

AGHA

APNA GHAR HOUSING ASSOCIATION LTD.



OCTOBER 2010

Special Report for Tenants

Welcome

to our first special report to you, our tenants.

Inside you can read how we aim to improve our services and how you can play a key role in this important process.

We want to deliver the best service we can, and to do this we need to put tenants at the heart of everything we do. You can get involved by shaping the actual improvements at a local level or by helping to check that standards are maintained and improved.

Our regulator, the Tenant Services Authority (TSA), has recently set out a framework of six standards that they expect social housing providers like us to meet.

- Home
- Tenant involvement and empowerment
- Tenancy
- Neighbourhood and community
- Value for money
- Governance and viability

Local Standards

In addition to these six areas, the TSA expects us to tailor our services according to local needs and circumstances and measure our performance.

In Apna Ghar 's case, this might be:

- How we provide support and facilities for tenants with disabilities , or
- How we work with tenants in a particular area to deal with a specific local issue

This leaflet sets the standards that we are working to. You can see whether we are meeting them and the action we intend to take if there are weaknesses.

Your Role

No one knows your home and the housing services you receive better than you, so it makes good sense to listen to your views and involve you, our tenants, in deciding what improvements are needed and how they will be delivered.

The TSA expects tenants to play a key role, both in setting the standards and ensuring they are met. This is called 'co-regulation'.

Working with you and listening to tenant suggestions we have developed an action plan for improvement, which is presented inside this leaflet. You can read how we are working to meet the TSA standards and what we plan to do in areas which need improvement.

We want to hear what you think about this as there are many different ways that you can get involved to help us continue to improve in the future.

You can find out how to get involved inside this leaflet.

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The Standards

How are we doing?

On the following pages you can clearly see what is expected from each of the TSA standards and how we are performing against each one.

Next to each standard we have listed actions that arose from the July 2010 Board meeting and two tenants' focus groups. This shows our future plans on how we aim to meet each standard, including what we plan to do and when.

Home

This covers things like the standard of repair of your home; including both major repairs and day to day maintenance items.

What we do already

The responsibility for day to day repairs to your home lies with our owning landlord partners. The tenancy agreement with them sets out who is responsible for the repairs inside your home. They will also have a published set of their own standards telling you when you can expect various types of repairs to be done.

What we plan to do

Improve our reporting to our Board by producing better and more comprehensive performance information.

...and by when

Ongoing

It is the landlords responsibility to carry out major repairs or improvements to ensure that all properties meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard.

Establish a 'New Build Scrutiny Panel' of tenants who have moved into new homes within the last five years. Tenants on the panel will review the information given to new tenants to ensure that it is clear and easy to understand. The Panel will look specifically at information regarding responsibilities and repairs reporting for the first year of a new property's life.

First meeting by 24 December 2010

New Information pack produced by 31 March 2011

If Apna Ghar owns your property, we are responsible for the day to day repairs as well as major repairs and improvements. We have agreements with maintenance contractors to deliver these services on our behalf.

Carry out stock condition surveys to assess long term works needed to ensure we continue to meet the Government's Decent Homes Standard.

31 March 2011

Review the existing arrangements with current maintenance contractors.

31 March 2012

Tenant Involvement & Empowerment

This is about making sure you have opportunities to influence how our services are delivered, what to do if you have a complaint, making sure that we deliver a high quality customer service and responding to the different needs of our tenants.

What we do already

We have a published complaints procedure.

What we plan to do

Follow up the Focus Groups held in September to establish a Customer Service monitoring group and where appropriate local groups.

...and by when

First meeting by 24 December 2010

Through our Tenants' Satisfaction Survey and in our new Tenant Insight form we have asked all tenants if you are interested in having a greater influence in how we run our housing service.

Follow up the responses from the Tenants' Satisfaction Survey.

31 January 2011

Follow up from Tenant Insight Form.

Ongoing

We have a Tenant Board Member.

Aim to recruit another Tenant Board Member.

30 September 2011

Governance and viability

One of the jobs of the TSA is to make sure that all social landlords are well run by their Boards and senior staff and remain financially sound.

What we do already

The Board have adopted the National Housing Federation's codes on governance and standards.

What we plan to do

We will review the Job Description and Person Specification for Board Members to ensure the needs of the organisation are met.

...and by when

31 March 2011

Tenancy

This includes the rights you have in your tenancy agreement, the way we allocate housing to new tenants and (within the government guidelines) how much rent we charge.

| What we do already | What we plan to do | ...and by when |
|---|---|------------------|
| We have reviewed our Allocations Policy and implemented a new Transfer Policy. | We will consider the rehousing needs of our tenants when allocating property. | Ongoing |
| We comply with our landlord partners' rent setting policies which meet the Government's requirements. | We will work with our landlord partners to make sure rents are set in line with new regulations. | 31 March 2012 |
| For Apna Ghar tenants, rents have been charged in accordance with the previous landlord's policies. | We will review the rents when properties are re-let to comply with best practice and legislation. | 15 February 2011 |
| Tenants are issued with tenancy agreements from the owning landlord partner. | Review Apna Ghar tenancy agreement to ensure best practice is followed. | 1 December 2010 |
| Tenants are issued with a Tenant's Handbook. | Update the Tenants' Handbook | 31 March 2011 |

Neighbourhood and Community

This standard deals with how we address antisocial behaviour (ASB) and how we co-operate with other important local agencies in your area including the police, the health service and the local authority.

| What we do already | What we plan to do | ...and by when |
|--|---|------------------|
| We have reviewed our ASB policy and procedure. | We will be working closely with tenants at Emily Duncan Place, E7 to resolve security problems by liaising with One Housing Group and the Forest Gate Safer Neighbourhoods Team. | 24 December 2010 |
| We have attended multi agency meetings and estate inspections where our tenants have experienced antisocial behaviour. | We will continue to work in partnership with other landlords and the police to tackle antisocial behaviour in neighbourhoods such as King George Crescent, Wembley and Academia Way, Tottenham. | Ongoing |

Value for money

It is important that our services provide value for money in terms of what it costs us (and therefore, indirectly, you and other taxpayers) to provide a good quality housing service valued by all.

| What we do already | What we plan to do | ...and by when |
|---|--|---|
| We have compared our performance with seven other housing organisations | We will join the bm320 benchmarking club. This will help us compare our performance and the cost of our services to other similar housing providers. It will also enable us to share the provision of some of our services with others, which may be more economical and provide us with better value for money. | First benchmarking report by 30 June 2011 |

Local standards

| What we do already | What we plan to do | ...and by when |
|--|---|------------------|
| <p>We have worked with our partner landlords to ensure local estate plans and protocols are followed.</p> <p>We have submitted data and information to local authorities relating to our work on local issues and performance.</p> | <p>Our first Focus Group with tenants at Emily Duncan Place highlighted a key area of dissatisfaction (see above, under Neighbourhood & Community). We will deal with this by working with the resident steering group and other agencies to come up with a solution and monitor its effectiveness in the future.</p> | 24 December 2010 |
| | <p>Another example of addressing an issue that is 'local' to Apna Ghar is the relationship we have with the 18 other housing associations whose properties and tenancies we manage. Ensuring all tenants we manage receive a consistent, good quality service and making sure they know who is responsible for what is very important. This emerged as a major concern at our second Focus Group for Apna Ghar -managed tenants in Brent, Ealing and Harrow. From this, we will set up a Communications or 'Partnerships' Group to look at how we can improve the information and the service that is provided by all the housing organisations involved in managing our clients/tenants.</p> | 24 December 2010 |

Got something to say? Get involved!

We want to hear from you if you would like to be part of this improvement work. It is vital that our plans for improvement are shaped by you. Get in touch and tell us what you think.

Please contact Jyotika Patel, Audrey Chambers or Andrian David on **020 8795 5405** if you would like more information or have ideas about how you could contribute.

Gujarati

જો તમને આ દસ્તાવેજનો કોઈપણ ભાગ મોટા અક્ષરમાં છાપેલો અથવા તેની માહિતી તમને ગુજરાતીમાં સમજાવેલી જોઈતી હોય તો, મહેરબાની કરી કસ્ટમર સર્વિસીઝને ટેલિફોન કરો: 0208 843 1263

Punjabi

ਜੇਕਰ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਪਰਚੇ ਦਾ ਕੋਈ ਹਿੱਸਾ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਜਾਂ ਪੰਜਾਬੀ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ, ਤਾਂ ਕ੍ਰਿਪਾ ਕਰਕੇ ਕਸਟਮਰ ਸਰਵਿਸਿਜ਼ ਨੂੰ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ 'ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ: 0208 843 1263

Somali

Haddii aad doonaysid qayb ka mid ah dukumeentigan oo ku qoran farta waawayn ama in laguugu macnayo luqadaada fadlan la soo xidhiidh 020 8843 1263

Hindi

यदि आपको इस दस्तावेज़ का कोई भाग बड़ी लिखाई में या हिन्दी में चाहिए तो कृपया कस्टमर सर्विसिज़ को इस नंबर पर फोन करें: 020 8843 1263

Urdu

اگر آپ کو اس دستاویز کا کوئی حصہ بڑے حرفوں میں یا اس کی تفصیلات اردو زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم کسٹمر سروسز سے اس نمبر 020 8843 1263 پر رابطہ کریں