

Care service inspection report

Castlehill Housing Support Services

Housing Support Service

4 Carden Place

Aberdeen

AB10 1UT

Telephone: 01224 625822

Inspected by: Gordon McIntosh

Type of inspection: Announced (Short Notice)

Inspection completed on: 21 September 2011



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Service provided by:

Castlehill Housing Association Ltd

Service provider number:

SP2004006411

Care service number:

CS2004070937

Contact details for the inspector who inspected this service:

Gordon McIntosh

Telephone 01224 793870

Email enquiries@scswis.com

Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

We gave the service these grades

Quality of Care and Support	5	Very Good
Quality of Staffing	4	Good
Quality of Management and Leadership		N/A

What the service does well

The tenants supported by the service are mainly very happy with the support they get. Staff try to make sure that people get the support they want in the way that they want it.

What the service could do better

The service could remind staff about how to note accidents.

What the service has done since the last inspection

The service has made the improvements suggested at the last inspection and has changed the way some of the planning and reviewing is done.

Conclusion

The people who use the service are mostly very happy with their sheltered scheme managers and housing support workers. Lots of people said that staff were very kind and very helpful.

Who did this inspection

Gordon McIntosh

1 About the service we inspected

Castlehill Housing Support Services provides support to tenants in sheltered housing developments throughout Northeast Scotland and an outreach service (Key Project) to people living in their own homes who need support to maintain their tenancy.

The service provider, Castlehill Housing Association Ltd is a Registered Social Landlord which manages properties in Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire and Moray.

The service aims; "to provide appropriate support services to sustain independence and quality of life".

Before April 2011 this service was registered with the Care Commission. On this date the new scrutiny body, Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS), took over the work of the Care Commission, including the registration of care services. This means that from 1 April 2011 this service continued its registration under the new body, SCSWIS.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

Quality of Care and Support - Grade 5 - Very Good

Quality of Staffing - Grade 4 - Good

Quality of Management and Leadership - N/A

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website www.scswis.com or by calling us on 0845 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

2 How we inspected this service

The level of inspection we carried out

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

What we did during the inspection

This report was written following short notice visits to the service on 12, 13, 14, 15 and 21 September 2011.

The headquarters and six sites were visited. The inspection visits were carried out by one Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (SCSWIS) Inspector.

The service had submitted an annual return and self evaluation as requested. SCSWIS records about the service were consulted in preparation for the inspection visit. Policies, procedures and records were examined including;

* Staff Handbook, Aims and Objectives, Participation Policy, Guidance Notes for Housing Support Plans (sheltered housing), Revised Housing Support Plan Guidance, Risk Assessment Policy, Generic Risk Assessment Form Guidance, Risk Assessment "Picklist", Service Brochure, Information Leaflets.

- * Referral Form
- * Initial Assessment Form
- * Housing Support Plans of Service Users
- * Daily Contacts Sheets
- * Review Records
- * Communication Logs
- * Recruitment Records
- * Training Records
- * Staff Meeting Records (Scheme meetings)
- * HR Support System
- * Accident Records
- * Incident Records
- * Complaints Records
- * Service Questionnaires for Service Users (and collated reports and plans)
- * Annual reports
- * Interviews/ Discussions with
 - Director of Housing Services (Registered Manager)
 - Housing Manager (Sheltered)

- Housing Support Officer
- Human Resources Officer
- 6 Scheme Managers
- 1 Housing Support Worker
- 6 Tenants

- * 76 Care Standards Questionnaires were returned
- * 30 Staff Questionnaires were returned

Feedback was provided to the service manager, housing manager (sheltered) and the housing support officer, along with discussion of the proposed grades.

Grading the service against quality themes and statements

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

Fire safety issues

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at www.firelawscotland.org

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at our last inspection

The requirement

The provider must ensure that measures are in place to safeguard the protection of service users. This should be inclusive of the receipt of a satisfactory disclosure prior to commencing employment. This is in order to comply with: SS1 2002 114 Regulation 9 (1) - a provider shall not employ any person in the provision of a care service unless that person is fit to be so employed. SSSC Code of Practice - Employer - Make sure people are suitable to enter the workplace.

What the service did to meet the requirement

The service had revised its procedures and checking mechanisms

The requirement is: Met

The annual return

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

Annual Return Received: Yes - Electronic

Comments on Self Assessment

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

A detailed self assessment was provided.

Taking the views of people using the care service into account

The comments by service users were very positive about the service and the staff. See body of this report.

Taking carers' views into account

The family carers who completed questionnaires were also positive about the service.

3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Overall grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service.

Service strengths

All the tenants who used the service were fully involved in planning, monitoring and reviewing their housing support plans. For the majority of the service users the housing support was as part of a sheltered housing service. The referral to the service was automatic on allocation of a sheltered housing tenancy. Prospective tenants had engaged in an assessment process as part of the application and allocation process. Housing support planning was undertaken by Scheme Managers, in partnership with tenants. Information about the service was provided in leaflets and a comprehensive service brochure which invited people to participate at all stages and to be actively involved in monitoring their support. The Housing Support Plans examined outlined the areas in which tenants needed or wished to be supported and were countersigned by tenants.

Plans had been reviewed annually until the introduction of new legislation and a new company policy, which changed the frequency to a minimum of six monthly reviews. The staff were implementing the new policy at all the sites visited, schedules had been drawn up and reviews were up to date in the files examined. Tenants were provided with copies of Housing Support Plans and Review Sheets unless they declined the latter.

The "Key Project" was set up to help tenants who needed additional support in establishing and/or in maintaining a tenancy. Leaflets were provided when tenancies were allocated and additional information and reminders about the service were provided periodically, in the company's newsletter. People who felt they could benefit from support could refer themselves or be referred by various officers of the company/landlord or by external agencies. Housing support planning was by referral information, initial assessment and consultation with related professionals and agencies. The areas for support and the housing support plan were agreed between

support workers and tenants. The timescales differed slightly from the sheltered housing setting, but were entirely reasonable.

The tenants who were interviewed, those who completed questionnaires and those who participated in company surveys all confirmed that they felt fully involved in their support, comments included; "Happy to continue as the advice and help has been invaluable", "Like having the security of knowing I can call and speak in confidence about any problems I have", "The warden...is very helpful and courteous as are the rest of the staff who cover on her days off. You can approach any of them and your problem will be resolved", "We are very pleased by the service given to us by the permanent and part time scheme managers. They do an excellent job despite continual cutbacks", "I am very happy with the care from Castlehill", "The service I get from Castlehill is first class", "Monthly visit I receive from support worker is invaluable as I have no other means of support", "...she has helped me a lot especially when I need help to fill in forms and letters.....very good at her job...", "Without this service I could have been out on the streets"

Areas for improvement

One part of the service used a housing support plan/review form which includes a section which invites "Feedback/Comments" about the service at each review. This could be usefully incorporated across all sections of the service.

Guidance for staff regarding risk assessments and accident recording is to be reviewed and revised where appropriate.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 4

We use a range of communication methods to ensure we meet the needs of service users.

Service strengths

The service provides a range of information in a variety of ways, including leaflets, pamphlets, brochures, handbooks, letters, newsletters, magazine website and DVD. Printed materials can be produced in a variety of formats or languages. The Housing Manager (Sheltered) consulted with the Participation Officer regarding the design and presentation of leaflets and other information. Staff put a lot of effort into consulting with tenants and into helping them to prepare for any changes to premises or support services. Tenants were consulted individually or through meetings, as appropriate.

The service gets feedback informally through face to face discussion, or more

formally, through reviews, through consultation meetings and through surveys. A suggestion from tenants, about setting up regular meetings with section managers, had already been implemented.

Loop systems had been installed at several schemes and a portable system was also available. The service had access to translation services where need be. Staff had received training in sensory impairment. Staff keep in touch with service users (or families where required) through telephone, text, email or letter. Staff help service users to access other services where necessary, by researching information, making appointments and accompanying people where need be.

Areas for improvement

The company hopes to provide hearing loop systems at more of its premises.

All sites have now been provided with a computer and a programme of staff training was being rolled out. Few of the schemes had computers which tenants could use.

The company is to provide more of its forms and policies on line.

Grade awarded for this statement: 5 - Very Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 – Good

Statement 1

We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service.

Service strengths

Service users had several opportunities to make comment on staff performance and staffing issues generally. They could make direct comment to scheme managers or line managers. Contact details were provided. At one project service users can make comment in reviews. Tenants were consulted through a company survey; tenants' representatives had been involved in the design of the survey which was carried out by external consultants. The company participation officer provided opportunities for direct contact at all sites.

Information about the complaints procedure was provided with initial information and was freely available.

A major part of the company survey examined the performance of staff in their day to day duties. For the most part responses about staff were very positive. Action plans were to be developed to address any issues raised. The survey also had a section specifically designed to gauge tenants' views about the personal qualities they wished to see in staff. The results of this section will be used to help design the questions for future recruitment interviews.

Meetings are to be set up to provide tenants with direct access to section managers. The Sheltered Housing Manager visits all schemes regularly.

All comments about staff in questionnaires and interviews were very positive. An unusually large number of respondents took time to make additional comments, including;

"Very good manager on site", "Our manager....is a very good ambassador for.....she gives 200% to all her tenants...", "Do a great job but there should be night cover", "Staff are very helpful and friendly. I am very happy"

Areas for improvement

The tenant participation officer was working on developing a tenants' forum.

The directorate of the company had developed an action plan to address issues raised by the survey.

Service users were not directly involved in recruitment of housing support staff. The service recognises the need to develop practice in this area.

Some tenants are still unhappy about changes to staff cover and out of hours arrangements. Some dissatisfaction was recorded re assistance with health and well being. The service plans to reissue information about the service and the role of scheme managers.

Major surveys will be repeated on a five year cycle in the interim, feedback will be collated from reviews and tenants' forum.

Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 0

Statement 2

We are confident that our staff have been recruited, and inducted, in a safe and robust manner to protect service users and staff.

Service strengths

Staff had been recruited following appropriate checks and with the appropriate skills qualifications and experience necessary for individual posts. The service was in the process of recruiting to create a larger "casual relief managers" pool, to ensure better consistency of support for service users. There were detailed company policies and procedures. A comprehensive induction included training and shadowing opportunities, an experienced mentor was provided. Progress was monitored by a checklist. There were in service training opportunities available for staff and on line training for refreshers of some mandatory training.

There were relatively high levels of staff trained to SVQ level II and beyond.

At one project there was regular supervision for staff, on a six weekly cycle with an annual review (appraisal).

At the sheltered housing sites, there were three scheme meetings per year and staff were given the opportunity for individual consultation if they wished. Staff reported feeling well supported by the Housing Manager (Sheltered).

Areas for improvement

Scheme managers were very positive about the support received from the Sheltered Housing Manager, they said he was very approachable and always available at the end of the phone for advice and support. Scheme managers appreciated the scheme meetings but most felt that the Housing Manager (Sheltered) was overstretched and

they would have appreciated more individual time on a regular basis to discuss service issues and their own professional development. None of the scheme managers interviewed had received the company appraisal.

Grade awarded for this statement: 4 - Good

Number of requirements: 0

Number of recommendations: 1

Recommendations

1. The service should review the monitoring and support arrangements for scheme managers. NCS Housing Support Standard 3.

**Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership - NOT
ASSESSED**

4 Other information

Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

Additional Information

Several staff members responded positively to Question 12 in the staff questionnaire, "Do you help people manage/take their medicines?". This was fed back to the service manager; staff are to be reminded of the company policy and the legal position.

Action Plan

Failure to submit an appropriate action plan within the required timescale, including any agreed extension, where requirements and recommendations have been made, will result in SCSWIS re-grading the Quality Statement within the Management and Leadership Theme as unsatisfactory (1). This will result in the Quality Theme for Management and Leadership being re-graded as Unsatisfactory (1).

5 Summary of grades

Quality of Care and Support - 5 - Very Good	
Statement 1	5 - Very Good
Statement 4	5 - Very Good
Quality of Staffing - 4 - Good	
Statement 1	4 - Good
Statement 2	4 - Good
Quality of Management and Leadership - Not Assessed	

6 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
8 Mar 2010	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and Leadership Not Assessed

All inspections and grades before 1 April 2011 are those reported by the former regulator of care services, the Care Commission.

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Telephone: 0845 600 9527

Email: enquiries@scswis.com

Web: www.scswis.com