

22nd September 2021

REPORT OF GENTOO

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The following report provides an update from Gentoo for the West Area Committee from June 2021 to September 2021

2 Background

- 2.1 Area Committee agreed that regular updates from Gentoo would be presented to each Committee meeting to enable members to be up to date on current Gentoo developments, projects and priorities.

3. Update on Neighbourhood Services

- 3.1 Gentoo are in the process of pulling together a media campaign aimed to support tenants on universal credit who will be impacted financially when the £20 uplift comes to an end in September 2021. The Money Matters Team will be leading on this project and supporting tenants with budgeting advice, debt management advice, utility suppliers, benefit checks etc.
- 3.2 Gentoo are supporting the Afghan Resettlement Scheme in Sunderland and have offered properties to support rehousing the refugees.
- 3.3 Gentoo in partnership with Newcastle Furniture Service (NFS), are offering new and existing tenants a furnished tenancy package, to allow tenants to live comfortably with new furniture and appliances at an affordable weekly cost. If you are in receipt of benefits, the furniture may be covered by the Housing Element of Universal Credit or Housing Benefit.
- 3.4 Gentoo's 'Poverty Action Group' a new initiative aimed at addressing poverty in the City, looking at a collaborative approach at times of need such Christmas, Easter, 6 weeks holidays etc. Organisations such as Sunderland Council, Foundation of Light, Sunderland Foodbank and members of the voluntary sector will be involved in this new group.

4. Investment & Renewal

- 4.1 Chestergate, Pennywell update - works on the first phase are progressing well. The show home is programmed to open on Saturday 18th September. Current sales figures are, 9 reservations, 18 have exchanged legal contracts and 2 have legally completed. Work is expected to be completed by late 2024.
- 4.2 Prestbury Road Site, Pennywell update – this scheme will deliver ten new homes (2 & 3 bed), all for Affordable rent. Works are progressing well and the Modular units are due to be delivered in October. Practical completion is now estimated to be February 2022.
- 4.3 Churchfields, Doxford Park update – works on the final phase of the Doxford Park masterplan are progressing well. The show home opened early August. Current sales figures are: 14 reservations, 9 have exchanged legal contracts and 3 have legally completed. Work is expected to be completed by mid-2024.

- 4.4 Belman Green (old Silksworth Housing Office), this scheme will deliver 13 new homes (2 and 3 bed) all for affordable rent. Works are ongoing with brickwork to all plots progressing well. Practical completion is estimated to be February 2022.
- 4.5 From January 2021 all new build affordable homes will have Air Source Heat Pumps this is in line with supporting Gentoo's Carbon footprint agenda.
- 4.6 Garage demolition – we updated you last quarter on the intention to demolish 51 garages, the first lots of works were scheduled for August, this has been delayed to September 2021.

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 Note the content of this report.

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