

## Blochairn Housing Cooperative Ltd

This inspection was carried out by Communities Scotland under section 69 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 on behalf of Scottish Ministers. Our purpose in inspection is to provide an independent external assessment of the effectiveness of housing service delivery and make recommendations to help improvement. Inspections are conducted within a published framework of Performance Standards. The Inspection of Blochairn Housing Cooperative took place on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> March 2006.

Blochairn Housing Cooperative owns 219 properties in the Royston area of North Glasgow. Its stock consists of a mixture of new build developments and refurbished tenement properties.

An experienced voluntary management committee governs the Cooperative. It currently has 11 committee members made up of nine tenants, one owner and one co-opted member. Average attendance at Committee meetings is 69% and 11.1% of members attended the last AGM. New Committee members receive excellent support. All Committee members attend a wide range of training courses and conferences, but they do not regularly review their skills. At the time of our inspection Blochairn had four full time employees. The Cooperative receives financial services from Reidvale Housing Association. The table below shows some key facts on Blochairn.

<b>Key Facts</b>	<b>2003-2004</b>	<b>2004-2005</b>	<b>2005-2006*</b>
Houses owned	220	220	219
Employees (full time equivalent)	4	4	4
Annual turnover (£000's)	518	525	539
Total possible rental income (£000's)	481	510	525
Total Arrears (£'s)	44,435	49,540	54,348
Average weekly rent (£)	43.61	44.05	45.59
Houses re-let	17	14	12
Average days to re-let	15	8	5
Responsive repairs carried out	779	849	-

Source: Annual Performance & Statistical Returns (APSR) & annual accounts

### Inspection Findings

Blochairn has an internal management plan in place; but the targets it sets out do not cover the life of the plan. The Cooperative has a good approach to risk management and has identified that viability, ability to continuing to committing resources to wider

role activities and its relationship with other agencies are the three greatest risks to it. Although there has been no internal audit since 2004, there are plans to resume this during 2006/07. The Association also needs to review its arrangements for complying with some of the administrative requirements of Schedule 7 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

Blochairn's financial projections indicate that it is viable in the short to medium term but its forecasts do not demonstrate longer term sustainability. The Cooperative's financial framework is suitable. It has clear concise one year budgets and financial reports however it could improve its five year projections by including cash flow and balance sheet information. Blochairn's houses currently meet the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and there are plans in place to ensure that this continues. The Cooperative has high management costs when compared to peer or national figures.

Key strengths in Blochairn's services are:

- its use of a common application form;
- it provides excellent access to the repairs service;
- it provides good choice for applicants through its participation in the Royston Common Housing Register;
- it provides good information to tenants and is responsive to their feedback;
- its tenants are generally satisfied;
- it manages its estates well;
- its approach to the management of anti social behaviour;
- it completes its repairs within target timescales and to high standards;
- its management of annual gas safety checks;
- its compliance with statutory duties on asbestos management
- its management of tenant rent arrears; and
- It has reduced the time it takes to let empty houses.

The key areas for improvement in Blochairn's services are:

- Its approach to restricting access to the housing list for applicants seeking larger or wheelchair adapted properties;
- its treatment of existing tenants, who must have held their tenancy for a specified number of years before they can apply for a transfer;
- its awarding of points per year of residency; and
- its provision of wheelchair access to its office.

### Next steps

We require Blochairn Housing Cooperative to give this summary of the inspection report to all its tenants.

## How to get more information and contact details

If you would like to see Blochairn's full inspection report you should contact the Chairperson at:

Blochairn Housing Cooperative Ltd  
311 Roystonhill Drive  
Glasgow  
G21 2HN

Telephone: 0141 553 1601  
Email: michael@blochairnhc.org.uk

The full report is on our website at <http://www.communitiesscotland.gov.uk>.  
This Summary can also be made available on tape, in Braille, large print and community languages. For information please contact Janette Campbell on 0131 479 5162 or email: [janette.campbell@communitiesscotland.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:janette.campbell@communitiesscotland.gsi.gov.uk)

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