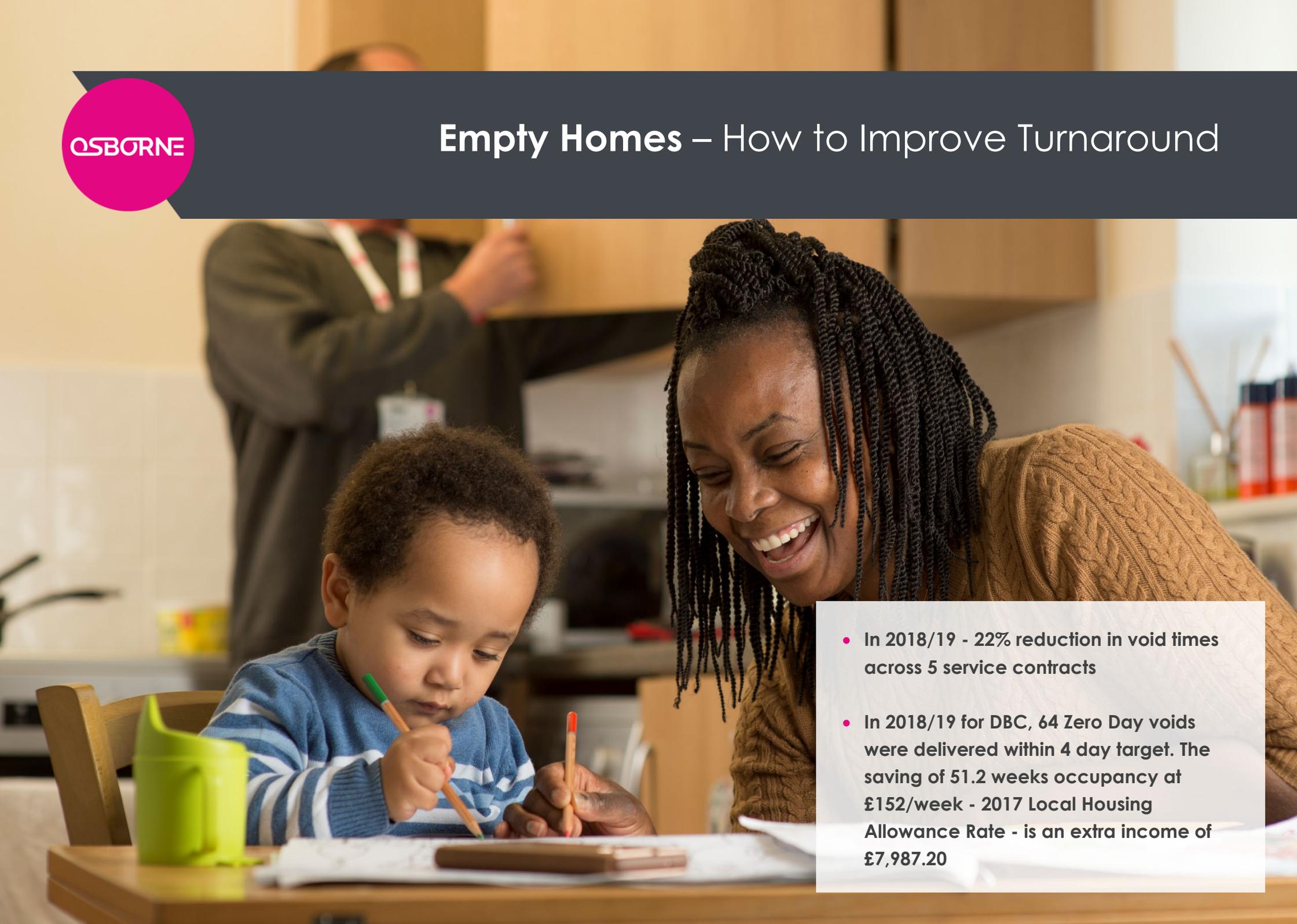


# Empty Homes – How to Improve Turnaround

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- In 2018/19 - 22% reduction in void times across 5 service contracts
  - In 2018/19 for DBC, 64 Zero Day voids were delivered within 4 day target. The saving of 51.2 weeks occupancy at £152/week - 2017 Local Housing Allowance Rate - is an extra income of £7,987.20

# Issue

Empty homes impact on everyone. Residents can lose out on somewhere safe to live and authorities lose out on occupancy.

Natural churn and the need for emergency housing are common features of social housing which have to be managed. Added to the challenge, is the current new build programmes which are leading to residents vacating older properties for modern ones.

Many authorities manage several thousand properties. Preparing empty homes for new residents has to align with a shared service vision. For some 'Zero days' voids are an important component but not at the compromise of quality and safety.

# Solution

Predictable turnaround times are linked to the housing stock condition. Good quality properties are simpler to turnaround. Sounds easy, but assessing

the condition and undertaking quality repairs in advance can be challenging. It is reliant on a collaborative 3-way partnership between authority, resident and service provider.

To make it happen we have worked with clients to move the empty homes phase to when the notice is given on the property rather than when the resident leaves. It requires a commitment to align data systems for full visibility of the empty homes schedule along with good quality repair history and compliance data.

On the ground, trusted relationships with the residents and the support of the client have been crucial to gain early property access for condition assessments.

By working together the pre-inspection can be completed, repairs executed and the specification agreed all before vacancy. That leaves just the more intrusive elements which can be lined up to start as soon as we receive the keys. The result is improved efficiency and quality.

# Outcome

Our clients have seen improvement in empty homes turnaround across the range of void categories through early involvement, shared systems, vision and commitment.

- In 2018/19 across all our 5 service contracts we delivered a 22% reduction in void turnaround times.
- V4 category voids (20-50 days) handed back on average in just 24 days for Slough Borough Council.
- In 2018/19, 617 Category 1–4 Voids were completed in 18/19 for Dacorum Borough Council (DBC)
- In 2018/19 for DBC, 64 Zero Day voids were delivered against our contractual target of 4 days. The saving of 51.2 weeks occupancy at £152/week - 2017 Local Housing Allowance Rate - is an extra income of £7,987.20
- DBC contract delivered a 118% increase in category 4 voids compared to the year 17/18 – 67% of those homes being processed in the first 2 quarters of the year.