

## **SUPPLEMENTARY REPORT**

### **THE COST AND TIME ASSOCIATED WITH TACKLING VOID PROPERTIES**

## PURPOSE

The tables below provide an estimate of the Officer time spent investigating and trying to resolve issues associated with the following void properties:

- The Bell Inn, Market Place, Willenhall
- 122-130, Newhall Street, Willenhall
- 38 Wilkinson Road, Moxley
- 43 Wenlock Gardens. Walsall.

They also provide an indication of fees and charges that have been incurred for the properties and outline what debt recovery action has been undertaken or is proposed.

The Bell Inn, Market Place, Willenhall	
Investigation time	Environmental Health Officer = 5 hours Income Recovery and Debt Management = 3 hours Senior Regeneration ( <a href="#">Building Conservation</a> ) Officer = 42 hours since early 2008 Total time = 50 hours
Fees and charges incurred	Securing the property = £400 Debt recovery claims issue fee = £85 Interest charges will be "considerable". Other costs have also been incurred in respect of works undertaken to urgently protect a listed building which include: Works under three Urgent Works Notices = £1921 Attendance fee from Property Services = £300 Mitie attendance fee for a site visit = £347 H&R Solutions Site Visit and Report which included cost schedules for Urgent and Repair Works = £1408 H&R Solutions Report = £677 Total costs = £5138
Debt Recovery Actions	The owner has formally disputed all charges claiming that he has contracted out all remedial works required. A letter was sent to the owner in December 2009 rejecting his claims and requesting immediate payment Proceedings have now been commenced and the matter should be entering into County Court shortly. Enforcement (if required) is likely to be referral to a High Court Bailiff

**122-130, Newhall Street, Willenhall**

Investigation time	Environmental Crime Officers = 25 hours Income Recovery and Debt Management = 3 hours Total time = 28 hours
Fees and charges incurred	Securing the site and clearance of fly tipping = £3300 Repairs to gates = £50 Debt recovery claims issue fee = £108 Claim has also attracted interest charges of £160 <b>Total cost = £3618</b>
Debt Recovery Actions	A claim was entered into County Court in Oct 2009 and Judgment in Default was obtained in January. Available enforcement options to be considered shortly which initially is likely to be referral to a High Court Bailiff. Debtor is currently out of the country.

**38 Wilkinson Road, Moxley**

Investigation time	Environmental Crime Officers = 11 hours Income Recovery and Debt Management = 2 hours Total time = 13 hours
Fees and charges incurred	Securing the property = £690 Debt recovery claims issue fee = £65 Claim has also attracted interest charges of £30 Total costs = £785
Debt Recovery Actions	A claim was entered into County Court in Nov 2009 and Judgment in Default was obtained in January. There have been a number of difficulties with this claim due to confirming liability/ownership of the property. No response has been received from either the owner or his son which would have assisted this process. Available enforcement options to be considered shortly which initially is likely to be an order summoning to Court for questioning.

43 Wenlock Gardens. Walsall	
Investigation time	Environmental Health officers 6 hours (in 2003) Planning officers 65 hours Legal officers 70 hours Income Recovery and Debt Management = 6 hours Total time = 147 hours
Fees and charges incurred	Works to the property = £1814 for rubbish removal in 2003, and £3680 for works in 2009 required by S.215 'amenity' Notice Debt recovery claims issue fee = £300 Claim has also attracted interest charges of £40 Total costs = £5834 -00
Debt Recovery Actions	A claim was issued in 2004 and Judgment was obtained the same year. There have been a number of unsuccessful attempts at enforcement including referral to a County Court Bailiff and Orders summoning the debtor to Court for questioning. To date; no agents have managed to meet with the debtor nor has any form of acknowledgement of the claim been received. In 2006 there was consideration to placing a Charging Order through the County Courts, but this was not progressed as a Local Charge was already placed on the property and the debt was not of sufficient value to consider and Order for Sale. In 2007/8 there was consideration towards the suitability of an ESP and the matter was effectively placed on hold, pending a decision. Recently, the owner has accrued a debt for default works required under a S.215 Notice and it has been established that an ESP is not possible. Liability (without costs) for the two charges total £5834 and so Legal Services have now taken on both debts with the intention of obtaining Charging Orders for both and then requesting an Order for Sale.

\* ESP = Enforced Sales Procedure