

 <p><b>Brent</b></p>	<p><b>Housing Scrutiny Committee</b> 14 September 2017</p> <p><b>Report from Community and Wellbeing Directorate</b></p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Wards Affected: All</p>	
<p><b>BHP performance data, resident engagement strategy and map of all BHP properties in each ward</b></p>	

## 1.0 Summary

1.1 The following paper covers 3 areas of interest to the Housing Scrutiny Committee:

- Quarter 1 (2016/2017) performance report, including the full scorecard, analysis of areas for improvement, progress and actions put in place to remedy underperformance
- An update on resident engagement, which sets out the issues with the current approach, the long term vision and ambition and the work being done through the Transformation programme to deliver long term improvements
- The Committee requested information on council housing stock and its distribution across the Borough, and this report provides an initial overview (Appendix A)

## 2.0 Recommendations

2.1 To note and comment on:

- the Q1 performance report and the work that is being done in response to improve the customer experience
- the work being done on resident engagement and the direction of travel
- the information on BHP properties across the borough, by ward, and what further information would be useful.

## 3.0 Quarter 1 Performance

3.1 The BHP performance scorecard is attached at Appendix B. The scorecard highlights under-performance in a number of areas. The BHP Board have seen and commented on the scorecard, and have been clear about the need for improvement. However, while it is important to focus on areas for improvement, it is also important to note that there is some positive progress in other areas, for example, responsive repairs.

3.2 It is also important to note a number of transitional issues have had an impact during this period. Quarter 1 was the first quarter after the decision to bring the service back into the council. This has created some uncertainty with staff, but significant work has been done to tackle this (ranging from staff briefings to contract offers to secondees and agency staff to improve the stability and commitment of the workforce). There have been a number of managerial changes during this period as part of the transition, and Hakeem Osinaike took up his post on 3 July 2017 (Operational Director Housing) and took over operational management of BHP from that date. He is reporting to the BHP Board and the Strategic Director Community Wellbeing until the end of September, and then he will manage the service as part of the council.

#### *Customer Access*

3.3 Irrespective of these underlying factors, the Quarter 1 scorecard has raised concerns about Customer Access, which is best illustrated through the average call answering time in the Customer Response Team (CRT), which was over 6 mins in Quarter 1 against a target of 60 seconds, and performance in 2016/17 of about 2 mins. There are a number of reasons for this drop in performance, but there are also good reasons to believe that it will improve in Quarter 2 and 3, both are set out below.

- *IT performance* – significant issues with server and a software upgrade, which mean that CRT staff have to wait while pages upload significantly lengthening call times. New servers are now in place and CRT expect to see a significant improvement in IT by the end of September.
- *Staffing* – the CRT has a high number of vacancies and agency staff. The team has been given permission to recruit permanently through this transition period because the turnover of agency staff is creating work and undermining performance
- *Team practice* – some contact centres use call backs at peak times (answer the call and say they will call back later). This practice masks real performance and has a negative impact on the customer experience. This practice was stopped early this year and it has had an impact on the performance indicators
- *Service Management* – there is now a greater focus on this minute by minute management which is crucial in a service like this, which ensures that shift adherence and lunch rotas are tightly managed alongside more analysis of call patterns to ensure staffing levels match peaks and troughs in the service
- *Cross service practice* – administrative functions traditionally sitting with CRT have been passed to various areas of the service, with training provided to support effective continuation, reduce floor walking and increase staff availability levels
- *Contractor support* – the CRT are often dependent on speaking to contractors customer service staff and these waiting times have increased. There was a failed attempt to solve this in June 2017 which was not fully supported, but it has since been escalated and there are now 2 staff from 4 September, which should have a clear impact

3.4 Through those measures, implemented in Quarter 2, performance is demonstrably improving. Average call response time has increased from 57% in Quarter 1 to 75% in Quarter 2 and average call answering time had decreased to 5 mins. At the beginning of Quarter 3, after just 3 days of on-site contractor support,

average call response time has further increased to 83% and average call answering decreased to just over 3 mins.

3.5 In addition to tackling the practical day to day performance issues, CRT is a critical part of the transformation programme. It has, therefore, been subject to a detailed review to clarify the longer term changes that are required. The key issue that needs to be solved is the records system that underpins their work – at the moment they have nowhere to log all contacts. This makes it difficult to track work on cases (so longer to respond to the customer), and it makes it difficult for management to understand what is driving contact and how long contacts take (so it is difficult to manage demand). The solution to this is a CRM system, which is currently being procured, so that the roll out will commence in late October 2017 (with initial elements), and will continue through to June 2018 (when the full functionality will be operational).

### *Repairs*

3.6 Another key area to focus on in terms of overall customer satisfaction is repairs and the picture here is more positive. For example:

- Repair appointments kept. Quarter 1 performance is 98%, 1% below target, but 2% above 16/17 performance
- Repairs completed on the first visit. Quarter 1 performance is 92% which is on target, but 1% below 16/17 performance, and
- Repairs satisfaction. Quarter 1 performance was 74% against a target of 95%, which is up from 55% in 2016/17, and more importantly the most recent performance is on a strong upward trend toward the target as the result of a joint action plan (between BHP and Wates) completed in June 2017 (June 82% and July 84%). There is no space for complacency, but there is a strong base on which to deliver the target through the rest of the year.

### *Rent and Service charge collections*

3.7 There was a dip in the collection rates for June to 96.17%. However, there was an increased collection performance in July 2017 to 102.6% against a target of 99.5%. This improvement was the result of officers working out of hours working, in the evenings and at weekends, and it is proposed that this practice continues into August and September 2017.

### *Health and Safety*

3.8 The 5 key health and safety targets are reported in detail in the scorecard, but in terms of an overview:

- Gas Safety compliance at the end of June was 99.83% compared with 99.98% at the end of April. There were 14 properties without a landlord's gas safety record (LGSR) issued within the previous 12 months, and action is being taken to gain entry either by agreement with the resident or through a court order where necessary
- In relation to asbestos, the format of the data reported has changed from 1/4/17 due to including in a single total, all locations where BHP has a Duty to Manage. Figures were previously reported separately for high, medium and low rise properties. Current compliance is 77% (471/609). There is a programme in place to assess the remaining 138 street property locations 31/8/17 to achieve 100% compliance for Quarter 2

- FRAs are all compliant, and there is significant additional work being done as reported to the last Housing Scrutiny Committee. It is also important to note the work that is ongoing to carry out the detailed inspections of all high rise to inform further capital works. These additional surveys will be complete and reported to management by the end of 15 September.

#### 4.0 Resident Engagement

4.1 In 2016, in response to identified weaknesses in resident engagement, BHP commenced a review on resident engagement and employed an external consultancy, HQN, to support the review and develop an engagement strategy. In formulating their report, HQN met BHP's Scrutiny Group and held a focus group of involved customers. All BHP residents were invited to share their views and priorities directly with HQN.

4.2 The review recommended a new resident engagement strategy and articulated a draft vision for BHP:

***An organisation that understands its customers and is driven by their needs and aspirations to improve services, homes and the wider community.***

4.3 It also set out five draft key objectives that were designed to provide a golden thread to support the delivery of BHP's and LBB's strategic objectives such as the Borough Plan.

- Create an approach to service improvement, which enables the customer's voice to drive change in both services and the wider community.
- Develop a strategic approach to resident led scrutiny, which evidences how customers challenge and influence the organisation.
- Develop a clear framework for consultation and communication with customers that builds trust and mutual respect.
- Use community engagement to improve the organisations relations with local communities and to address the link between housing and wider wellbeing
- Regularly evaluate the outcomes of the engagement service to ensure they deliver both social and financial added value.

4.4 The BHP Board and BHP Scrutiny Committee considered the report in August 2016 and decided not to implement the strategy at that time. However, the work is now being included in the Council / BHP transformation programme, which also includes a new Customer Strategy. This programme, building on the review of BHP and decision to bring the service back in house, renews the Council's commitment to resident engagement when the service is brought back in house. It recognises that excellent customer engagement in a range of ways that are convenient to all residents must be at the heart of managing and improving the service.

4.5 As part of the transformation programme analysis has reinforced the work done by HQN, which identified that the current engagement programme is centred heavily around face to face meetings. This results in engagement levels of 0-3% and a silent majority of 97% - although this is not uncommon in the housing sector. Whilst there are many face to face forums available for residents, it has been established that these could be reduced still ensuring that there is added value for the resident and

organisation. This is particularly important because they tend to be delivered in a manually intensive way by a small BHP engagement team, so the small team provides a lot of support to engage with a relatively small number of people.

4.6 The outcome of the transformation programme is not known yet, but the emerging findings suggest there is a need to:

- refocus engagement activity around resident quality assurance and service redesign
- question everything else that we do – both whether we should do it (groups have been identified which are not delivering impact), and how we should do it (how we support resident associations to set up and become self-sustaining)
- look at new ways of mainstreaming resident quality assurance by automating customer satisfaction feedback, making it quick and easy to do on a mobile device.

4.7 A new customer insight function will be designed to listen to the customers' voice (through all channels) and ensure core services are also listening and taking action. We will ask residents to work with us to solve issues such as estate parking, cleaning etc. and they will be able to report issues such as fly tipping using real time digital communication. There will be a new customer relationship management system which will store customers details, their demographic, show they have been involved and it will capture who is engaging and who isn't, who is being served and who isn't. This will free up staff to add specialist value by diverting inbound customer contact (enrolment, payments, bookings) to web and Customer Response Team and case management to ensure nothing falls through the cracks.

4.8 As part of the resident engagement strategy, we will develop a customer strategy. The intention of the customer strategy will be to develop broader and more inclusive approaches to communication with customers across the organisation. This will involve expanding the way we communicate with customers; methods to include social media and digital communication. Communication and consultation will be mainstreamed, so it is available on tap and personalised. Real time digital feedback and contract monitoring will be visible to all. We will also develop a clear approach to making sure communication is consistently provided to all partners including key community organisations, forums and residents associations.

4.9 The following sets out the engagement plan for implementation of the new Customer Strategy which will cover customer service, access and engagement;

<b>Scope</b>	<b>Start</b>	<b>Completion</b>
Develop Initial Draft with BHP Senior Management Team (SLT) and Core Team	01/09/17	30/09/17
Survey residents	29/09/17	15/10/17
Consult stakeholders	15/10/17	31/10/17
Final Draft available	01/11/17	15/12/17

4.10 From 1 October 2017, when the service comes back in house, the Council has committed to maintain all existing engagement activity until the Transformation programmes completes the full review, and working with residents makes recommendations for improvements to engage all residents, not just the 3% who are currently engaged. The one material change is in the BHP Board. Currently the BHP Board leads the organisation and is made up of housing experts and several elected tenants and leaseholders. Once the service comes back in house, the leadership of the services moves to the Council's Cabinet. In order to manage this transition, the Cabinet Member for Housing and Welfare reform will continue to chair an informal advisory panel, which includes all of BHP Board's tenant and leaseholder members.

4.11 All residents will continue to take part in the engagement opportunities at BHP and residents will have the opportunity to be able to feedback quickly and more efficiently using digital means. In the summer edition of the BHP residents Magazine, 'Your Voice' featured an article to recruit more customers to get involved in helping us to share the new housing service.

## **5.0 BHP Stock**

5.1 An interactive map of all BHP properties in Brent, by ward has been developed, and a static copy of it is attached as Appendix 3, along with data tables which show how many properties of each type, per ward. This map facility can be built upon further, for example to contain the properties of other Registered Housing providers with a presence in the borough. However this will be dependent on them providing up to date property lists to our Business Intelligence Team. The Housing Partnership team, who has relationships with all major registered providers, will request their property data.

## **6.0 Financial Implications**

6.1 All costs associated with the performance management update will be delivered through existing revenue budgets, and resident engagement transformation will be either delivered within the existing Transformation budget, or be subject to approval of a separate business case (on a case by case basis) which will go to the Transformation Board for approval and allocation of funds.

## **Appendices**

Appendix A: Map of council properties in Brent, by ward, with associated data

Appendix B: BHP Q1 Performance Scorecard

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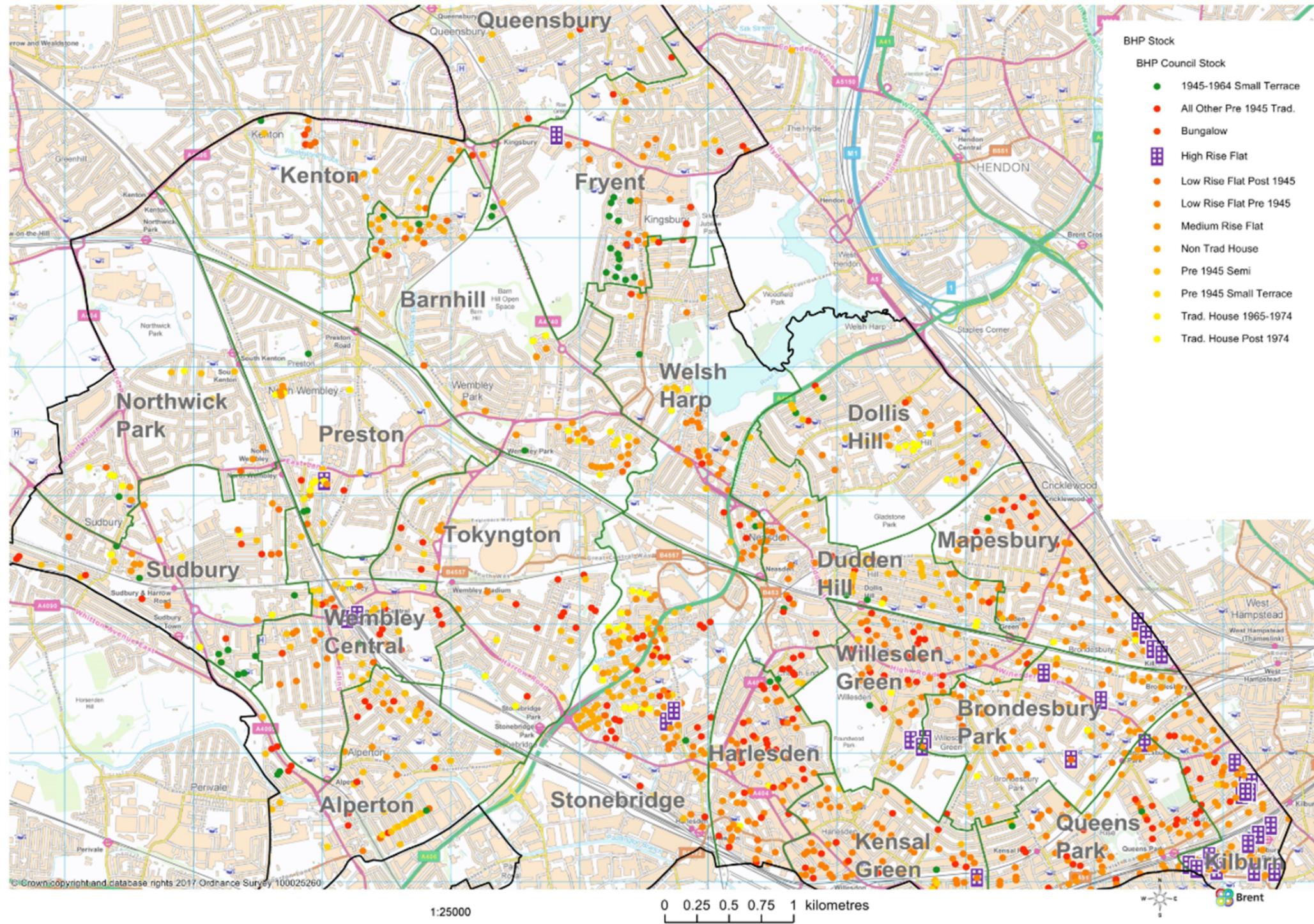
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Well

Being

Appendix A (1) Map of council properties, disaggregated by ward



Appendix A (2) – Type of properties by Ward

Ward	1945-1964 Small Terrace	All Other Pre 1945 Trad.	Bungalow	High Rise Flat	Low Rise Flat Post 1945	Low Rise Flat Pre 1945	Medium Rise Flat	Non Trad House	Pre 1945 Semi	Pre 1945 Small Terrace	Trad. House 1965-1974	Trad. House Post 1974	Grand Total
Kilburn		13		1044	2	13	410			2		31	1515
Stonebridge	2	122	4	111	31	182	580	185	62	2	7	215	1503
Brondesbury Park	2	4	1	67	38	38	358		12	1	15	2	538
Queens Park	11	64	1	47	9	143	186		6	1			468
Mapesbury	1	9	11	217	26	74	118		4			6	466
Barnhill	5		14		68	1	182	87	3		15	26	401
Dollis Hill	2	3	1		66	13	154		11		62	36	348
Kensal Green	6	48		1	7	179	53		10	27		2	333
Fryent	42	23	27	3	39	6	115		16				271
Willesden Green	2	23		37	1	107	77		4			5	256
Alperton	4	20	3		34	40	29		91	10			231
Dudden Hill	4	50			4	59	36		43	2		29	227
Welsh Harp	3	18	1		23	83	50	1	15			14	208
Sudbury	40	5	2		43	4	79		8		2	13	196
Harlesden	2	52			9	91	34			3		3	194
Wembley Central	2	29	8	65	8	15			34	8		3	172
Tokyington		13				3	100		11	1	3	3	134
Preston	5	2	1	1	1		68		7		7	40	132
Kenton	1		35		15		36	12	11				110
Northwick Park	2				4	1	63		5		2	28	105
Queensbury		2	11		3		34		8				58
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>1593</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>1052</b>	<b>2762</b>	<b>285</b>	<b>361</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>7866</b>

The table below shows the TOTAL number of High Rise units by ward

Row Labels	Brondesbury Park	Fryent	Kilburn	Mapesbury	Queens Park	Stonebridge	Wembley Central	Willesden Green	Grand Total
ALPHA HOUSE			51						51
AMUNDSEN HOUSE						54			54
AUSTEN HOUSE			114						114
BARRETT HOUSE			27						27
BLAKE COURT			59						59
CANTERBURY COURT			40						40
CRAIK COURT			57						57
CRONE COURT			69						69
DICKENS HOUSE			110						110
FRONTENAC	29								29
GLOUCESTER HOUSE			4						4
GOREFIELD HOUSE			94						94
HEREFORD HOUSE			47						47
JOHN RATCLIFFE HOUSE			38						38
LODGE COURT							31		31
MANOR COURT							34		34
MAPES HOUSE					47				47
PEASCROFT HOUSE	18								18
PHARAMOND	19								19
RATHBONE HOUSE			29						29
ROSEDENE	1								1
RYDE HOUSE			32						32
SANDBY HOUSE			13						13
SHACKLETON HOUSE						57			57
SUMMIT COURT				19					19
THE OAKS								37	37
VARLEY HOUSE			13						13
WESTCROFT COURT		3							3
WILLIAM DUNBAR HOUSE			62						62
WILLIAM SAVILLE HOUSE			66						66
WINDMILL COURT				106					106
WINTERLEYS			48						48
WORDSWORTH HOUSE			2						2
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>975</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>1430</b>