



Report to:

Northwards Housing Board

14 September 2016

Item No:

11c

Title:	Annual Report 2015-16		
Date:	30 August 2016		
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Confidential:	No		
For: (Please tick action required)	NOTING	DISCUSSION	APPROVAL ✓
PURPOSE OF REPORT			
To update the Northwards board on the content of the Northwards Annual Report 2015-16			
RECOMMENDATION			
That the board approves the suggested content for inclusion in the Northwards Annual Report 2015-16 and agrees that the final document should be signed off by the Chair and Chief Executive during the final week of design and production.			
IMPLICATIONS			
Risk Management	Northwards are an open, transparent organisation. The annual report is part of our commitment to sharing our performance information with tenants.		
Regulatory & legal compliance	There is a legal requirement to share our annual accounts by the Homes and Communities Agency, traditionally Northwards supplements this with further performance information.		

Consultation/Consideration:

	Yes, No or N/A:	Name:	Date:
Sub-Committee:	No		
Task Groups:	No		
Ward Councillors:	No		

1. Background

1.1 The Tenant Services Authority made it mandatory for housing providers to produce an annual report for tenants. Although the authority no longer exists, it is deemed good practice to continue to publish an annual report.

1.2 There is no longer a deadline in place for the production of the annual report. However, Northwards usually launch the annual report in time for the Annual General Meeting in mid-October.

2. Last year's annual report

2.1 Northwards Housing was 10 years old last year and, as part of those birthday celebrations, we told the stories of tenants and employees whose lives had been affected by Northwards since we started.

3.2 The communications team developed a film called 10 years, 10 lives to relay the stories. It followed 10 different people from all walks of life and sought to understand the impact that Northwards had had on the community of north Manchester.

3.3 The design of the document was attractive and easy to read. The stories from tenants were accompanied by good photography, mostly taken from the stills from the film to ensure that the theme was clear throughout.

3. This year's annual report

3.1 We have always produced a traditional printed report, mixing performance and account information alongside interesting news and stories from the past 12 months. The idea is that the more compelling the report content is, the more likely our tenants will be to read it.

3.2 As well as an increased public appetite for bite-sized news and information, over the past few years there has also been a marked increase in the popularity of infographics being used to convey key messages. We have experimented with these ourselves and used them successfully to help relay complex information in a quick, snappy, easy-to-digest format.

3.3 After seeking agreement from EMT we decided this year's annual report will be produced in the infographic style. We have collected our most interesting performance figures, benchmarking information and annual accounts and created a pocket-sized snapshot of how we are doing.

3.4 The annual report will be produced on A3 paper and then folded down into a much handier and more accessible document. The content will point people towards our website if they want more detail on any of the main points.

3.5 We know that infographics are an effective communications tool. They make daunting facts and figures engaging and interesting. They are also incredibly useful in terms of communication with different groups. For example, non-English speakers and people with disabilities. Using the infographic style will make this our most accessible annual report to date.

3.6 The financial cost is significantly less than in previous years and the new format means we can include the annual report as an insert with the autumn edition of the Northwards Natter magazine, which means we will be sharing our performance with a much wider audience.

3.7 The proposed copy for the annual report is attached. Please note that some information is still outstanding, but this is expected to be in place by the board meeting on 14 September. A verbal update will be provided.

4. Supplementary information

4.1 We will be supporting the content of the annual report with video which will be shared via social media.

4.2 Many of our main initiatives this year have been documented on film by the Northwards communications team and, as such, when we announce the publication of the report we will be using engaging film clips to help generate even more interest and feedback.

5. Conclusion

5.1 We are confident that this year's annual report will reach more people than ever before. Its handy size will appeal to those people who just want the headline facts. Those who want more are signposted to our website and invited to join us on social media.

5.2 For those customers who prefer to engage with us online we will share videos which effectively showcase some of our most impactful initiatives from 2015/16.

Annual Report Content

Introduction

Welcome to our Annual Report for 2015/16

This year we're trying something a little bit different. In the past we've produced longer, more detailed annual reports.

But that's just not everybody's cup of tea, so this time we've gone for a handy, pocket-sized version. Much kinder to the environment and easier to digest.

It gives you the highlights of what we've been up to during 2015/16, presented in a user-friendly way.

We've included figures on the things that really matter to customers like repairs, the environment and your neighbourhoods.

And you can see at-a-glance how we compare to similar housing organisations in terms of rehousing, repairs and rent.

If the pocket version isn't quite enough, visit our website www.northwardshousing.co.uk for lots more information about what we've been up to.

We hope you enjoy reading the Annual Report and looking back on the last financial year at Northwards.

Robin Lawler, Chief Executive

Financial accounts:

Graphs explaining total income and total expenditure

Green initiatives:

100% of employees completed Going Greener training sessions (*supported with video*)

1,031 PV Panels installed (*supported with video*)

Fair and equal

Launch of the Diversity Forum – improving services for BAME customers and staff

Launch of Retired Not Expired campaign celebrating our older tenants (*supported with video*)

Customer satisfaction

79% of customers say we are very good at keeping them informed

84% are satisfied with overall service

Improving homes

£24.9million spent on home improvements

98% of customers happy with completed work

Neighbourhood

576 cases of ASB investigated (*supported with video*)

139 tonnes of rubbish removed (*supported with video*)

Digital inclusion

314 hours of digital inclusion training delivered by 16 digital champions (*supported with video*)

1,354 online chats on our new website

Resident involvement

Tenants' View completed three scrutiny exercises

45 community events were held

Our People

Six apprentices found employment (*supported with video*)

Awarded Gold by Investors in People

How we compare (benchmarking figures – upper and lower quartile)

Rehousing

Average re-let time is 36.5 days

Repairs

99.4% of tenants satisfied with repairs

97.1% of repairs completed on the first visit

Rent

(((awaiting % figures to be converted into ££££££)))