

To: Housing Panel
Date: 26th April 2017
Report of: Property Services Manager
Title of Report: Great Estates Programme

Summary and recommendations	
Purpose of report:	To update the Housing Panel on works completed under the great estates programme and proposals for future works and funding
Corporate Priority	Meeting Housing Needs
Policy Framework	Housing Strategy
Recommendation(s)::	
1. The Panel are asked to note the contents of this report	

Appendices	
Appendix 1	Examples of work completed during 16/17

Introduction and background

1. The Council approved funding for a programme of work designed to improve the external environment of its housing estates. A team has been put together to co-ordinate and programme this work and has worked very closely with Direct Services who have delivered most of the work on site. Works have included off street parking provision, increased block security, environmental improvements, and redesign of refuse areas, installing internal floor coverings to common areas.
2. This report outlines work completed to date and proposals for future works

Funding

3. Below is the budget approved by Council in Feb 2017 along with budget and spend for 16/17

	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21
Approved budget	1,650,621	1,200,000	1,200,000	1,200,000	600,000
Actual spend	1,250,621				
Carry forward on identified schemes		400,000			
TOTAL	-400,000	1,600,000	1,200,000	1,200,000	600,000

4. It will be noted that there is a carry forward of £400,000 from 16/17 into 17/18. This is for schemes which were not completed during 16/17 due to the need to carry out consultation and obtain the necessary approvals which has extended the lead in time for these works.
5. Learning from this, we are now beginning the planning of schemes much earlier and are programming works accordingly, in order to avoid future carry forwards wherever possible.

Identification of schemes

6. Schemes are identified in four ways.
 - i. Requests from ward councillors
 - ii. Identification of specific issues on estates by Tenancy Management Officers
 - iii. Identification of areas where off street parking is uncontrolled and damaging the immediate environment
 - iv. Supplementary works in conjunction with the cyclical painting and repairs programme to provide a co-ordinated response and to maximise the impact of works on an estate to improve the appearance and immediate environment.

Resident consultation

7. Resident consultation is seen as key to the success of any improvements. A process has been developed whereby initial plans are drawn up and tenants are then consulted on the proposals. This is done via open evenings, door knocking and individual letters. Tenant's initiatives have assisted in this approach which has proved to be very successful.
8. During the consultation residents are asked for their views on the proposals and to put forward any ideas that they may have. Wherever possible we incorporate tenant's suggestions into the final scheme. This would include the layout of any landscaping and surface treatments, planting and designation of certain areas for specific uses.
9. Residents are also consulted on security measures where appropriate. One such example is the introduction of wireless door entry which gives residents much better control via smart phones and other similar devices.

Developing the overall approach

10. We have put together a small team to project manage and co-ordinate this work. This includes a project manager, surveyor and architectural assistant.
11. Experience has taught us that detailed planning is essential to ensure smooth delivery of the projects, and lead in times can often be extended in order to undertake resident consultation, finalise the agreed plans and receive planning permissions. In some cases it is also necessary to undertake S20 leaseholder consultation in order to recover some of the costs.
12. Direct Services undertake the majority of the work through their maintenance department, engineering department, and Parks.

Schemes completed during 16/17

Colemans Hill 1-43	Environmental improvements, security,
Druce Way 28-55	New bin stores
Warburg Crescent 31-58	New bin stores
Whitworth Place 1-24	New bin stores
Overmead Green 7-29	Garden environment and bin stores
Preachers Lane/ Friars Wharf	Door entry and new entrance doors
Linnet Close 7-24	Garden environment
Taggs Gate & Stowford Road	Level forecourts on demolished garage sites on HR land
Denny Gardens	Community garden
Various	Floor coverings
Various	Car parking schemes

Proposed works for 17/18

13. The programme currently identified for the coming financial year is below. Other works identified during the year may be added if there is sufficient funding within the year and subject to the statutory approvals required.
14. The main focus of the 17/18 programme is on Townsend Square. This estate has had little done to it over the past ten years and we are combining our resources to improve parking, the external appearance of the blocks, landscaping and security. We hope that by combining works from several budgets in one co-ordinated approach we will increase the overall impact of the works and make a significant difference to the estate environment.
15. We are also undertaking a review of all blocks on Blackbird Leys in order to inform a prioritised programme of improvement works for future years. This will involve developing a design solution for each block type.

Wolsey House 214-240 Riley House 86-212	Door entry
Hawksmoor Road 1-84	Garden environment
Birchfield Close 21-55	Garden environment
Cowley Road 151a, Flats 1-9	Roof Garden/Environment
Townsend Square	Environmental improvements and car parking in association with cyclical painting and repairs
Blocks on blackbird leys	Assessment of all blocks and prioritisation for future improvement works

Financial implications

16. None

Legal issues

17. None

Conclusion

18. The great estates funding has enabled the council to address long standing issues on our estates that have been a concern for members and residents. We have developed our approach to this programme of work with Direct Services who are able to carry out the majority of the work.
19. Feedback from residents where work has been completed is very positive and early consultation with them ensures we address their concerns directly, leading to more effective solutions to some of the problems experienced on the estates.
20. Because there is identified funding for the next four years we are able to plan larger schemes of works and prioritise these going forward. The initial work on Blackbird Leys outlined above is an example of this.
21. We have developed a “one council” approach to this project involving a number of different departments within the council to deliver the programme of work and project teams have been set up where appropriate to co-ordinate and deliver the work

Report author	Martin Shaw
Job title	Property Services Manager
Service area or department	Housing & Property
Telephone	01865 252544
e-mail	mshaw2@oxford.gov.uk