



**Preparing for an Inspection**

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### About Pennington

- Housing
- Housing finance
- Asset management
- Surveying and property services
- Project and procurement management
- Gas, electrical and building services
- Tenant services
- Training




### This session – part one!

- Housing Corporation and Audit Commission expectations
- How you achieve a customer focused service
- How tenants have been engaged
- Using self assessment – making the KLOEs your friend!
- Pitfalls and bear-traps of inspection




### This session – part two!

- Preparing for inspection
- Value for money
- Using external challenge to improve performance



### This session – part three!


It's over to you!



### Housing Corporation Expectations


- The Regulatory Code and guidance was updated in August 2005

'Housing associations .. must operate financially sustainable and efficient businesses and .. provide good and responsive housing and related services ..'




### The Regulatory code

- Housing associations must be:
  - Viable
  - Properly governed
  - Properly managed




### Regulatory code and the maintenance service

- Viable
  - The business plan must be informed by asset management information which is reviewed regularly




### Regulatory code and the maintenance service

- Properly governed
  - Board and management must have required skills
  - Must be accessible, accountable and transparent to residents
  - Must involve residents in decisions and in how services are managed and provided
  - Must work to eliminate discrimination and provide equitable services
  - Must identify major risks and how these are managed




### Regulatory code and the maintenance service

- Properly managed
  - Must be properly monitored, efficient and effective and have internal controls / quality checks
  - Must aim to continuously improve and provide value for money
  - Must ensure homes are well maintained and lettable
  - Must carry out maintenance in an effective and responsive way based on residents preferences




### Regulatory code and the maintenance service

- Properly managed
  - Must make investment in the future of the stock a key priority
  - Must be responsive to regional and local housing strategies



### Audit Commission expectations


- The Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE) set out performance expectations of excellent and fair organisations
- These are a vital tool for self-assessment and external challenge / review



### The KLOEs


- Include:
  - Stock investment asset management
  - Resident involvement
  - Access and customer care
  - Diversity
  - Value for money
  - A technical note on Gas Safety

These are updated – so check regularly!




### How you achieve a customer focused service

- Focus on service improvements not just inspection
- Commitment from the top and throughout the organisation
- Set standards with tenants
- Review performance against standards with tenants
- Deliver what customers want – not what you want to give them




### How you achieve a customer focused service

- Measure satisfaction with services
- Respond to enquiries at agreed time convenient to resident
- Make it easy for people to access the service 24/7
- Promote how the service can be accessed
- Provide information about the service in a variety of formats




### How you achieve a customer focused service

- Have well informed staff and treat people with respect (includes contractors)
- Involve residents in newsletter, leaflet and handbook design and information to be included
- Have a good complaints procedure that works – and learn from it
- Ask a range of tenants how services can be improved




### How have you engaged with tenants?




### How tenants have been engaged

- Board membership
- Setting standards
- Focus groups/surveys
- Best value reviews
- Tenants conferences
- Open days/Workshops
- Fun days
- Pizza evenings
- Performance monitoring
- Devolved budgets
- Junior Board
- Estate Walkabouts
- Video diaries
- Area focused events based on complaints
- Master-planning
- Engaging contractors
- Setting programmes
- Choosing materials
- Environmental events




### Using self-assessment

- Audit Commission (AC) guidance and form:
  - Set the scene, service areas, prospects for improvement and action plan
- The AC review this self assessment before inspection
  - Honest and evidence based
  - Demonstrate self-awareness




### Using self-assessment

- For service areas **in depth** the KLOE is a good self-assessment
  - Who drives the self-assessment?
  - What do you do with it?
  - How self-aware is it?
  - How do you use it?
  - Can you be critical in a constructive way?
  - Do you know how others perform?




### Making the KLOEs your friend!

- They help to set long term objectives ; where do **you** want to be in 1, 3, or 5 years time?
- Use them as a tool to assess the service and for 'gap' analysis
- Involve residents and staff in the assessment
- Use them to produce service plans
- Use them to assess the resources you need
- Identify potential questions that AC will ask




### Making the KLOEs your friend

Excellent	Fair
Systematic	Inconsistent
Innovative and well above the minimum	Do the minimum
Use information and IT well	Just collects and monitors information/limited systems in place
Service designed around service users	Service designed for itself/contractors
Cost effective	Not cost effective
Partnership working	Working in silos



### Pitfalls and bear-traps

- Capital improvement, planned and cyclical maintenance, major repair works:
  - Stock condition data
  - Approach to updating stock condition data
  - Use of demand data to feed into investment planning
  - Stock/estate sustainability
  - FFP Business Plan
  - Tenants' priorities / involvement / choices
  - DHS targeting and prioritisation / DHS+
  - Cyclical works
  - Asbestos
  - Customer satisfaction




### Pitfalls and bear-traps

- Responsive repairs:
  - Planned:responsive split
  - Emergency/urgent/routine ratios
  - Repairs ordering process/diagnosis/levels of variations
  - Operative flexibility, multi-skilling, completion of job by one operative/first time
  - Access/diversity
  - SOR
  - Repairs categories, targets and performance levels




### Pitfalls and bear-traps

- Responsive repairs:
  - Appointments system
  - Repair receipts
  - Pre and post inspection levels and targeting
  - Budget management/overspends
  - Approach to minor repairs
  - Work allocation/work programming
  - Customer satisfaction




### Pitfalls and bear-traps

- Void repairs:
  - Outcome-based lettable standard (internal service/external customer) - based on tenant consultation
  - Pre-allocations/integration with tenancy management
  - Pre and post-inspections
  - Duplication of keys
  - Timescales
  - Performance monitoring




### Pitfalls and bear-traps

- Void repairs:
  - Voids process – end-to-end
  - Discounts on voids work
  - Integrated/dedicated voids teams
  - Void cleaning
  - Level of work done pre and post-occupation
  - Policy on DHS or not
  - Decorating/decorations allowances
  - Condition of ready-to-let properties (void checks)



### Pitfalls and bear-traps

- Gas servicing:
  - Performance levels on annual servicing
  - Performance monitoring arrangements
  - Post-inspection/checking
  - Paperwork (file checks)
  - Appointments
  - No access/legal process
  - Publicity/awareness raising



### Useful information sources

- Audit Commission
- Housing Corporation
- Chartered Institute of Housing
- Housemark
- Housing Quality Network
- Checkmate

*Amber Valley Housing Ltd*

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*Introduction*

Martin Sherman MCIQB  
MBEng  
Director of Asset  
Management & Development

Preparing for inspection  
The external challenge



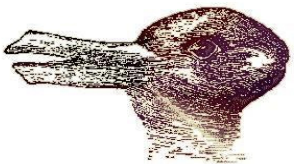
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*Background information*

- AVHL Stock transfer 2003
- 5500 homes.
- 4 Green lights : Housing Corporation
- Mock inspection 2003, After transfer
- Mock inspection November 2005
- Audit Commission inspection due late 2006

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*Why Mock inspection?*




**A Rabbit.... Or A Duck?**  
**hint: the duck is looking left, the rabbit is looking right**

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*Why the challenge?*


- To Benchmark Service provision
- No denial
- No excuses
- Clear plan for improvement
- Gap Analysis
- Priorities
- How far have we come
- Efficiency agenda
- To encourage & motivate
- Set agenda
- Key projects
- IT improvements



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*Why External Challenge?*


- To simulate the real thing
- To encourage participation
- To provide a clear view of where we are and where we need to go without denial or excuses
- To ensure an impartial approach
- Time. Lots going on..... IT system, Reviews, Projects, etc
- Added benefits. Gap analysis
- Focus on service delivery
- Experience of Inspections & inspectors
- So what



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*The company approach*


- To lead or to be led
- Proactive delivery
- Benchmark assessment
- Cultural approach
- Three pronged approach

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### Other Tools in the box




- KLOE
- Customer survey
- Audit Reports
- Data Analysis, Systems approach 
- External Audit provision
- Project management initiatives
- Service reviews
- Procurement options

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### The Mock inspection

- Communication lines
- Preparation
- Team Choice
- Project plan
- Request for information
- Information gathering
- Time lines
- Buy in
- On site
- Focus groups
- Feedback
- Draft report
- Report



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### The Mock inspection Service improvements

- Perception of service
- Communicate findings
- Incorporate recommendations into Corporate plan for 2006
- Set priorities and project plans
- Awareness of KLOEs
- Awareness of Audit Commission reports
- Staff commitment

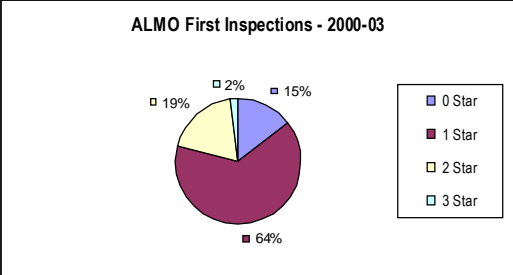


*Old Woman...Or Young Girl?  
hint: The old woman's nose is the young girls chin.*

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### Statistics

#### ALMO First Inspections - 2000-03



Star Rating	Percentage
0 Star	19%
1 Star	64%
2 Star	15%
3 Star	2%

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### RSL Inspections

#### Summary Table of Audit Commission RSL Inspections

	How good is the service?				No. of inspections	% of Total RSLs Inspected
	Poor = 0 star	Fair = 1 star	Good = 2 stars	Excellent = 3 stars		
Excellent	0	3	5	0	8	11%
Promising	0	25*	17	0	42	60%
Uncertain	6	6	2	0	14	20%
Poor	4	2	0	0	6	9%
<b>No. of inspections</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>70</b>	
<b>% of Total RSLs Inspected</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>0%</b>		


Total number of Housing association inspections as at November 2005 carried out by the Audit Commission since May 2004, when the revised methodology was introduced.

AVHL\* with one star and promising prospects result would have been well placed in relation to the inspections already carried out.

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### In Summary

- Independent view
- Benchmark
- Valuable
- Timing



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