



**Resident Improvement Group (RIG) scrutiny
report on Horizon's Letting Standard**

Action plan 2018

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Action plan August 2018**

Scrutiny Project Findings	RIG's Recommendations	Horizon's response	Timescale
The Letting Standard			
<p>The Letting Standard makes no reference to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting the Scottish Housing Quality Standard and Energy Efficiency in Scottish Social Housing (ESSH). • Provision of a clothes drier. • Leaving garden sheds etc. if in good condition. • Issuing of keys for window locks. • Change of locks to the front and back door. • Efficient, effective lighting in communal areas. • Provision of a safety lock on the bathroom door allowing it to be opened on the outside. • Floors are even and ready for coverings. • Provision of an extractor fan in the kitchen or bathroom where required. • Provision of a shower curtain in the bathroom. • Spy holes in the front door are fitted at a standard height. Adaptations will be made if required e.g. for wheelchair users. • Door entry system needs to be checked. 	<p>At the next review of the Letting Standard, the Association gives consideration to the observations and findings of RIG as noted and changes to the Standard are made.</p>	<p>Horizon already carries out the works identified by RIG as missing from the Lettings Standard however we agree that the documentation available to staff and incoming tenants was not comprehensive enough. We will revise fully the Letting Standard and develop a comprehensive document for use internally by staff and a synopsis to be given to incoming tenants.</p>	<p>Complete</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Livingroom and kitchen doors having door closers if required by building regulations. • Provide as built bedroom wardrobes or cupboards, hall cupboards where provided i.e. shelving, clothes rail etc. • The removal of redundant electrical / TV points. • Provision of CO, smoke and heat detectors. • Reference to the Association's responsibility for the maintenance of the water supply in the property. • Communal lighting is in good working order. 			
Information to tenants			
Scrutiny Project Findings	RIG's Recommendations	Horizon's response	Timescale
Incoming tenants are not always provided with information about the Letting Standard.	Incoming tenants are provided with a full or summary version of the Letting Standard at the time of viewing to raise awareness and knowledge of the Association's commitment to the standard.	Agreed – we will issue a copy of lettings standard to new tenants with offer letter and it will also be in the 'information for new tenants' part of our website	Complete
RIG members were unable to determine if the Right to Repair is explained to tenants.	Right to Repair information is provided to the tenant at sign up.	Agreed – to be included in sign up pack	Complete

Scrutiny Project Findings	RIG's Recommendations	Horizon's response	Timescale
RIG feel that there is low tenant awareness about the Letting Standard.	The Association to develop a communications plan to raise awareness of the standard with new and existing tenants and identify the ways in which Letting Standard information can be shared including provision of a paper copy, downloadable on website, newsletter articles etc.	<p>Agreed – we will issue info on what to expect to incoming tenants.</p> <p>For existing tenants – we intend to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicise how to apply for a transfer /other housing options to existing tenants in summer newsletter • Relaunch reward scheme for tenants leaving property in ready to let condition. • HOs to visit all tenants (<,40) with live housing applications to discuss the standard we expect properties to be left in. 	<p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>August – November 2018</p>
Outstanding Work or Repairs Required			
Scrutiny Project Findings	RIG's Recommendations	Horizon's response	Timescale
It is tenant preference that where possible all repair work is completed by the Association before a property is let reducing disruption to the tenant. However, an additional observation is noted below.	This area of good practice is maintained.	Agreed	On going
Tenants are often eager to take receipt of the keys for their new home and small repairs causing minimum disruption and other information is a lower priority to them. By letting a property with small scale repairs this would reduce void rent	By issuing the Summary Version of the Letting Standard, tenants will be informed of repairs and standard expectations.	Agreed- HOs will provide new tenant with details of outstanding repairs at sign up and will check progress at settling in visit	August onwards

<p>loss time and giving the tenant access to a much deserved home.</p>	<p>When properties are let with outstanding repairs tenants to be provided with a repair reference number and a timescale for completion by the Housing Officer. This should be reviewed and monitored by the Housing Officer through information available on the voids sheet which should be updated weekly.</p> <p>Any outstanding repairs are followed up at the tenant settling in visit.</p>		
<p>The aim of the Association is to ensure properties are let quickly, within target and within budget. Properties which are returned in a bad or poor condition, presents a challenge to the Association and takes additional time to clear up or repair. These circumstances can slow the voids targets however these bad properties are taken into consideration when reporting on performance.</p>	<p>Void performance reporting continues to reflect the difficulties for the Association when voids returned in poor condition.</p>	<p>Board performance reports already reflect the effect on performance when properties are returned in poor state, most of which are because the tenant has died.</p>	<p>On going</p>
<p>Other reasons or challenges in delivering the letting standard were identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants leaving a property in a state of serious disrepair and recharge repairs where the Association are unable to reclaim costs. 	<p>The Association considers these additional challenges and gives feedback to the RIG how staff action can reduce the associated risk.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intend visiting all tenants who want to move to ensure that they are aware of the standard we expect when they move out and provide support and assistance where we can • We are looking at a group wide approach as part of the H&S committee 	<p>Q3/4 2018/19</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant welfare and income challenges and the inability to maintain a property e.g. decoration. • Managing tenant aspirations. 		<p>to highlighting and addressing issues around vulnerable tenants – house condition will be a factor in this approach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will continue to promote our tenancy sustainment services for tenants who require support to maximise their income • We will seek to extend the painting service during winter months 	
Horizon Housing Association Administration			
Scrutiny Project Findings	RIG's Recommendations	Horizon's response	Timescale
The RIG collected photographic evidence of properties before and after any work was done.	This practice is continued by staff for monitoring purposes.	Already in place	On going
A review of the Letting Standard based on this scrutiny report will require changes to internal paperwork and staff understanding.	<p>All paperwork is changed and amended to reflect the revised standard.</p> <p>Relevant staff are provided training on the standard.</p>	<p>Void procedures are being updated jointly by housing management and asset management teams,</p> <p>Training session on new procedures will be held</p>	End of August 2018
As part of the research the RIG did not check how the New Tenant Visits Feedback was collated, processed and used.	As part of the review of this scrutiny project this information may be useful in determining further opinion and satisfaction regarding the Associations Letting Standard.	We have reviewed the questionnaire to take into account the lettings standard and have also changed how feedback is sought. Our CST now contact new tenants a week to two weeks after the sign up encouraging them to complete the survey either by phone or email. The incentive of a quarterly prize draw has been introduced.	Complete

<p>From the research, the RIG was not made aware of any formal complaints to the Association regarding the Letting Standard. However the telephone interview research did identify concern by an incoming tenant. These concerns are being addressed by the Association.</p>	<p>Any future complaints are logged and brought to the attention of the RIG who will take into account as this scrutiny project action plan is reviewed.</p>	<p>Agreed – we will provide RIG with analysis of feedback and of complaints in a post scrutiny report next year.</p>	<p>June 2019</p>
<p>Other</p>			
<p>Scrutiny Project Findings</p>	<p>RIG's Recommendations</p>	<p>Horizon's response</p>	<p>Timescale</p>
<p>The Scottish Government are strengthening the current standards for fire and smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors to ensure all homes have the highest level of protection by the end of 2020.</p> <p>One of the new improvements for owner occupiers and tenants in the social housing sector is the increased alarm coverage. The new guidance specifies the following requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One smoke alarm installed in the room most frequently used for general daytime living purposes. • One smoke alarm in every circulation space on each storey, such as hallways and landings. • One heat alarm installed in every kitchen • All alarms should be ceiling mounted, and • All alarms should be interlinked. 	<p>The review of the Horizon Housing Association Letting Standard reflects the changes from the Scottish Government</p>	<p>Horizon Housing Association Letting Standard will be reviewed again once the proposed changes from the Scottish Government are confirmed. The consultation is ongoing and is due to be complete in the Autumn.</p>	<p>January 2019</p>

RIG members showed inconsistency in their awareness and understanding of Care and Repair Services offered in local authority areas.	Promote care and repair services to tenants.	Agreed – we will pull together information on C&R services available to tenants in each local authority and make this available to both new and existing tenants	September 2018
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