

Publication Scheme

3rd October 2005



EMS 79034
Stores and Purchasing



INVESTORS IN PEOPLE



POSITIVE ABOUT
DISABLED PEOPLE



CORGI



BSI
REGISTERED
FS35012



NFPA
Agreement



asap
✓ audited compliance
Registered to the Association of Social Housing
Providers as a company with the status of a provider
of Housing Services



CHARTER
MARK
CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE

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1 Background

The district of Ashfield lies to the north of Nottingham and covers about 11,000 hectares and has a population of 108,000.

The district is made up of three major towns and a number of villages. Hucknall borders Nottingham in the south, Kirkby in Ashfield in the centre of the district and Sutton in Ashfield lies to the north of the district. To the west of the M1 is a rural area containing the villages of Underwood, Jacksdale and Selston. South of Kirkby in Ashfield lies Annesley.

Ashfield Homes an Arms Length Management Company was set up in April 2002 to manage the housing stock of Ashfield District Council. The company manages approximately 7,400 properties across the district. The company received a three star rating by the Audit Commission in 2002 making it one of the highest rated housing organisations in the country.

2 Freedom Of Information Act

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) received Royal Assent on 30 November 2000. It gives a general right of access to all types of recorded information held by public authorities, sets out exemptions from that right and places a number of obligations on public authorities. A 'public authority' is defined in FOIA, and includes but is not restricted to, central and local government, non departmental public bodies (NDPB's), the police, prosecuting bodies, the health service, and schools, nurseries, colleges and universities. The general right of access to the information held by a public authority is provided for under section 1 of the Act. Any person wishing to exercise this right, which will not come into force until January 2005, will have to make a written request to the public authority. Any person who makes such a request must be informed whether the public authority holds that information and, subject to exemptions supplied with that information.

However the Act provides another mechanism for gaining access to information. Every public authority is required to adopt and maintain a publication scheme. A publication scheme is a guide detailing types of information which are to be made routinely available. This guide should provide the public with a simpler means of obtaining information and reduce the need for public authorities to respond to requests made under section 1.

A publication scheme must set out the classes of information contained within the scheme, the manner in which the information is intended to be published, and whether or not a charge will be made for the information. The purpose of a scheme is to ensure a significant amount of information is easily and routinely available. Schemes are intended to encourage organisations to publish more information proactively and to develop a greater culture of openness.

Once a public authority has prepared a scheme and approval for the scheme has been given by the Information Commissioner, the scheme is adopted by the public authority. On adopting a publication scheme the public authority is committed to making the information contained within the scheme routinely accessible, and to review the scheme periodically.

3 Our Commitment

Ashfield Homes is committed to being open and to provide information to the general public. One of our values states 'Ashfield Homes Ltd. will adopt a spirit of openness when making decisions and delivering services'.

4 The Publication Scheme

The officer responsible for the publication scheme is Mr I Dethick, Chief Executive Officer. You can contact him on 01623 608888 or e-mail him at i.dethick@ashfieldhomes.co.uk

The officer responsible for maintaining the scheme on a day to day basis is Mr P Saunders, Performance & Business Improvement Manager. You can telephone him on 01623 608924 or e-mail him at p.saunders@ashfieldhomes.co.uk

Under section 19(1c) of the Act, we must review the scheme regularly. We plan to do this annually and will add classes as and when necessary.

We plan to make information available via our website where possible. Check (www.ashfieldhomes.co.uk) for more information. Any information that is available electronically will be available from our website. Hard copies will be available upon request.

5 Asking for information

Information for all classes of information can be made by contacting Mr P Saunders. Details of how to contact him are contained in section 6 of this scheme.

You may be required to pay a fee for the information you require depending on the information requested. You will be advised at the time of your request if a charge will be made and how much it will cost you.

When requesting information please include the following details:

- Your name and address
- The information or documents you would like to access
- The format you would like the information to be sent – for example, printed leaflet, via email, Braille, large print and certain other languages.

We must supply you with the information you have asked for within twenty working days of receiving your request. We will always try to meet your request as quickly as possible and expect to satisfy most requests for Scheme information within ten working days.

The only exception is where you have to pay for the information. If you do have to pay, our targets remain the same but we aim to provide you with the requested information in ten days from when you pay us, instead of when we receive your request.

6 Your Comments

We welcome your comments about the scheme. If you feel there are areas we have not covered or if we can make the scheme easier to use please contact:

Mr P Saunders
Performance & Business Improvement Manager
Ashfield Homes Limited
Broadway
Brook Street
Sutton in Ashfield
Nottinghamshire
NG17 1AL

Telephone 01623 608924

Fax 01623 608889

e-mail: p.saunders@ashfieldhomes.co.uk

7 Complaints

If you have a complaint about the scheme or failure on our part in relation to the scheme please contact

Mr P Saunders
Performance & Business Improvement Manager
Ashfield Homes Limited
Broadway
Brook Street
Sutton in Ashfield
Nottinghamshire
NG17 1AL

If you have followed our complaints procedure and are still unhappy you can contact:

The Information Commissioner
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Telephone: 01625 545700

8 Excluded Information

Excluded throughout the scheme is all information relating to private individuals by virtue of it being personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998. In addition, some classes set out a range of information that is excluded from publication. This will include instances where the health, welfare and safety of our staff may be affected or where commercial interests may be harmed should we disclose the information. Where this is the case the reasons behind the decision are clearly stated.

Deletion of Information

A lot of information the Company produces is only needed for a limited period. It costs a lot to keep information once it is no longer needed. The Company will therefore destroy information that is no longer needed. The Company is neither allowed to withhold information requested properly nor amend or destroy information to avoid its release.

9 Ashfield Homes Aims & Values

- Manage the investment in the Council's housing stock to ensure it meets the decent homes standard
- By providing excellent housing services contribute to the wider regeneration of the communities of Ashfield by entering into partnerships with appropriate organisations.
- Facilitate the continuous improvement of tenant services
- Extend the empowerment of tenants in the management of their homes and the services they receive
- Ashfield Homes Ltd. will minimise the detrimental effect our organisation has upon the environment

Values

- Ashfield Homes Ltd. will provide excellent housing services to the tenants of Ashfield District Council and the wider community which represent Best Value.
- Ashfield Homes Ltd. will be an excellent employer for all employees.
- Efficiency, economy, effectiveness, equity and quality will be at the heart of Ashfield Homes Ltd 's performance culture. Underpinning all of this will be what matters to customers.
- Ashfield Homes Ltd. will offer fair treatment to all service users regardless of age, race, sex, disability or sexual orientation.
- Ashfield Homes Ltd. will involve service users to the level and extent they choose at all stages of the decision-making process.
- Employees will work together to deliver the aims of Ashfield Homes Ltd. recognising that teamwork is more effective than working alone and in isolation.
- When complaints are received, problems occur and mistakes are made, Ashfield Homes Ltd. will investigate quickly, put it right and learn so it does not happen again.
- Ashfield Homes Ltd. will adopt a spirit of openness when making decisions and delivering services.

10 CLASSES OF INFORMATION

In determining the classes of information we have looked at the key areas of our business ensuring that all areas are included within the scope of this scheme.

Heading 1-Information about the company, including Board Members

This heading covers information relating to the Company how it operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people.

Class 1.1

The Memorandum and Articles of Association

The Memorandum and Articles of Association describes how the Company operates and the rules that must be followed.

- Note The Memorandum and Articles of Association will be subject to a charge.

This information is available as a hard copy upon request

Class 1.2

Membership of the Company

This includes information about Board members.

This information is available from our website

Class 1.3

Organisational Structure

Items here include details of Committee structures and Director and Service Head structures.

This information is available electronically upon request

Class 1.4**Election of Board Members**

This includes all information relating to the election/appointment of Board members

Available in hard copy

Heading 2 – Contact Information about the Company’s services

This heading includes information about how to contact the Company.

Class 2.1**Service Standards.**

A comprehensive guide to the Standards set by the company.

This information is available from our website

Class 2.2**Complaints/Compliments**

This includes the details on how to make a complaint or compliment about the Company

This information is available from our website

Heading 3 – Information about the company’s strategies and policies

Under this heading are included current editions of the plans and strategies

Class 3.1**Policy and Strategic Management.**

This class contains information on Corporate Values, Delivery Plan, Equal Opportunities policy, and Partnership agreements.

- A Charge may be made for items within this Class
- Certain items may be exempted because of business interests

Our Strategies and Policies are available from our website

Heading 4 – Information about the Company’s resources and financial arrangements**Class 4.1****Company Finances.**

Under this class are included summarised annual budget, statement of accounts and capital programme information. This will also include items such as Financial Regulations of the organisation.

- A charge may be made for items within this class

Available as a hard copy

Class 4.2**Company Resources**

Items here include the Asset Register.

- Note some publications in this class will be subject to a charge.
- Some publications will not be available because of personal information

Class 4.3**Service Level Agreements**

Details relating to Service Level Agreements between Ashfield Homes and other agencies.

- A charge may be made for items within this class
- Certain items may be exempted because of business interests

Available in hard copy

Heading 5 – Information about decisions of the Company

This heading comprises the details of meetings; agendas, reports and minutes of Company. Exemptions include: (a) personal information; (b) provided in confidence; (c) exempt from disclosure by law.

Class 5.1**Agendas and reports.**

This class includes the Agendas and connected reports for all committees.

- Note some publications in this class will be subject to a charge.

Available electronically upon request

Class 5.2**Minutes.**

This class includes the minutes for all sub committees and Board Meetings

- Note some publications in this class will be subject to a charge.
- Some items may be exempt because of personal information or those affecting business interests

Available electronically upon request

Class 5.3**Key Decisions.**

This class includes the forward plan of key decisions to be made by the Company.

- Some items may be exempt because of personal information or those affecting business interests

Heading 6 – Information about improving the work of the Company

This heading comprises information on Company performance against locally set and nationally prescribed targets, and reports on those areas that have been reviewed.

Class 6.1**Local Performance Plan.**

Items here include information on Company performance and future plans.

This information is available from our website

Class 6.2**Best Value Review Reports.**

Items here relate to Best Value reviews of service provision and performance information.

- Some items may be exempt because of personal information or those affecting business interests
- There may be a charge for items in this class

Class 6.3**Performance Indicators – Company performance.**

Items here include information on Company performance against locally set and nationally prescribed targets.

A summary of this information is available from our website

Class 6.4

Surveys

Surveys undertaken by the company or by third parties undertaken on behalf of Ashfield Homes.

- There may be a charge for items in this class
- Some items may be exempt because the information has been provided in confidence

Our latest survey results are available from our website

Heading 7 – Decent Homes and tenant services

This heading comprises information on providing decent homes for the people of Ashfield and the provision of services to tenants.

Class 7.1

Improving the condition of the housing stock within the district.

Items here include information on the decent homes strategy and business planning. Information about access to Repairs and Maintenance Services are included in this category

- Some items may be exempt because of personal information or those affecting business interests
- There may be a charge for items in this class

Class 7.2

Providing access to housing advice and information when required.

Items here include information on housing strategy and housing business plan, payment advice and offices.

This information is available from our website

Class 7.3

Helping people to live securely and independently.

Items here include information on older persons services and tenant support.

- Some items may be exempt because of personal information or those affecting business interests
- There may be a charge for items in this class

Heading 8 – Tenant Empowerment & Communication with the general public

This includes all information relating to tenant participation

Class 8.1

Involving tenants

Items will include our communication strategy with tenants, such as the tenant compact, newsletters etc.

This information is available from our website

Class 8.2

Tenants consultation

Items will include the monitoring of tenant services through research and feedback

Class 8.3

Service Leaflets and General Information

Items here will include Tenants Handbooks, and advice leaflets about service provision

This information is available from our website

Class 8.4

Press Releases

Published press releases made by the company

Heading 9 – Employment

This includes all information relating to employment of staff.

Class 9.1

Vacancies

A list of current vacancies advertised by the company. This information will only be relevant to posts that are being advertised at the time of the request.

This information is available from our website

Class 9.2

Job Descriptions

All current job descriptions for employees.

Information on advertised posts is available from our website

Class 9.3

Staff Policies & Guidance

Internal policies and guidance that staff are expected to follow

These are available in hard copy only

ہم زانیاریہاں دہریارہی ٹاشفیلڈ ہومس کہ بہ زمانی ٹینگلیزی نوسراوہ ٹہتوانریت بز زمانی کوردی ترجمہ
بکرت. تکایہ داوای زانیاری زیاتر لہ ٹہندامینکی دستہی فرمانبہران بکہ.

KURDISH

Ashfield Homes 印製的所有英文刊物，都可翻譯成中文。請聯絡本處職員，查詢詳情。

CANTONESE

اشفیلڈ ہومس سے متعلق انگریزی زبان میں دستیاب کسی بھی معلومات کا اردو زبان میں ترجمہ فراہم کیا جاسکتا ہے، مزید معلومات کے لیے برائے مہربانی اسٹاف کے کسی رکن سے بات کریں۔

URDU

انگریزوں میں لکھے ہوئے تمام اشفیلڈ ہومس کی معلومات کو اردو میں بھی دستیاب کیا جاسکتا ہے۔ مزید معلومات کے لیے براہ کرم اسٹاف کے کسی رکن سے بات کریں۔

GUJURATI

Wszelkie informacje dotyczące Ashfield Homes napisane po angielsku mogą być przetłumaczone na język polski - o dalsze szczegóły proszę zapytać osobę z personelu.

POLISH

