

# Response to inspection report

## Redbridge Homes

## Landlord Services

### Introduction

This response has been prepared by Redbridge Homes 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

Both Redbridge Homes and the London Borough of Redbridge jointly agree that the report represents a fair assessment of the services provided at the time of the inspection.

We welcome the positive comments made about resident satisfaction with the Repairs service and their involvement in the service, our gas servicing arrangements, our pro-active approach to tenancy management, the fact that our estates are in good condition and that there are high levels of customer satisfaction with the lettings service. In addition we are pleased that the Inspection team flagged up that our track record in delivering improvements as an area of strength and that there is a positive working relationship with the Council. We are particularly pleased that the Audit Commission considers that Redbridge Homes has promising prospects for improvement as this will stand us in good stead for delivering the service improvements required.

We are disappointed that we did not achieve the two stars as this will delay the decent homes funding however we accept the findings and are determined to achieve improvement in the areas identified so that the impact on tenants is minimised.

We have taken into account all the areas that need improving and have produced a comprehensive 3-year Improvement Plan incorporating the recommendations and actions to deliver our corporate strategies. This will ensure improvements are in place for the next inspection in 2010. Progress in some areas has already taken place, for example:

- A new telephone system has been installed and this is enhancing our ability to report on our performance against our service standards, to understand how services are being delivered and improve our flexibility in delivering services.
- We have a dedicated Complaints officer so we can learn from these more easily and pick up any themes of customer dissatisfaction.

- Residents know about our aids and adaptations service as this is now publicised widely, and there are fewer delays as we now work more effectively with our partners
- Corporate objectives have been agreed and disseminated through the organisation in our Plans and performance management processes so there is greater clarity within the organisation about the priorities.
- To drive forward continuous improvements for residents seven corporate strategies have been identified; value for money, customer care, equalities and diversity, asset management, resident engagement, financial inclusion and human resources. Together these will strengthen and target our approach in these areas over the next 3 years.
- We are driving down costs by embarking on a programme of Value for Money reviews, starting with Environmental Services and Income Recovery. In addition we are part way through a comprehensive open book review of the Repairs Contract to achieve savings. We are in the process of installing a diagnostic tool at our repairs call centre to help us ensure we get more repairs right first time thereby improving our service to residents. There is now a 3-year organisational plan for achieving value for money.
- Our Fit4Life summer programme kick started our approach to involving communities in July 2009 and our community development programme has extended to cultural days on estates and visit to local theme parks for families. Celebrating cultural events such as Diwali is planned for later in the year.
  - As indicated at the time of the Inspection and following consultation with residents, one of our Housing Offices will be closing from the 1<sup>st</sup> September to be replaced by more targeted mobile working. This will also mean that all our offices will then be DDA compliant.

We know that there is a lot to do over the next few months but with the continued support of our staff, residents and partners we are determined to achieve the two stars at the next Inspection.