

## PRESS STATEMENT



**DATE : MONDAY 3<sup>RD</sup> JULY 2023**

**SUBJECT : EDGAR ROAD, WESTRUTHER**

In response to the recent media attention in relation to the homes at Edgar Road, the safety of our customers is our primary consideration. Our structural engineers have advised the homes are now at the point where they are no longer safe for our customers to reside in. We cannot ignore the technical advice we have been given.

The unfortunate situation regarding these homes in Westruther has been ongoing for several years. During this time all key stakeholders have been fully updated on the position.

Berwickshire Housing Association have been working with structural engineers since 2018 to assess the options available to us with regards the homes. The approximate total costs to restore the homes to the high standards we would expect, would be upwards of £128,000 per house. We have a responsibility to all our customers to ensure value for money in all that we do, and in May 2021 our Board agreed that undertaking the works would not be justifiable.

We first engaged with the customers residing in the Edgar Road properties on this matter in July 2021 and requested they provide us with their preferred housing options by February 2022.

All remaining Edgar Road customers have secured a priority move to the newly constructed Eildon homes, when they are completed. These new homes are located directly opposite the current BHA homes in Westruther.

It is unfortunate that there is a time lag between customers being required to vacate their existing homes due to safety concerns and the new build homes being completed. During this period, all remaining BHA customers in Edgar Road have been offered alternative accommodation to move into until the new homes are completed.

As some of the remaining customers have chosen not to accept our offer of alternative accommodation, we have been left with no choice but to initiate the legal process. We continue work closely with these customers to re-house them imminently.

**Addendum - as at 5 July 2023** - The procedural hearing on 5th July was heard by Sheriff Nicol who granted decree against two of the three remaining occupying customers (both of whom had already accepted offers). This would not be enforceable before a period of 12 weeks, and it is anticipated that both households will be rehoused by then.

The remaining one household has been set for a proof hearing on 29<sup>th</sup> September. The Sheriff highlighted that the defence would and should be to disprove whether BHA had made reasonable and appropriate efforts to find alternative accommodation.



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Scottish Charity No.: SC042342 Registered Office: 55 Newtown Street, Duns, TD11 3AU