

Actions following the Audit Commission's Short Notice Inspection

Inspectors said:

- we should develop a comprehensive list of service standards for repairs, gas servicing and resident involvement and involve our residents in the process.

We have:

- launched a new comprehensive set of service standards which we have developed with our residents.

Inspectors said:

- we should improve the management and performance of how we handle complaints.

We have:

- launched a new national complaints policy
- started measuring satisfaction with how complaints are dealt with
- started to put together a residents review panel to audit the quality of a sample of complaints
- introduced a new process to identify learning points from complaints and use these to improve our services.

Inspectors said:

- we should publicise our complaints and compensation procedures.

We have:

- posted the new complaints policy on our website
- published it in our residents' newsletters
- started work on developing a new compensation policy with members of the Resident Area Panels - expected to be launched at the end of July.

Inspectors said:

- we should improve our performance in telephone answering for repairs calls.

We have:

- carried out a review of how we handle calls to our repairs contact centre and are aiming to have performance reports ready for analysis by the end of July. These results will then be used for discussion with our contractors and added to their improvement plans from August 2010. This will allow them to put in place measures to further improve repairs call handling.

Inspectors said:

- we should publicise our repairs appointments slots.

- **We have:**

included the offer of a selection of appointment times in our new repairs service standards.

Inspectors said:

- we should improve our performance on gas servicing.

We have:

- appointed a new Gas Safety Manager
- appointed an independent organisation to undertake gas audit checks
- made savings of £1.2 million due to the new gas servicing contract
- ensured that 99.5% of our homes have valid gas safety certificates.

Inspectors said:

- we should understand our residents' profile and use this information to make sure our services are delivered fairly and that we meet the diverse needs of our residents.

We have:

- started building up a profile of all our residents to help personalise our services
- surveyed 70% of all William Sutton Homes residents
- developed a programme to review all our key services to make sure that all our customers have fair and equal access
- appointed a Diversity Manager
- introduced diversity training for all our staff and main contractors.

Inspectors said:

- we should demonstrate how, through involvement activities, our residents are influencing the way we delivery our services.

We have:

- developed a customer feedback action plan which records learning points from all our satisfaction surveys and complaints.
- introduced processes involving key managers to translate these into service improvements.
- published (by the end of July) our annual Resident Impact Assessment which explains how residents have been involved across the business during the year and what impact they have had on how our services are delivered to them.

Inspectors said:

- we should ensure that we promote opportunities for all our residents to be involved so they are representative of the communities we work in.

We have:

- launched our new resident involvement strategy A New Voice and introduced new ways and opportunities for all our residents to get involved.
- used our residents' profiling information to promote opportunities for underrepresented groups to be involved.

Inspectors said:

- improve the way we handle hate crime and domestic abuse.

We have:

- launched new domestic abuse, racial harassment, and hate crimes policies which we developed in consultation with residents.

Inspectors said:

- we should compare our repairs costs with other top performing housing providers and look at ways in which we can improve our performance.

We have:

- introduced a number of joint initiatives with our contractors to reduce costs and improve the service
- Made a commitment to join Housemark, a leading provider of performance improvement services. Membership of Housemark will enable us to compare costs of providing services with other organisations and also source best practice.

Inspectors said:

- we should involve residents in making sure that our services offer value for money.

We have:

- reviewed the remit of our new Service Task Teams to include value for money assessments for their respective areas of service
- put in place plans to involve our new Resident Area Panels in local budgeting decisions.

Inspectors said:

- we should involve residents in a review of the website to make sure key information is easy to access.

We have:

- carried out a review of our website with our residents to make it more user friendly
- introduced an online form to enable our residents to report repairs via the website
- worked with residents to find out what else they would like to be able to do via the website and set up a project team to take these ideas forward.

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