

Wigan & Leigh Housing

ALMO

Introduction

This response has been prepared by Wigan & Leigh Housing following an inspection carried out by the Audit Commission's Housing Inspectorate. Inspected bodies are asked to prepare responses to the Inspectorate's reports which set out how the report's recommendations will be met and how services to users will be improved following the inspection. The Commission has editorial control over the content of the responses of inspected bodies.

Response

The Board and management of Wigan and Leigh Housing and Wigan Council respect the findings of the inspection report. We are satisfied that the two star, "good" rating reflects the current position. We are not content to be "good" and we will be working hard to continuously improve until we achieve excellence in all our services

We are disappointed at the second judgement but will use the report and its findings to respond positively to the issues highlighted. The inspection process proved challenging, providing an objective appraisal of our services and offered valuable suggestions as to how they need to improve further.

We are pleased that the Housing Inspectorate recognised a significant number of strengths in the customer focussed services we provide, particularly, high quality stock investment and customer involvement and that we have well maintained, clean and tidy estates. We also welcome the clear steer on the areas where we need to improve.

We will be urgently addressing the value for money issues raised in the inspection and will develop a clear strategic vision beyond achieving decent homes. Work on both these issues has already started.

We have taken on board all the recommendations from the report and incorporated them into the Company's Delivery and Business plan for 2005/6. The plan can be viewed on our website at www.walh.co.uk. Any weaknesses or criticisms identified within the report have also been identified and tasks to address them have been incorporated into local service plans. A robust process of monitoring and reporting progress in respect of these plans to management, Board and Council on a quarterly basis is in place.

Wigan Council will continue working closely with Wigan and Leigh Housing to both monitor and support us to ensure that we continuously improve and meet the Council's strategic aims for social housing in the borough.