

Councillor Emily Smith
Vale of White Horse District Council
135 Eastern Avenue
Milton Park
Oxon
OX14 4SB

Our reference:
Your reference:

3 October 2022

Dear Councillor Smith

Thank you for your letter to Steve Trenwith regarding concern from some Sovereign tenants about poor insulation in their homes, I've been asked to respond on Steve's behalf.

The Sovereign Homes and Place Standard outlines our commitment to building and maintaining good quality homes and better places to live. Details can be found on our website – <https://www.sovereign.org.uk/about-us/homes-and-place>. While we have always striven for high standards in our developments, this new approach underpins how we invest in our existing homes and how we build new homes.

The Homes and Place standard will outline how we retrofit our homes for the future. This year we will be starting with a pilot programme, which may be directly linked with the Social Housing Decarbonisation fund (SHDC).

We also have a longer-term Strategic Asset Management program. We have finalised an asset grading process of our existing portfolio and assigned a Homes and Place score to each property. The Homes and Place score considers all aspects of a home including the energy efficiency and adaptation to achieve net zero carbon. This work allows us to view the overall performance of homes for our customers and set out a program of re-investment.

The re-investment of the existing estate includes a pilot programme to test the most efficient improvements we can undertake to homes and thereafter accelerate the energy efficiency of our homes. We have identified a large number of homes within Vale that will be considered for this work over the longer term.

Recently we have met with key Officers within Vale District Council to outline this approach and start to consider where there may be opportunities to work together to improve our homes and communities.

Our SHDF wave 2 bid is for 400 homes, final selection will be from an initial review of 992 qualifying homes. We'll look to prioritise those most in need.

Of the 992 homes 169 are within the Vale of the White Horse area. We're looking to improve EPC band D and E homes to band B (RdSAP 86+). The SHDF threshold is band C (RdSAP 69 to 80), and where appropriate a heating load of 90 kW/hr m² per year.

Should you wish to find out more about how we are improving our homes and communities I would welcome the opportunity to meet with you and Officers from Vale and outline our approach further.

Currently, if Customers have concerns about the insulation of their homes and it won't be picked by the SHDF our local property team will arrange to visit the customers and investigate the concerns.

Should you or your fellow Councillors have concerns about our communication or response about individual cases, please pass these to Jason Searle who is Interim Head of Repairs for the South and Vale area or myself and we will forward to the right people and ensure the matters are dealt with in a timely way.

Yours sincerely



Matthew Hensby
Regional Director
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