



If you require a copy of this letter or the report in large print, in Braille, on tape, or in a language other than English, please call 0844 798 7070.

Date: December 2009

Dear Resident,

Re - The results of the short notice inspection at Eden Housing Association

A team from the Audit Commission has recently inspected some of the housing services provided by your landlord. This letter tells you what we found.

We looked at how Eden Housing Association maintains residents' homes and concentrated on the following three areas:

- responding to repairs reported by residents;
- the repair of empty homes before residents move in; and
- the servicing of gas appliances.

We also asked the following questions:

- how easy it is for residents to access these services;
- what residents think of Eden Housing Association's customer care;
- how Eden Housing Association caters for different peoples' needs; and
- whether it provides value for your money.

Overall we found that the Association's performance was good. Strengths outweighed weaknesses in two areas inspected, with a balance of strengths and weaknesses in the third area. (See note on page 2 for an explanation of our judgements). In particular we found the following:

1. Maintaining residents' homes

Eden Housing Association is a strong performer for responsive repairs with most being completed on time. A handbook helps residents identify repairs and contractors have permission to carry out additional works to complete repairs at the first visit. Eden Housing Association is servicing gas appliances on time and new tenants receive useful advice to assist them to move into their home and meet tenancy conditions. Appointments for repairs are limited, being restricted to morning or afternoon time slots within office hours, and tenants are not able to book appointments at the time of reporting repairs. Repairs to make empty properties ready to let are taking too long.

2. Being responsive to residents

We found tenant satisfaction with services is high. Eden Housing Association has agreed service standards with tenants and there is a range of convenient ways for customers to access services. Eden Housing Association has a good understanding of its residents and delivers services around their needs. The office reception and communal areas in the housing stock are accessible for people with a disability. Eden Housing Association has not assessed how its activities impact on the local community to ensure accessibility for all residents in the area. Performance against

service standards are not fully monitored to check that commitments made to customers are delivered.

To help your landlord improve its service to all residents, we have made the following recommendations:

- offer repairs appointments which limit the amount of time residents have to allow access;
- arrange repairs appointments at the time residents report defects;
- assess how its activities impact on the local community to ensure they are inclusive for everyone; and
- set targets to reduce costs so that saving can be invested in other services identified as important for residents.

The report will shortly be available on our website at www.audit-commission.gov.uk/housing. You can also find further information about housing inspections there. Alternatively the association will be able to let you have a copy of the report.

3. Next steps

We have asked Eden Housing Association to work with its residents over the next few weeks to develop an action plan showing how it intends to implement our recommendations. Once we have its finished action plan we will consider the likelihood of Eden Housing Association improving the inspected services. We will then publish our final report. We hope to publish this by 11th March 2010.

The Association's regulator, the Tenant Services Authority will work with Eden Housing Association to make sure that the recommendations in the inspection report are acted upon and improvements to your service are delivered.

I hope this letter has been of interest to you. Thank you very much for your co-operation.

Yours faithfully

Elaine Sams
Principal Inspector
Housing Inspectorate
Audit Commission

CC Tenant Services Authority regulator
Eden Housing Association board members

The Audit Commission uses a four point scale for judging the quality of services, as follows:

- Strengths considerably outweigh weaknesses;
- Strengths outweigh weaknesses;
- A balance of strengths and weaknesses; and
- Weaknesses outweigh strengths.