

Four Walls Housing Co-operative

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 Four Walls Housing Co-operative (Four Walls) took place in March 2005.

Inspection Findings

Four Walls was set up in 1986 to own and manage 1 newly built property, consisting of 11 flats in the Charing Cross area, in the popular west end of Glasgow. The Co-operative is governed by a voluntary Management Committee of 10 people, 8 of whom are also its tenants. The Association currently has 13 shareholding members who are all of its present tenants. It provides houses for women only, aiming to provide an environment of mutual support.

As a registered social landlord (RSL) the Co-operative is unusual in having so few houses and so few members from whom to draw its Management Committee. Tenants and Management Committee members inevitably have to balance a variety of interests. The Committee has not had all the professional advice it needs to help it to recognise its varied responsibilities, manage the Co-operative as an ongoing business and to meet the service and governance requirements of an RSL. It does not provide fair and equal access to its housing and cannot demonstrate that its houses are let to people in need.

No current financial plans have been prepared for the Co-operative's medium or longer term sustainability. Although Four Walls has low debt and cash in hand, it must look at ways to protect the medium and long term future of its tenants and housing assets.

Four Walls does have good informal contact with its tenants and responds well to individual issues. However, it has no framework for managing the quality of its services or planning its future sustainability. The Co-operative's performance is characterised by significant weaknesses in major areas; complying with legislation, performance standards and good practice. The Management Committee has recently appointed new managing agents who are well placed to help it improve services and performance management but Four Walls also needs assistance with a fundamental and objective review of its purpose and its future.

Key strengths in Four Walls' services:

- good access to its repairs services; and
- Committee Members are very accessible to tenants.

Key areas for improvement in Four Walls' services:

- the restricted access to its housing;
- meeting housing need through allocations;
- the speed and quality of its repairs service;
- compliance with its legislative duties relating to gas safety and asbestos; and
- management of empty houses and sustaining tenancies.

Next steps

Four Walls should respond to our findings by submitting an improvement plan within 8 weeks of the publication of this report. The plan will be agreed with us as part of a regulatory support strategy. We require Four Walls 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 find out how Four Walls plans to respond to the findings of this inspection you should contact:

The Chairperson
Four Walls Housing Co-operative Housing Association Ltd
35 Carnarvon Street
GLASGOW
G3 6HP

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 5163 or e-mail: janette.campbell@communitiesscotland.gsi.gov.uk.

اپنی کمیونٹی 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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