

Homes for Life Housing Partnership

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 Homes for Life Housing Partnership took place in December 2006. We awarded the Partnership the following grades:

Housing Management	B	Good	Many strengths and some areas where improvement is needed.
Property Maintenance	C	Fair	Some strengths, but with many areas where improvement is required or with a small number of significant weaknesses.

Inspection Findings

Homes for Life Housing Partnership was established in 1998. It owns 304 houses in 22 settlements across East Lothian. The Partnership acquired 27 houses from East Lothian Council. The remainder of its properties are newly built over the last seven years. The Partnership has failed to secure funding to continue its programme of building new houses and therefore needs to review its purpose.

A Board of Directors runs the Partnership. The Board is made up of representatives of East Lothian Council, East Lothian Housing Association, tenants and ordinary members. Following fundamental changes in what the organisation was set up to do, it is aware that it needs to:

- review the composition of the Board;
- review its governance arrangements; and,
- consider its future options.

Homes for Life's key strengths are:

- it allocates its houses to those in need;
- it gives tenants good information and supports them in sustaining their tenancies;
- it performs well in minimising rent arrears;
- its properties are in good condition; and,
- it has worked effectively to understand the future maintenance requirements of its houses.

Homes for Life has consulted with tenants in relation to some service delivery issues such as a rent increase. It also asks tenants how satisfied they are with some of the services they receive. Overall, however, the Partnership is aware that it needs to develop the methods it uses to involve tenants in the work of the organisation.

The Partnership's key areas for improvement are:

- its approach to strategic and operational planning;
- its approach to performance management;
- the way it identifies risks to the Partnership;
- the reporting arrangements between the Partnership and its responsive repairs contractor;
- the way it demonstrates control over the responsive repairs service;
- in understanding how easy it is for tenants to access the repairs service; and,
- complying with the requirements of 'Right to Repair';

Next steps

Homes for Life should submit an improvement plan to Communities Scotland within eight weeks from the publication of this report. We require the Partnership to give this summary of the inspection report to all of its tenants.

How to get more information and contact details

If you would like to see Homes for Life Housing Partnership's improvement plan you should contact:

Homes for Life Housing Partnership
57 Market Street
Haddington
EH41 3JG

Telephone: 01620 829300 E-mail: info@homesforlife.co.uk

The full report is on our website at 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 5163 or email janette.campbell@communitiesscotland.gsi.gov.uk.

اپنی کیونٹی میں بولی جانے والی زبان میں اس دستاویز کے ترجمے کے بارے میں معلومات کیلئے برائے مہربانی
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আপনার সম্প্রদায়ের ভাষায় এই দলিলপত্রের অনুবাদের জন্য জ্যানিট ক্যাম্পবেল-কে 0131 479 5162 নম্বরে
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করবেন।

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