 6.6. The year again saw continued investment in building safety compliance works.
- 6.7. As well as our programme of capital works we carried out responsive repair work and cyclical testing of heating and electrics to ensure the continued maintenance of our housing stock. We also continued our External Wall Insulation (EWI) programme in the year and secured external funding towards this. We operated a 24/7 contact service.
- 6.8. A Repairs Excellence Project commenced at the end of 2021/22 aimed at identifying and implementing efficiencies in all repairs processes. This will generate operational improvements and cash savings going forward.
- 6.9. A stock condition surveying programme also commenced in 2021/22 and results will be used as part of the long term investment planning, leading to improved decency and energy efficiency performance of housing stock.

## 7. **OBJECTIVE 2 : OUR TENANTS LIVE SUCCESSFUL AND FULFILLING LIVES**

7.1. The objective has a number of cross cutting measures, including :

- Number of tenants involved
- Improvements made due to tenant involvement
- Tenancies sustained
- Rent arrears
- Percentage of ASB cases resolved
- Tenant satisfaction levels
- Number of tenants and residents helped into training and employment

7.2. The table below summarises the **related KPIs** for 2021/22 and comparatives :

KPI	KPI description	Trend	21/22 Outturn	21/22 Target	20/21 Outturn	19/20 Outturn
1	Current rent arrears % against annual rent	↑	2.55%	3.00%	2.75%	2.79%
8	Tenancies sustained post support	↑	98.3%	90.0%	97.3%	93.8%
13	Anti-Social Behaviour % of resolved cases	↑	97.6%	95.0%	95.2%	95.6%
15	Tenant satisfaction overall	↓	84.8%	89.0%	87.0%	87.0%

### **Customer Service Standards**

7.3. To complement our corporate KPIs, St Leger has developed Service Standards with our customers. These take into account our Corporate Plan, KPIs and the Regulator's Consumer Standard, to ensure our customers are clear about the levels of service they can expect from us and we are clear about what we need to deliver.

7.4. The standards are reviewed periodically and approved by EMT and Board. Performance against the standards is monitored by EMT and Performance and Improvement Committee on a quarterly basis, with actions generated to improve performance.

7.5. For 2021/22, there were 15 measures across seven standards, covering the following areas for customers:-

- Helpful, friendly and polite staff and contractors;
- Being treated with respect and decency;
- Feeling safe in their home;
- Knowledgeable staff dealing with enquiries efficiently and effectively;
- Easy to contact us by their preferred method;
- Convenient appointments; and
- Getting the service right.

7.6. The table below summarises our performance for the past five years :

Service standards	21/22	20/21	19/20	18/19
Compliant with target	6	7	8	8
Within target tolerance	3	1	3	2
Not compliant with target	6	3	2	3
Total	15	11	13	13

7.7. The areas 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.

7.8. Our Service Standards will be reviewed again in 2023/24 in light of the introduction of new Tenant Satisfaction Measures under the Social Housing White Paper requirements.

## **Satisfaction surveys**

- 7.9. The main customer survey is an annual Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR). Results from the July 2021 survey are summarised below. Results of all providers across the country also fell, and St Leger remains in the upper quartiles compared to our peers and nationally for the main core questions. (see benchmarking section below)

Core satisfaction survey question	2021/22	2019/20	2017/18	2016/17	2015/16	2014/15
Overall satisfaction	<b>84.8%</b>	87.0%	88.8%	91.0%	91.8%	90.9%
Quality of your home	<b>86.5%</b>	89.4%	89.2%	92.7%	93.2%	92.1%
Neighbourhood as a place to live	<b>79.9%</b>	81.2%	81.3%	89.9%	90.8%	91.4%
Rent provides value for money	<b>n/a</b>	94.2%	92.8%	93.6%	93.4%	92.2%
Repairs and maintenance	<b>86.3%</b>	90.1%	85.9%	89.4%	89.5%	88.8%
Listens to views and acts on them	<b>74.9%</b>	83.1%	83.5%	85.8%	86.8%	85.9%

## **Achievements in year**

- 7.10. Customers will be the ultimate beneficiaries from all VFM work. St Leger is committed to providing suitable homes, maintaining independence, tackling social and financial exclusion and empowering people to have a better quality of life
- 7.11. Operational performance was strong with all KPIs either meeting or within tolerances of targets, and from similar levels of resource from the previous year.
- 7.12. 2021/22 was another difficult year as we continued to address numerous challenges, where we saw approximately 25% more tenants on UC this year than last, the continued implementation of a new housing management IT system and the majority of staff working mainly from home for most of the year due to Covid19.
- 7.13. Full roll-out of UC continued in 2021/22, now affecting nearly 8,000 St Leger Homes tenants and equating to over £24million of income per annum. For 2021/22, we collected nearly £2million more rent in UC than the previous financial year.
- 7.14. It is pleasing to report that current rent arrears performance out-turned at 2.55% against the year-end target of 3.00%, and is the lowest level since March 2017 (2.44%). The five year period since then has seen UC roll out fully across the borough, Brexit and the Covid19 pandemic, with the latter bringing with it many restrictions
- 7.15. The Board approved a new Customer Voice strategy (previously Customer Involvement) to further strengthen our outcome focussed customer involvement structure. We have undertaken a full review of tenant engagement operations and work in our neighbourhoods continued extensively in the year.
- 7.16. Considerable focus on voids was again applied in the year to improve turn around and re-let times. This improved slowly throughout the year (and continues in 2022/23). We aim to ensure properties are empty for as short a period as possible as this has a positive impact on neighbourhoods, reducing anti-social behaviour (ASB) and crime, as well as having a positive impact on rental income



## 8. **OBJECTIVE 3 : BE A NATIONALLY RECOGNIED PROVIDER OF HOUSING SERVICES**

8.1. The objective has a number of cross cutting measures, including

- Number of standard void re-let days
- Percentage of complaints upheld against interactions
- Staff sickness absence levels
- Proportion of invoices paid on-time
- Rent loss from empty properties
- Compliance with ISO45001 health and safety management system
- Health & Safety outcomes
- Our performance against comparable organisations (**Benchmarking \***)

8.2. **\* Benchmarking is a key element of meeting this objective and assessing VFM, so a separate section appears at Section 10 below, summarising the extensive work undertaken in this area.**

8.3. The table below summarises the **related KPIs** for 2021/22 and comparatives :

KPI	KPI description	Trend	21/22 Outturn	21/22 Target	20/21 Outturn	19/20 Outturn
2	Void rent loss % of annual rent	↑	0.79%	0.50%	1.00%	0.59%
3	Average no. of days to re-let a property	↑	33.7	20.0	46.1	22.7
7	Complaints upheld as a % of interactions	↓	0.13%	0.07%	0.07%	0.06%
11	Days lost through sickness per FTE	↓	11.9	7.9	6.6	8.22
20	Employee satisfaction SLHD as an employer	n/a	83%	80%	n/a	n/a
21	Recommending SLHD to family and friends - Tenant survey Net Promoter Score	n/a	47	25	n/a	n/a
22	Recommending SLHD to family and friends – Employee survey Net Promoter Score	n/a	-7	25	n/a	n/a

### **Achievements in year**

#### KPIs

8.4. Voids performance was worse than target throughout the year for both void rent loss and re-let times, as we continue to recover from the impact of Covid restrictions from the previous year. However, performance improved as the year progressed and a number of indicators were above median when benchmarked. Improving performance continued into 2022/23 as we aim to get to pre-pandemic levels.

8.5. Complaint levels increased significantly during the year and this received increased focus as the year progressed to understand the reasons why and to take appropriate action.

#### People

8.6. We achieved reaccreditation for the Government Standard for Customer Service Excellence (CSE) for the twelfth year running - awarded for demonstrating focus on the needs and preferences of their customers.

8.7. St Leger's main offices re-opened in mid 2021/22 and an agile working project enabled office based staff to move to a mix of home and office working. Agile working has led to reduced use/need of premises, which will mean savings on rent and utilities going forward, plus travel time and cost for employees and improving our carbon footprint.

8.8. The results from three more employee pulse surveys, which focussed on employee wellbeing, were used to inform St Leger's agile working approach and lead the implementation of policy change and associated guidance and learning, and facilitate plans to embed the new ways of working.

- 8.9. There were further realignments in the year and also strengthening of certain teams, all of which improved or will improve operational efficiency.
- 8.10. 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 eleven years and retained accreditation to the international ISO45001 health and safety standard during 2021/22.
- 8.11. Following achievement of the Silver level in the Public Health Bewell@Work Award in 2019/20, we continued our wellbeing activity throughout 2021/22 and working towards achieving Gold.
- 8.12. The number of RIDDOR reportable injuries reduced in the year and a full evaluation of health and safety performance is provided to Board on a regular basis.
- 8.13. St Leger Homes has a strong safeguarding culture and are a member of both the Adult & Children Safeguarding Boards and play an important role with strategic partners across Doncaster.
- 8.14. In addition, we increased activity as members of other partnership panels and boards, including the Health and Wellbeing Board, the Doncaster Integrated Care Partnership Board and also the Multi-Agency Risk Management Arrangements Conference (MARAC).
- 8.15. Considerable work took place in 2021/22 to enable SLHD to become an accredited member of the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance ( DAHA).

### Systems

- 8.16. The main systems project was the new integrated housing management ICT system, with Phase 2 going live in October 2021 after the first phase going live in November 2020. The successful implementation means the new system will mean more efficient and effective ways of working and improve services to customers.
- 8.17. The new system rationalises a number of separate systems to give a much more comprehensive and efficient single view of a tenant and will also deliver cost savings around software licencing.
- 8.18. 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.
- 8.19. 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.

### Procurement

- 8.20. St Leger's Procurement arrangements were merged with DC's late in the year to give operational and purchasing synergies.
- 8.21. Industry standard Schedule of Rate (SORs) from the National Housing Federation (NHF) were implemented in 2021/22 and 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.
- 8.22. 'Social Value' assessments, which were introduced in 2020/21, ensure 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.

## 9. OBJECTIVE 4 : THROUGH INNOVATION AND PARTNERSHIP WORKING WE WILL DELIVER THE AIMS OF DONCASTER GROWING TOGETHER

- 9.1. The objective has a number of cross cutting measures, including
- Number of households in “bed and breakfast”
  - Number of homelessness acceptances
  - Number of homelessness preventions
  - Proportion of our expenditure spent in Doncaster
  - Recognition for our contribution to a growing and successful Doncaster
  - Public sector apprenticeship target
  - Contribution to partnerships
  - Customer Involvement evaluation
  - World of Work participation rates and outcomes

9.2. The table below summarises the related KPIs for 2021/22 and comparatives :

KPI	KPI description	Trend	21/22 Outturn	21/22 Target	20/21 Outturn	19/20 Outturn
4	Households placed in B&B accommodation	↑	787	n/a	831	84
5	Full Duty homelessness acceptances	↑	384	n/a	398	228
6	Homeless preventions	↓	566	n/a	604	965
12	Percentage of local expenditure	↑	73%	70%	71%	n/a
14a	Tenants & residents undertaking training	↔	30	56	30	53
14b	Tenants & residents into employment	↑	51	25	28	31

### Achievements in year

- 9.3. The three homelessness related KPIs didn't have targets in the past two years due to the influences of Covid, but 2021/22 saw improved performance in two of the KPIs and similar levels in the third. The other three KPIs related to this Corporate Objective showed improved or maintained performance.
- 9.4. We recognise that we maximise our effectiveness through joint working, and have increased, effective partnerships with numerous partnering organisations, in particular DC, DWP, CAB, and Community First Credit Union and Doncaster Financial Inclusion Group (FIG) to deliver solutions to our tenants. We also work closely with 24 Tenants and Residents Associations (TARAs).
- 9.5. St Leger has a proactive approach to anti-social behaviour and we continued to work effectively with our partners via the Doncaster Safer Partnership.
- 9.6. We attended monthly Neighbourhood Action Groups and Case Identification Meetings across the borough. As well as low level enforcement and support we successfully carried out enforcement sanctions on Notice of Seeking Possessions (Secure Tenancies), Notice of Possession Proceedings (Introductory Tenancies), Injunctions, Demoted Tenancy Orders, Evictions and Closure Orders.
- 9.7. Addressing homelessness is one of the key priorities of Doncaster Growing Together, and therefore within our Corporate Plan, ADP and SDPs. We work very closely with the Complex Lives (CL) Alliance, including DC, NHS and Children's Services, to support vulnerable Doncaster residents.
- 9.8. Successful bids to Government in recent years for funding initiatives such as the Protect and Vaccinate Fund, Rapid Rehousing Pathway, Vulnerable Renters Fund and Rough Sleeper Initiative, secured funding in 2021/22 and this provided much needed resources and capacity to the service in their work towards addressing homelessness in Doncaster.
- 9.9. 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.

## 10. **BENCHMARKING** – how we compare with others

- 10.1. We actively benchmark our services, because a key element of being able to evidence VFM is how we compare with other organisations.
- 10.2. The main method of benchmarking is through our membership of Housemark. One outcome is the grading our costs and performance into four bands “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).
- 10.3. We also carry out more tailored benchmarking with specific organisations, where appropriate. This was limited in 2021/22 but some benchmarking was undertaken involving:
- Universal Credit (UC) – working with the DWP national policy team;
  - 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; and
  - Member of a national Former Tenant Arrears forum.

## HOUSEMARK

- 10.4. The benchmarking information from Housemark for 2021/22 compares our performance to a peer group of around 20 ALMOs, Metropolitan Boroughs, Unitary authorities and similar organisations, and also around 90 housing providers nationally.
- 10.5. 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.
- 10.6. In summary, benchmarking information for 2021/22 shows our strongest performance to date, indicating that we are **a low cost, high performing organisation**.
- 10.7. This is summarised below and further details of benchmarked cost and performance indicators are attached at **Appendix A**.

### Housemark - VFM ‘dashboard’

- 10.8. 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.
- 10.9. 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 (see below).
- 10.10. The dashboard is intended to give a VFM snapshot and generate further investigation. The tables below shows the cost and performance indicators selected with the dashboards for 2021/22 and comparatives for 2020/21, 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 2021/22 - 20 ALMOs, Metropolitan Boroughs and Unitary authorities**



### **Peer group 2020/21 - 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 2021/22 – approx. 90 housing providers**



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



## Housemark - Cost and Performance indicator quartile summaries

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

<b>COST</b>			<b>21/22</b>		20/21		19/20	
	<b>no.</b>	<b>%</b>	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Quartile 1	<b>6</b>	15	2	6	9	28	9	28
Quartile 2 / Median	<b>17</b>	43	19	56	10	31	10	31
Quartile 3	<b>10</b>	25	8	24	7	22	7	22
Quartile 4	<b>7</b>	17	5	14	6	19	6	19
Totals	<b>40</b>	100	34	100	32	100	32	100

  

<b>PERFORMANCE</b>			<b>21/22</b>		20/21		19/20	
	<b>no.</b>	<b>%</b>	no.	%	no.	%	no.	%
Quartile 1	<b>14</b>	33	9	28	15	47	15	47
Quartile 2 / Median	<b>14</b>	33	8	27	7	22	7	22
Quartile 3	<b>11</b>	25	10	30	6	19	6	19
Quartile 4	<b>4</b>	9	5	15	4	12	4	12
Totals	<b>43</b>	100	34	100	32	100	32	100

- 10.12. All Quartile 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 - Optimising service costs

- 10.13. 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 Outturn CPP £	19/20 Outturn CPP £	20/21 Outturn CPP £	<b>21/22 Outturn CPP £</b>	Peer Median CPP £	Peer Quartile	National Quartile
<u>Repairs</u>							
Major Works	1,815	1,134	1,101	<b>971</b>	1,469	↑Q1	↑Q1
Cyclical Maintenance	129	127	138	<b>141</b>	312	Q1	Q1
Responsive Repairs	571	571	583	<b>622</b>	631	↑Q2	Q2
Void Works	200	193	214	<b>223</b>	280	Q2	Q2
<u>Housing</u>							
Rent arrears collection	76	78	88	<b>92</b>	120	↑Q1	Q1
Resident Involvement	14	16	19	<b>19</b>	41	↑Q1	Q1
Tenancy Management	89	90	104	<b>110</b>	137	Q2	Q2
Lettings	30	36	39	<b>41</b>	61	Q2	Q1
Anti Social Behaviour	56	58	62	<b>64</b>	58	↓Q3	↓Q3
Estate Services	115	128	130	<b>137</b>	179	Q2	Q2
Housing – total	380	406	442	<b>463</b>	596	Q2	Q1
<b>Total Cost Per Property</b>	3,095	2,431	2,478	<b>2,420</b>	<b>2,774</b>		

Overheads are allocated by Housemark into each service categories

↑ ↓ arrows indicate any quartile movements compared to 2020/21

## **11. Plans for 2022/23 onwards**

- 11.1. Operationally, as with 2021/22, one of St Leger's main plans for 2022/23 onwards is to conclude the implementation and 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.
- 11.2. Financially, DC have set St Leger a £1m budget savings target over a three year period, commencing in 2022/23. Operating within reduced budgets will force process improvements and efficiencies, and maintaining the high performance levels and meeting targets will further evidence VFM.
- 11.3. The cost of living crisis – utilities, fuel, inflation, interest rates – will provide numerous challenges over the next couple of years. This will impact on SLHD costs and performance, and also for tenants as they try to manage their budgets.
- 11.4. Progression of the Social Housing White Paper provides additional challenges, not least the regulatory framework, part of which is the VFM standard, and also the recently published Tenancy Satisfaction Measures, and all of the requirements have been built in to plans from 2022/23 onwards.
- 11.5. The employee performance monitoring framework introduced in 2021/22 will continue to be developed along with a wider performance management framework that will monitor progress against a range of measures, including KPIs, PIs, budgets and governance actions (risk, internal audit).
- 11.6. Strategically, work has or will commence in 2022/23 on reviewing and updating the VFM strategy, done in November 2022, and also the Corporate Plan, which is due for renewal by March 2024.
- 11.7. In summary, the main priorities for 2022/23 are :
  - embed the new integrated housing management system;
  - develop the performance management framework and culture;
  - improve performance where targets are consistently not being met – primarily around voids, sickness and complaints;
  - deliver the required budget savings; and
  - develop the workforce.

## **12. Summary**

- 12.1. The 2021/22 financial year was a return to normality after the disruptions of 2020/21. Demand on all services was high and we had a higher number of vacant posts than anticipated. Performance overall was good, or with improving trends in most areas, and all were managed within a challenging budget. Staffing levels and budgets have stayed the same or reduced, except where there had been agreed cost or inflationary increases with DC.
- 12.2. Good progress was made with implementing the integrated housing management system and addressed the actions from building safer futures and social housing white paper requirements.
- 12.3. We continue to be a low cost, high performing organisation compared to other housing providers. This places us in a strong starting point going into 2022/23 as 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.



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

## APPENDIX A

Service area	Indicator Description	21/22 Outturn	21/22 Peer Median	21/22 Peer Quartile	20/21 Peer Quartile
Corporate	Staff turnover in the year %	9.6%	11.8%	Q1	Q1
Corporate	Satisfaction overall (STAR)	84.8%	78.0%	Q1	no data
Corporate	Landlord is easy to deal with % (STAR)	85.4%	72.0%	Q1	no data
Corporate	Treats tenants fairly and with respect % (STAR)	90.9%	84.1%	Q1	no data
Cyclical Maintenance	Total CPP	£141	£292	Q1	Q1
Cyclical Maintenance	Gas servicing - % valid certificate	100.00%	99.99%	Q1	Q1
Cyclical Maintenance	% gas safety checks by annivers date	100.00%	99.88%	Q1	Q1
Lettings	Dwellings vacant unavailable to let %	0.04%	0.52%	Q1	Q1
Lettings	Void rent loss % of rent loss	0.81%	1.67%	Q1	Q1
Major Works	Total CPP	£971	£1,468	Q1	Q2
Major Works	Quality of your home (STAR)	86.5%	75.7%	Q1	no data
Major Works	Home is safe and secure % (STAR)	92.8%	80.4%	Q1	no data
Major Works	% of dwellings that are non-decent	0.01%	0.4%	Q1	Q1
Rent arrears & collection	Total CPP	£92	£120	Q1	Q2
Rent arrears & collection	Percentage of Rent collected %	100.41%	99.37%	Q1	Q2
Resident Involvement	Total CPP	£19	£41	Q1	Q2
Resident Involvement	Direct employees per 1000 props	0.33	0.64	Q1	Q2
Resident Involvement	Views taken into account % (STAR)	74.9%	59.9%	Q1	no data
Resident Involvement	Make views known % (STAR)	81.6%	65.4%	Q1	no data
Responsive repairs	Satisfaction repairs service (STAR)	86.3%	74.2%	Q1	no data
Total Housing M'ment	Total CPP	£325	£424	Q1	Q1
Community investment	Total CPP	£33	£33	Q2	Q3
Corporate	Finance Costs CPP	£42	£63	Q2	Q2
Corporate	Direct revenue costs - finance costs %	2.3%	2.6%	Q2	Q2
Corporate	Total Overheads CPP	£390	£413	Q2	Q2
Corporate	Central Overheads CPP	£131	£158	Q2	Q2
Corporate	IT & Comms CPP	£110	£117	Q2	Q3
Corporate	Days lost through sickness per FTE	11.9	11.9	Q2	Q2
Estate Services	Direct employees per 1000 props	0.81	0.94	Q2	Q2
Estate Services	Total CPP	£137	£151	Q2	Q2
Estate Services	Satisfaction with n'hood (STAR)	79.9%	79.3%	Q2	no data
Lettings	Total CPP	£41	£61	Q2	Q2
Lettings	Direct employees per 1000 props	0.84	0.92	Q2	Q2
Lettings	Average re-let time (major works) days	87.2	87.2	Q2	Q2
Lettings	Average re-let time (all re-lets) days	46.2	53.4	Q2	Q2
Lettings	Average re-let time in days (standard)	33.7	42.4	Q2	Q2
Lettings	Dwellings vacant & available to let %	0.47%	0.80%	Q2	Q2
Major Works	Average SAP rating	70.5	70.8	Q2	Q3
Rent arrears & collection	Direct employees per 1000 props	1.81	1.84	Q2	Q2
Rent arrears & collection	Current rent arrears %	2.53%	3.30%	Q2	Q2
Resident Involvement	RI in consultation groups %	8.0%	4.2%	Q2	Q3
Responsive repairs	Total CPP	£623	£631	Q2	Q3
Responsive repairs	Appointments kept % of apps made	97.2%	97.1%	Q2	Q1
Responsive repairs	Emergency repairs as % of all resp repairs	17.3%	30.3%	Q2	Q1
Responsive repairs	Repairs completed at the first visit %	92.9%	90.9%	Q2	Q3
Tenancy Management	Total CPP	£110	£137	Q2	Q2
Tenancy Management	Direct employees per 1000 props	1.96	1.98	Q2	Q2
Tenancy Management	Average days to respond to complaints	10.0	10.6	Q2	Q2
Tenancy Management	Tenancy turnover	5.91%	6.28%	Q2	Q3
Total Housing M'ment	Direct employees per 1000 props	5.98	6.12	Q2	Q2
Void repairs	Average cost of void repair £	£3,106	£3,378	Q2	Q2
Void repairs	Total CPP	£223	£280	Q2	Q2

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

**APPENDIX A**

Service area	Indicator Description	21/22	21/22	21/22	20/21
		Outturn	Peer Median	Peer Quartile	Peer Quartile
Anti Social Behaviour	Total CPP	£64	£58	Q3	Q2
Anti Social Behaviour	Direct employees per 1000 props	1.05	0.88	Q3	Q3
Anti Social Behaviour	ASB cases per 1,000 properties	77	58	Q3	Q4
Community investment	Direct employees per 1000 props	0.59	0.51	Q3	Q4
Community investment	Residents undertaking training or education	30	116	Q3	Q2
Community investment	Residents supported into employment	51	54	Q3	Q3
Community investment	Households provided with money advice	955	957	Q3	Q2
Corporate	Direct revenue costs - total overheads %	21.4%	19.2%	Q3	Q3
Corporate	HR CPP	£54	£40	Q3	Q2
Corporate	Overheads as % of Revenue costs	21.4%	19.2%	Q3	Q3
Corporate	Direct revenue costs - IT&comms costs %	6.0%	5.5%	Q3	Q3
Corporate	Premises costs CPP	£52	£44	Q3	Q3
Corporate	Direct revenue costs - premises costs %	2.9%	1.8%	Q3	Q3
Rent arrears & collection	% of rent paid by HB	37.1%	35.4%	Q3	Q3
Rent arrears & collection	Former tenant arrears %	1.83%	1.58%	Q3	Q3
Rent arrears & collection	UC tenants in arrears %	57.64%	55.02%	Q3	Q3
Rent arrears & collection	Non- UC tenants in arrears%	20.46%	18.65%	Q3	Q3
Responsive repairs	Average cost of responsive repair £	£156	£152	Q3	Q2
Responsive repairs	Ave. responsive repairs per prop.	3.3	3.2	Q3	Q4
Tenancy Management	% of complaints responded to target	66.3%	79.3%	Q3	Q3
Anti Social Behaviour	Satisfaction with case handling %	54.5%	69.2%	Q4	no data
Anti Social Behaviour	Satisfaction with case outcome %	49.4%	70.2%	Q4	no data
Corporate	Direct revenue costs - HR %	3.0%	1.9%	Q4	Q4
Corporate	Direct revenue costs - central o'heads%	7.2%	7.1%	Q4	Q3
Corporate	Overheads as % of turnover	16.4%	10.7%	Q4	Q4
Cyclical Maintenance	Direct employees per 1000 props	2.57	0.82	Q4	Q4
Major Works	Direct employees per 1000 props	6.37	0.04	Q4	Q4
Rent arrears & collection	Write offs %	0.70%	0.37%	Q4	Q1
Responsive repairs	Direct employees per 1000 props	8.3	4.5	Q4	Q3
Tenancy Management	Evictions	0.08%	0.04%	Q4	no data
Void repairs	Direct employees per 1000 props	3.61	1.62	Q4	Q4