

BABERGH DISTRICT COUNCIL / MID SUFFOLK DISTRICT COUNCIL

To: Joint Housing Board	Report Number: JHB/10/16
From: Corporate Manager - Housing Options	Date of meeting: 16 May 2016

VOID PERFORMANCE 2015-16

1. Purpose of Report

1.1 To update members of the Board regarding void performance during 2015-16.

2. Recommendations

2.1 Members are asked to note the contents of the report and the on-going work to improve performance.

3. Financial Implications

3.1 Re-let performance has a direct impact on resources within the HRA. Rent loss and payment of council tax reduces the funds available for other activities.

4. Legal Implications

4.1 None.

5. Risk Management

5.1 Extended void periods and the resulting loss of rental income presents a risk to the two Councils' business plans.

6. Consultations

6.1 Not applicable

7. Equality Analysis

7.1 There are no equality issues associated with this report.

8. Shared Service / Partnership Implications

8.1 Currently Mid Suffolk has an in-house team which carries out repairs in void properties whereas Babergh uses an external contractor. Work is in progress to review the delivery of responsive repairs, including repairs in void properties, across the two districts.

8.2 The review will consider the options for improving and integrating the service to provide the best quality and value for money service for residents in both Council areas.

9. Links to Joint Strategic Plan

9.1 Managing our housing assets effectively.

10. Key Information

10.1 In each authority around 200 properties become void each year and are re-let via Gateway to Homechoice following repairs and safety checks.

10.2 Management of this process involves staff from two teams; Housing Options and Asset Management. The Housing Options Team carries out the administrative work required when a tenancy is brought to an end, arranges for invoices to be paid, visits the property before the tenancy ends, advertises and allocates vacancies to new tenants and carries out accompanied viewings.

10.3 The Asset Management Team is responsible for inspecting properties when they become vacant, specifying the work required to bring them up to the two Councils' lettable standard and completing or arranging for repairs and safety checks to be carried out.

11. Void Performance

11.1 Appendix A shows the average number of days properties were void and compares 2014/15 with the current year. The graphs show performance for all properties, those requiring only standard repairs, those requiring major works, for example a fire damaged property and those requiring minor capital work such as a new kitchen or bathroom.

11.2 The target is to achieve an average re-let performance of 28 days for all properties. Whilst this was not achieved in 2015.16 there has been an improvement compared to the same period last year as shown in the table below.

Types of repairs needed	Babergh		Mid Suffolk	
	14/15	15/16	14/15	15/16
All types	45	43	66	43
Major works	165	148	158	155
Minor capital works	42	49	50	49
Standard repairs (all property types)	36	32	50	31
Standard repairs (general needs housing)	38	25	39	32
Standard repairs (sheltered housing)	33	50	64	31

- 11.3 The tables in Appendix B break the time into the number of days to carry out repairs for the different types of work required and the time taken after the work is complete and before a new tenancy begins.
- 11.4 The tables highlight the differences between properties requiring major works and those requiring only standard repairs. It also shows that the time to allocate properties to new tenants is higher for sheltered and very sheltered housing. Babergh has two very sheltered schemes which are often harder to let due to lack of demand from people who require on-site care provision and for whom there is funding available.
- 11.5 The sheltered housing review will take into account demand in recommending the best future use for each individual scheme.

12. On-going work to improve performance

- 12.1 A new mobile working IT module called Total Mobile which will be introduced in August will improve efficiency. The system and tablets are currently being tested and will allow tradesmen to receive notification of their jobs and report completion electronically.
- 12.2 Improvement in performance is also dependent on a review of the delivery arrangements for responsive repairs. An options appraisal is currently being undertaken with two options under consideration. Option 1 is to invest in a rejuvenated in-house team to provide repairs for both districts. Option 2 is to outsource repairs and maintenance services to an external provider.
- 12.3 Option 1 has been agreed by Mid Suffolk’s Executive Committee and will be considered by Babergh’s Strategy Committee in June. An in-house option provides greater flexibility and presents an opportunity to expand the business in the future to undertake works for other organisations. It would also build on the positives of the existing Direct Labour Organisation, such as high customer satisfaction, whilst implementing a robust set of performance measures.

13. Appendices

Title	Location
(a) Performance graphs	Attached
(b) Analysis of time taken to re-let vacancies	Attached

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APPENDIX A

Average re-let times Mid Suffolk

The vertical axis shows the cumulative average number of days properties were void

Table 1 All properties

Number of properties
 2014/15: 207
 2015/16: 188

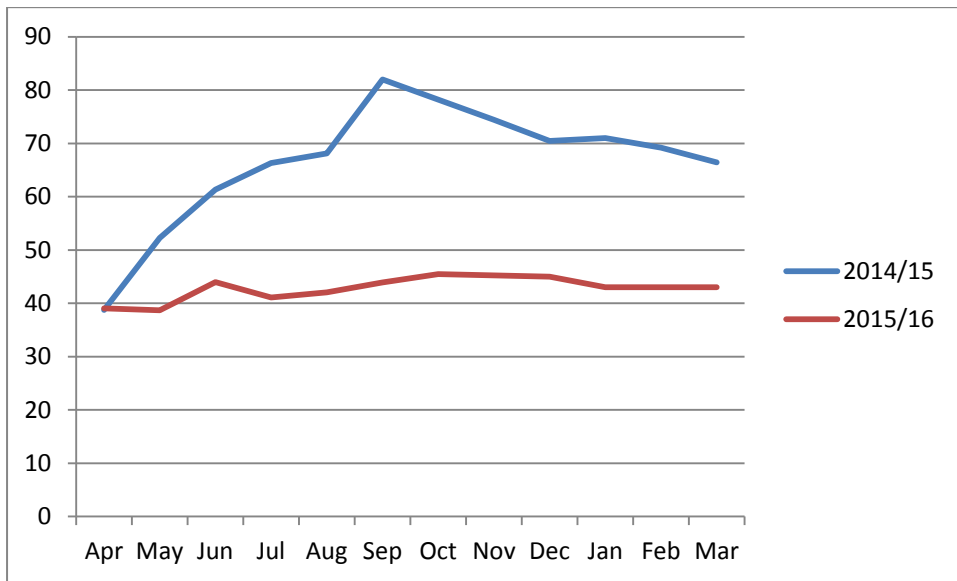


Table 2 Properties requiring only standard void repairs

Number of properties
 2014/15: 125
 2015/16: 128

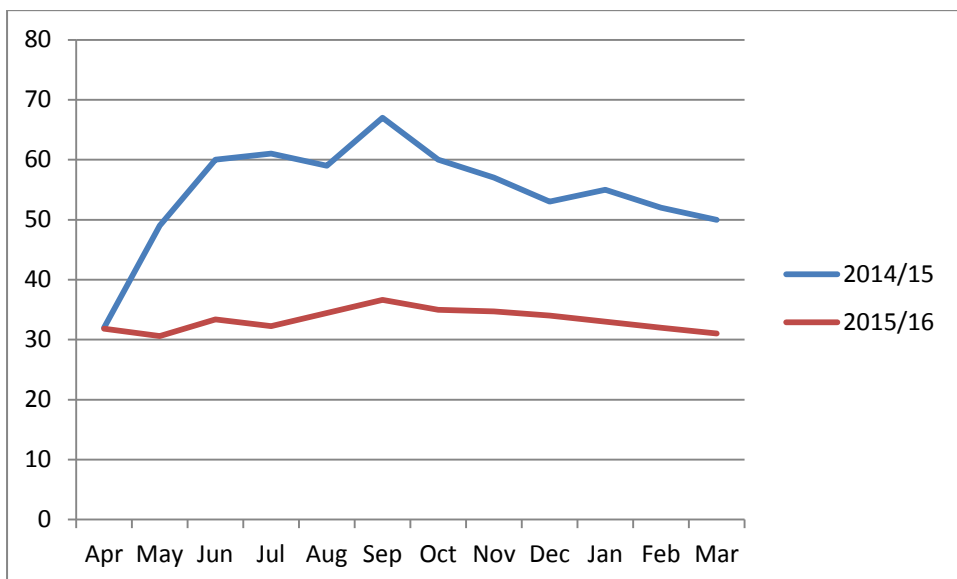


Table 3 Properties requiring major works

Number of properties

2014/15: 32

2015/16: 10

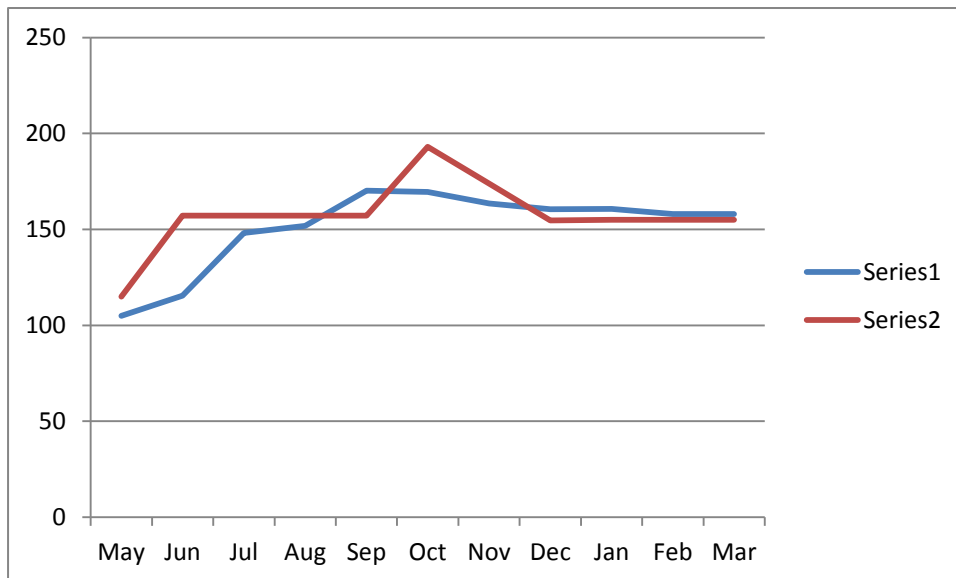
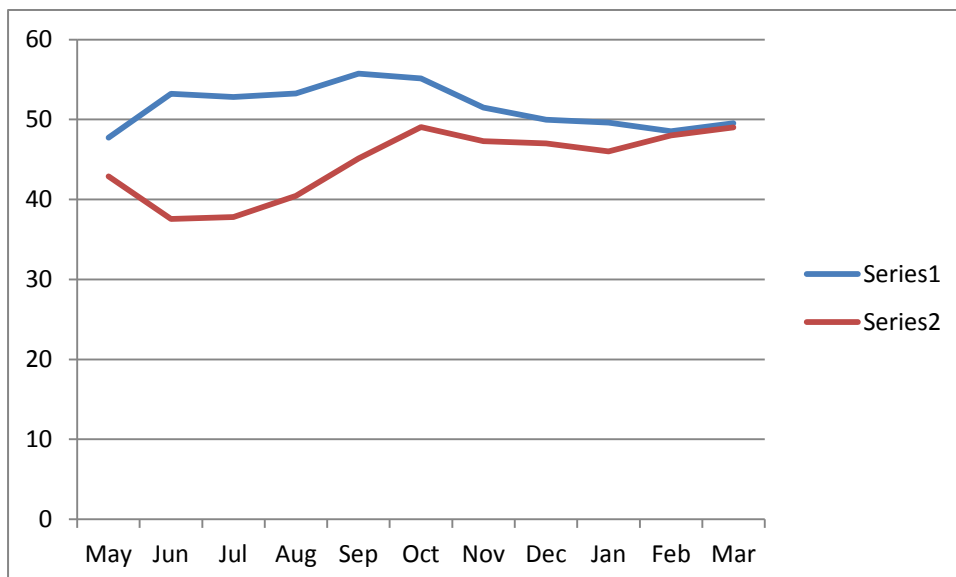


Table 4 Properties requiring some capital expenditure such as a new kitchen or bathroom

Number of properties

2014/15: 50

2015/16: 50



Average re-let times Babergh

The vertical axis shows the cumulative average number of days properties were void

Table 1 All properties

Number of properties

2014/15: 209

2015/16: 218

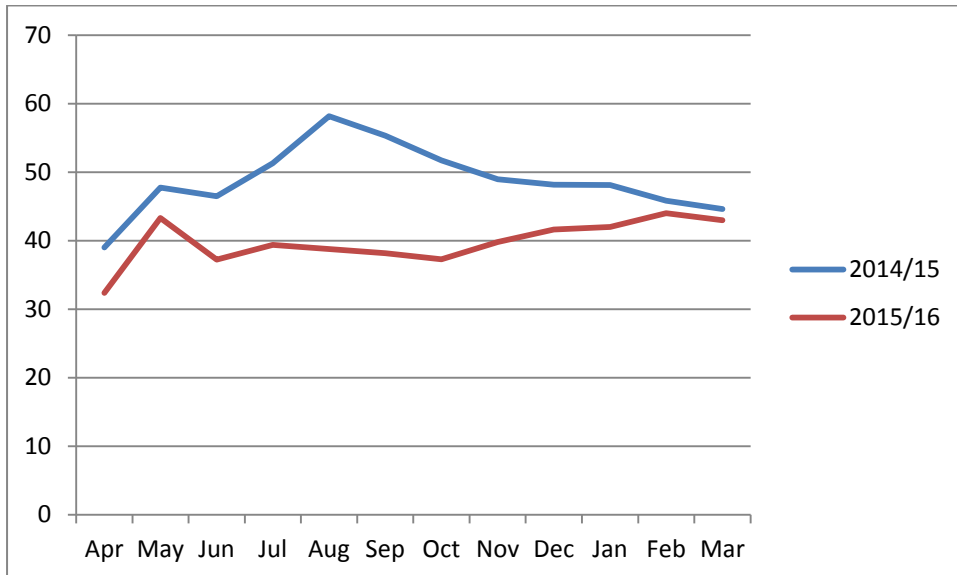


Table 2 Properties requiring only standard void repairs

Number of properties

2014/15:130

2015/16: 144

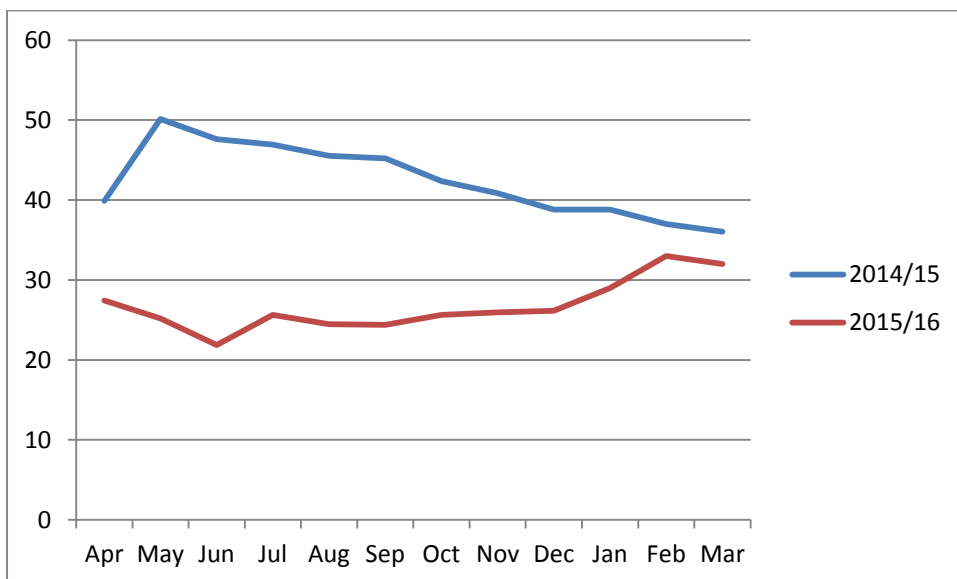


Table 3 Properties requiring major works

Number of properties

2014/15: 11

2015/16: 12

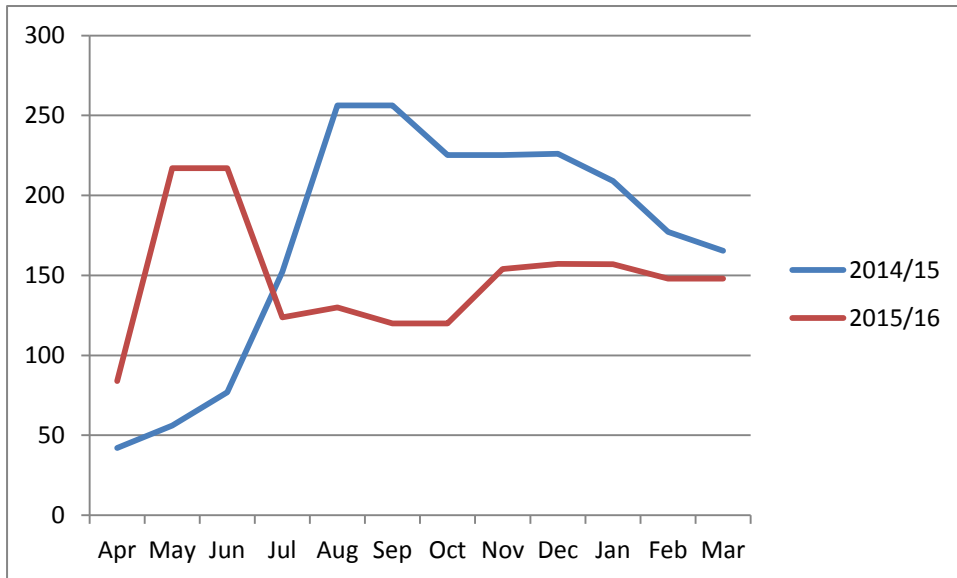
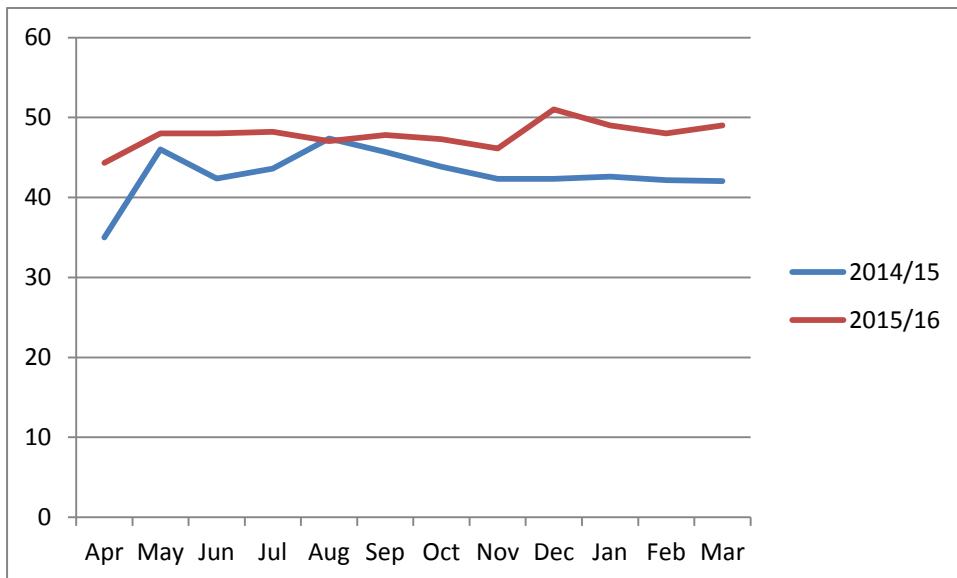


Table 4 Properties requiring some capital expenditure such as a new kitchen or bathroom

Number of properties

2014/15: 67

2015/16: 62



Properties re-let in 2015.16

Where the time is taken

Babergh 2015.16	Target (days)	Actual (days)
Average time from keys received to ready to let (all properties)	no target	36
Average time from keys received to ready to let (major works required)	54	148
Average time from keys received to ready to let (some capital works required)	14	48
Average time from keys received to ready to let (standard works required)	7	21
Average time from ready to let to tenancy start date (all property types)	no target	13
Average time from ready to let to tenancy start date (general needs properties)	no target	6
Average time from ready to let to tenancy start date (sheltered properties)	no target	10
Average time from ready to let to tenancy start date (very sheltered properties)	no target	89

Mid Suffolk 2015.16	Target (days)	Actual (days)
Average time from keys received to ready to let (all properties)	no target	37
Average time from keys received to ready to let (major works required)	54	155
Average time from keys received to ready to let (some capital works required)	14	45
Average time from keys received to ready to let (standard works required)	7	25
Average time from ready to let to tenancy start date (all property types)	no target	9
Average time from ready to let to tenancy start date (general needs properties)	no target	7
Average time from ready to let to tenancy start date (sheltered properties)	no target	15