

# WORKING TOGETHER

Providence Row Housing Association  
PERFORMANCE REPORT UPDATE 2011



At Providence Row Housing Association we aim to involve tenants in everything we do. This includes 'co-regulation', where we work with tenants throughout the year, gaining their views and feedback on our services. Our tenants' views are central in shaping our policies, procedures and performance standards. They also help us to review and update all these areas of our work, ensuring we aim for the best possible standards in all we do.

In this report you'll find the performance standards and targets which were drawn up in consultation with our tenants. You'll also find details of how we performed against these standards and what targets we will be working towards during 2011-12.

## WHAT THIS REPORT WILL TELL YOU

Last year, we consulted with our tenants and produced our first Annual Performance Report, which showed the targets we were committed to working towards during 2010-11. This was in response to guidelines which our regulator the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) has set for all social housing organisations.

Our tenants' priorities within the TSA guidelines were repairs, value for money and anti-social behaviour - our standards focus on these key areas. We have also set standards for tenant involvement, customer service and tenancy.

This document reports on how we have performed against these targets between 1 April 2010-31 March 2011.

Front cover: The Maintenance Advisory Panel carry out regular inspections of PRHA's properties.

## CO-REGULATION – WHAT DOES IT MEAN IN PRACTICE?

Co-regulation is an important issue to us. We work with our tenants in formal ways – for example through the Service Users Advisory Panel (which is open to all tenants) and informally through surveys and regular house meetings.

We use the feedback we gain from tenants to help us plan the future of the organisation.

Our Service Users Advisory Panel and the PRHA Board are responsible for monitoring how we perform against the standards and targets in the Performance Report. We provide them with regular performance statistics and updates, so they can review our progress against the standards.

Our tenants can raise issues and concerns through the Service Users Advisory Panel (SUAP). The Panel meets at least five times a year – it is the main place where we discuss the performance standards and form of this report. In 2011-2012 we will work with the SUAP to review service users' feedback about performance. We will use this feedback to update the standards we have set.

**Our tenants have also been involved in setting borough-wide standards for social landlords through the Tower Hamlets Housing Forum. One of our tenants is now on the tenants' scrutiny panel that is monitoring these standards.**

Please note: Where this report refers to 'tenants', this includes both tenants and licensees of PRHA.



# Some of our achievements in the past year

In the past year we have worked on a range of initiatives. Some of our major achievements in the past year include:

- Involving tenants in scheme/property inspections. Two tenants are currently studying for the CIH Active Tenants certification to monitor standards 'on the ground'. Tenants have attended NHF certificated training programmes and Maintenance Advisory Panel (MAP) members have attended training on conducting void inspections
- Improved efficiency for our out-of-hours emergency repairs service through using a calls handling service
- Significant savings achieved on tenants' gas & electricity bills by negotiating a fixed-price contract
- Maintaining the Decent Homes Standard through improvement works.

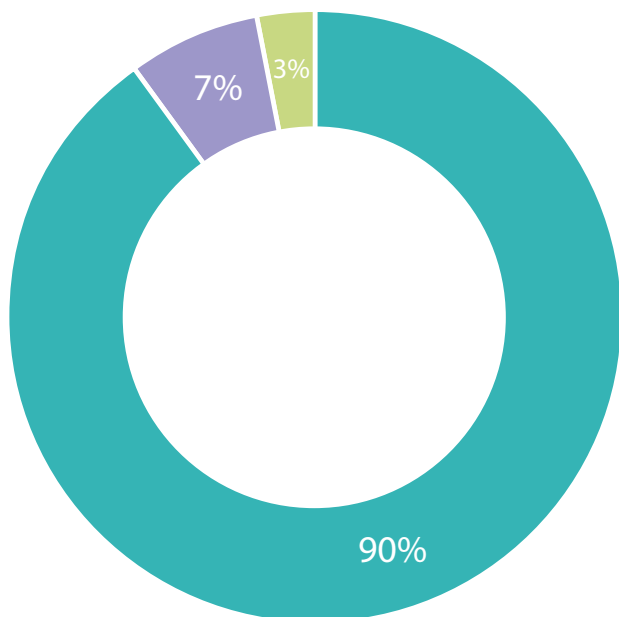
## TENANT INVOLVEMENT & EMPOWERMENT

### We planned and have achieved the following during 2010-11:

- Carried out tenant satisfaction surveys for supported housing. The general needs tenants survey was delayed due to changes in the national survey format. This is now underway. It will aim also to establish what sort of participation mechanisms our general needs tenants want.
- Reviewed the Participation Impact Strategy to examine how tenant involvement has impacted on the organisation and its services. This is now underway through the Service Users Advisory Panel.

### Tenant satisfaction

2010-11 'Satisfaction Survey' shows tenants' overall satisfaction with PRHA services as follows:

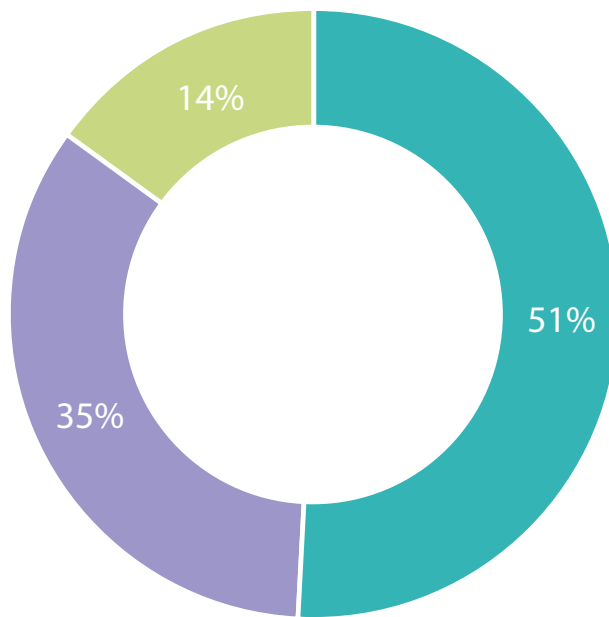


#### Satisfaction Survey

- Satisfied / very satisfied
- Dissatisfied / very dissatisfied
- Did not respond to this question

Overall satisfaction amongst tenants in supported housing has remained the same compared to 2010. There is a slight decrease in the percentage of tenants who were dissatisfied (8.5% were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied in 2010.)

A survey of satisfaction levels amongst general needs tenants is underway - results will be published in Autumn 2011.



#### Complaints Survey

- Service delivery
- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Other issues

**113** informal complaints

**119** formal complaints



## GOVERNANCE & FINANCIAL VIABILITY STANDARD

### What our tenants want:

- a say in how things are run.
- to be consulted.
- to be involved in planning services for the future.

### We planned and have achieved the following during 2010:

- Reported to tenants through the newsletter on changes made as a result of tenant feedback.
- Given updates on what the Board is doing and who the Board members are.

### We have also:

- Ensured tenants have a say on our Board.
- Ensured our Service Users Advisory Panel's work is fed back to our Board.
- Ensured tenants can meet Board members at informal events.
- Ensured tenants in supported housing are consulted on day to day running of their housing schemes.
- Ensured scheme & estate inspections take place with local tenants.
- Ensured tenants are involved in planning new developments or when we introduce changes in the way we do things.
- Ensured participation is at the heart of everything we do.

### We aim to run PRHA in a way that is accountable & meets legal requirements

#### Financial Viability

Financial viability is how PRHA ensures that it uses its resources to achieve its objectives & does not have financial difficulties.

PRHA has effective controls and procedures in place to ensure that our finances are used properly & that our assets such as property are protected. We have effective systems in place to monitor and report on the current and future use of our finances.

## REPAIRS SERVICE

### What our tenants want:

- to know what is happening with their repair, when it will be fixed & where possible resolved at the first visit.
- firm appointments & common standards.

### We planned, and have achieved the following during 2010-11:

- Provided an appointment date and timeslot for all tenants in self-contained properties.

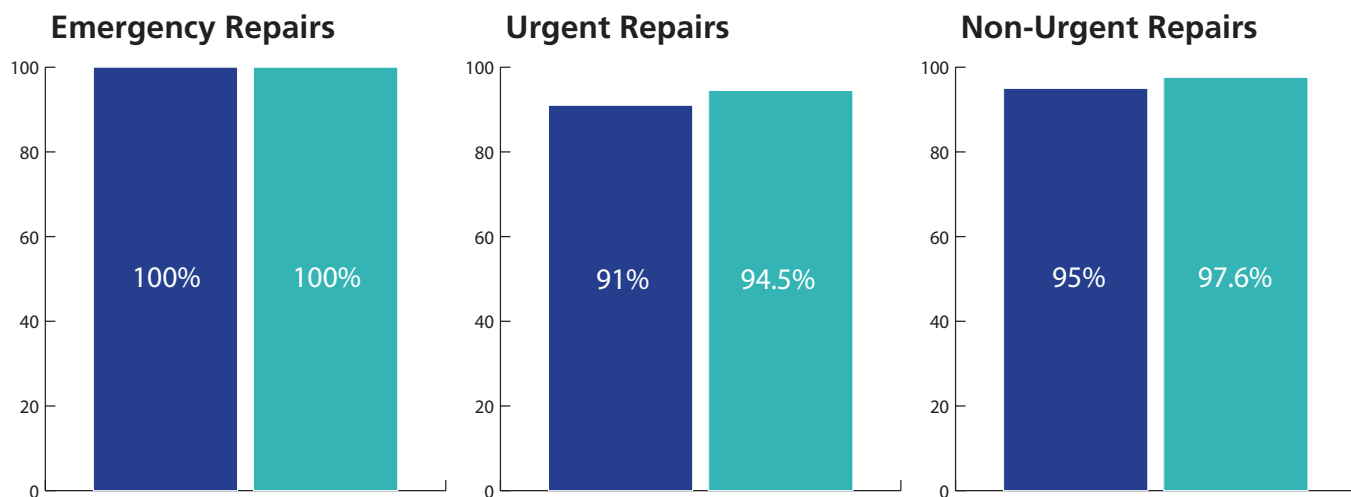
### We have also:

- Given a repair order number to the person reporting the defect.
- Resolved the problem on the first visit (and where this has not been possible, actively followed up until the repair is satisfactorily completed).
- Kept the resident informed of progress with the repair.
- Provided tenant satisfaction slips for all repairs through our regular surveys.
- Followed up on tenant satisfaction responses if problems are raised.
- Post-inspected 100% of all repairs over £2000 in value, and 10% of all other completed repairs.
- Promoted job shadowing and work placement for MAP representatives within the Property Services Team.
- Provided additional training for MAP representatives to develop their skills, knowledge and experience.

We will shortly report on lift breakdowns in individual project leaflets.

**We have not yet achieved our target of following up 10% of all repairs with telephone surveys. This is partly because in our supported housing, staff take responsibility for these. (See 2011-2012 action.)**

**Our statistics show that in 2010-11, repairs were completed within target as follows:**



- Target Goal
- What we achieved

We also report on repairs performance every 6 months, in the Service Users newsletter and on our website [www.prha.net](http://www.prha.net).

## VALUE FOR MONEY STANDARD

### What our tenants want:

- To know how their service charges have been spent and that contractors are doing a good job.

### We planned and have achieved the following during 2010:

- A full review of service charges was undertaken.
- Our larger service contracts are reviewed every 3 years to ensure we are getting good value for money. Gas & electricity supplies are reviewed annually.
- Provided regular meaningful information on costs and performance of contractors and in-house operatives.
- Extended choice in the repairs process. Examples of how we have done this include decoration works at Daniel Gilbert House & Middle Street, where tenants had choice over colour schemes. At Old Nichol Street, tenants had a choice of worktops and kitchen units.
- Extended the work of the Maintenance Advisory Panel (MAP) to include review of information on costs and performance on repairs and services contracts.
- Extended the MAP brief to include post-inspections of regular communal repairs.
- Advised tenants of their right to make representations (with support) at MAP to challenge costs and performance.

### We have also:

- Reported on how the service charge was spent and what services are provided (reported in individual project leaflets.)

**We have not yet achieved our target of working with other local landlords to benchmark our performance against other similar organisations in the area. We will work on this during the next year and tenants will be kept updated on progress.**



# ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR, THE NEIGHBOURHOOD & COMMUNITY STANDARD

## What our tenants want:

- to know what can be done about anti-social behaviour.
- to be updated on action taken & reassured that they can remain anonymous.
- to know that graffiti & rubbish are dealt with quickly & effectively.

## We planned and have achieved the following during 2010:

- Agreed an information sharing protocol with local police, enabling us to work together to resolve issues such as anti-social behaviour, noise & graffiti.
- Developed a neighbourhood management policy for any neighbourhoods and communal areas which PRHA is responsible for. All supported housing services have a neighbourhood management policy specific to their service.  
(A general needs accommodation policy is being drafted and will go out for consultation by December 2011.)

## Our statistics show:

40 formal complaints were received about anti-social behaviour in supported housing during 2010-11. These complaints related to noise, nuisance & neighbour disputes. Complaints about anti-social behaviour in supported housing includes disagreements between neighbours in projects.

Our current system records every complaint separately. This means that these figures include situations where there were several complaints from different tenants but about the same issue.

There were two reports of nuisance at general needs properties. In our general needs properties, ASB complaints tend to be about issues in the local community, for example noise or graffiti.

**100%**

of ASB complaints were resolved

**91%**

were resolved within the timescales.

## We have also:

- Informed all tenants about the tools and powers available to them and to PRHA when they report a problem. This is published in the Tenants' Handbook which is given to new tenants at their sign-up.
- Logged all ASB reports on PRHA's database and kept the reports 'live' until they are dealt with or closed.
- Provided a response within three working days of a complaint being made. This should include response times, a plan of action, a named person and an assurance of anonymity.
- Involved community police in tenants meetings where ASB is being discussed.
- Looked at physical security measures where possible & necessary.

## In the year ahead we will:

- Look at systems for enabling 24-hour and weekend reporting for ASB for our general needs tenants & consult with tenants (by December 2011) possibly through partnerships with other agencies.
- Investigate tracking software to enable tenants to monitor progress with their complaint. We will evaluate this against the potential cost & will consult tenants on this (by December 2011).

## CUSTOMER SERVICE

### We aim to:

- Welcome all complaints as an opportunity to improve our services.
- Ensure tenants know how to complain & how the complaint will be responded to.
- Resolve all complaints as quickly & effectively as possible & in line with timescales in procedures.
- Ensure that all complaints receive a written response.
- Publish the complaints procedure in the Tenants' Handbook.

### We planned and have achieved the following in 2010-11:

- Published the complaints procedure online
- Reviewed the tenants' newsletter to provide information that tenants have said they want to receive.

### We have begun:

To publish action taken in response to complaints or suggestions. At projects, feedback is given through tenants meetings. However due to changes in the performance department we were unable to follow this through with regular reporting organisation-wide. This is now planned for 2011-2012.

**99%**

of all formal complaints were resolved to the complainants' satisfaction

**89%**

of these were resolved within the timescales.

### In the coming year we will:

Investigate enabling tenants to make a complaint on the PRHA website.

## UNDERSTANDING & RESPONDING TO DIVERSE NEEDS OF TENANTS:

PRHA has a strong commitment to diversity and aims to ensure that all tenants and staff are aware of this. We also aim to live up to our organisational values of Inclusion, Respect, Empowerment, Justice and Compassion.

### We aim to:

- Provide opportunities for tenants to develop employment related skills & lifeskills.
- Provide opportunities for tenants to volunteer.
- Ensure we understand the background of our tenants in order to respond to their diverse needs.

We actively encourage tenants to take up employment & training opportunities within PRHA. Several of our tenants are now employed full-time within PRHA. In 2010 we met our target for 10% of staff and volunteers to be tenants or PRHA service users. In 2011 we exceeded the target, with 21% of staff and volunteers being tenants or service users.



## HOME STANDARD

### What our tenants want:

- their homes to be safe & for communal areas to be kept clean.
- to be kept informed about schedules for cleaning and inspection visits.

### We planned and have achieved the following during 2010:

- Ensured that tenants are involved in planning & choices for any planned & capital works to their homes or estate.
- Where catering services are provided, ensured that residents are consulted through catering committees & action points, minutes & feedback given to residents.
- Improved the standard of cleaning across most of our sites. There are still some complaints from a few properties - these are being followed up with the contractors & changes to the contract management have been negotiated.
- Advised tenants how PRHA is meeting the Decent Homes Standard.

### Our statistics show

**100%**

gas safety checks and fire systems inspections completed

**100%**

bulk rubbish removed within target time of one day.

### We have also:

- Involved tenants in estate/scheme inspections.
- Ensured all schemes have regular window cleaning & that dates for this are published in advance.
- Ensured all schemes have regular grounds maintenance.
- Ensured tenants are told when fire systems are going to be tested.
- Ensured that tenants know their property has been inspected for gas safety (where applicable).

## TENANCY

### What our tenants want:

- information on the issues that matter to them.
- help to manage the financial aspect of their tenancy.
- information on move-on options (supported housing tenants).
- General needs tenants want to know what their rights are in relation to transfer or exchange.

### Allocation of PRHA properties

PRHA properties are let through the Housing Options Team (for supported housing) or the Local Authorities common housing register (for general needs housing).

### Rents:

PRHA's rents are charged according to target rents for accommodation in the local area.

All tenants are provided with clear information about how their rent and service charge is set and changed. Service charges are based on actual costs incurred for services & anticipated inflationary costs. Where extra chargeable services are requested (for example CCTV at a specific site) we would only proceed if there is majority support for the improvement.

### Tenure

PRHA uses assured shorthold tenancies and licences for its supported accommodation. We issue assured tenancies for general needs properties unless the accommodation is intended to be temporary.

### We planned and have achieved the following during 2010-11:

- Ensured that all temporary supported housing tenants receive written information when they move in about move-on options and likely timescales. We also aim to ensure this is updated regularly and that information is given on factors affecting different options.
- Ensured that all information about mutual exchange & transfer is available to all general needs tenants in the Tenants' Handbook and is regularly updated. Going forward, information will also be available online.

### Our statistics show:

130 people moved on during the year to social housing from temporary supported accommodation.

### We have also:

- Provided regular updates to short-term supported tenants on issues affecting move-on.
- Ensured all staff are trained to provide basic welfare benefits advice.
- Ensured specialist advice on budgeting and welfare benefits is available to all tenants.

### In the year ahead we will:

Monitor percentage of new house rules implemented following consultation with tenants in temporary supported housing.

# Our commitments for the coming year (2011-2012)

We will work towards additional targets across all our services. These targets are as follows:

## Repairs:

- Monitor & report on the percentage of appointments kept.
- Report on percentage of repairs resolved on the first visit. We are currently updating our computer recording system to allow us to produce these figures.
- Carry out telephone surveys on at least 10% of repairs.
- Review the compensation policy and procedure with the Service Users Advisory Panel and in some circumstances consider compensation for missed appointments.
- Aim to provide online reporting of repairs through the PRHA website.
- Carry out a full review of team operations to ensure maximum efficiency.
- Report on how our performance compares to other local landlords (this is currently done for general needs properties – we plan to extend it to all properties.)

## Value for Money:

- Set out a plan to review services annually.
- Fully involve residents in the tender process for all major contracts.
- Report on how we're trying to bring in choice & how our performance compares with other local landlords.
- Review options for tenant choice to pay for an upgrade. (This would only apply to our permanent accommodation, the majority of which is fairly new, therefore this has not arisen yet).
- Involve at least three trained residents in the

repairs and services procurement process.

- Include the MAP team on key decisions around our Asset Management Investment Strategy. The new Asset Management Strategy is being drafted and will go to the Service Users Advisory Panel later this year.
- Look at partnering with other social landlords to achieve costs savings in service contracts – for example we are discussing joint tendering for gas servicing contracts with another local housing association.

## Anti-Social Behaviour:

- Update information on the PRHA website on what tools and powers are available to tenants and to PRHA staff when ASB is reported.
- Look at electronic systems for 24-hour and weekend reporting of ASB for general needs properties.
- Investigate tracking software to enable tenants to report ASB incidents anonymously and to track their ASB complaint on the website.

## Customer Service:

- Investigate enabling tenants to make a complaint on the PRHA website.
- Publish action taken at organisational level in response to complaints or suggestions.

## Home Standard:

- Continue to report on percentage of safety checks completed.
- Report on cleaning & maintenance performance across all projects.

We will also publish the Standards on our website, [www.prho.net](http://www.prho.net). For information on PRHA's financial performance over the past year, please see our 2011 Annual Report.

## Providence Row Housing Association



**business to support people**

Providence Row Housing Association  
458 Bethnal Green Road, London E2 0EA  
Tel: 020 7920 7322  
Website : [www.prho.net](http://www.prho.net)



**INVESTORS  
IN PEOPLE** | Bronze

Registered with the Tenant Services Authority, as a Registered Provider Number L0695 and with the Registry of Friendly Societies, as an Industrial & Provident Society, Number 19322R. PRHA is an Exempt Charity.

Providence Row Housing Association is a Charitable Housing Association incorporating The Kipper Project, a registered charity