



Tenants

Annual Report 2010

Contents

1. Welcome from the Chair and Managing Director of Erimus Housing	3
2. Introduction	4
3. Preparation and Consultation	4
4. What are Local Offers?	4
5. What have we done so far?	4
6. How do we meet the National Standards and Improvements?	5-17
• National Standard 1 Tenant Involvement and Empowerment	5
• National Standard 2 The Home Standard	8
• National Standard 3 Tenancy Standard	10
• National Standard 4 Your Neighbourhood and Community	13
• National Standard 5 Value for Money	16
• National Standard 6 Governance and Financial Viability	17
7. Ensuring Equality and Diversity	18
8. Who will monitor our performance on the National Standards and Local Offers?	18
9. Going forward and reporting to you in the future	18
10. Feedback request	19

1. Welcome



Mike Carr
Chair
Erimus Housing



Chris Smith
Managing Director
Erimus Housing

Welcome to the detailed Tenants Annual Report

With the introduction of the Tenant Services Authority (TSA), the way we report to you has changed.

Erimus Housing has now been part of the Fabrick Group for two years and in that time we have continued to go from strength to strength, not only with our delivery of services, but with the benefits from economies of scale that a group the size of Fabrick brings with it. Creating the Group helped us secure an increase in our financial surplus in 2009/10, which has allowed us to put the additional income back into delivering better services for our tenants and invest more money on modernising our properties.

The last 12 months have been significant for Erimus Housing as we reached the end of the five year transfer promises made to you. In 2004, we made 75 legally binding promises to you and have successfully delivered on them all, with the most significant being the completion of the Decent Homes programme at a cost of £130m. In the previous 12

months we have demolished a number of properties including two high rise blocks at Glentworth House and Fulbeck House. We have modernised all of our remaining properties to the Government's Decent Homes Standard and have continued to build new properties across Middlesbrough, providing a mix of family homes and much needed bungalows.

We need to ensure that there is a correct balance of demolition and improvements to our existing properties. The decision to demolish properties is not an easy one and this has only been done after all options, especially costs and the practicalities of improving ageing, unpopular stock, were considered.

Our aim is to continually improve and provide value for money. This has led to a major review of how Erimus Housing and, indeed, the Fabrick Group deliver services to you. We have worked closely with you over the last 12 months to identify areas where our processes can be improved. This has also led to savings which will be used to deliver new and improved services that are important to you. In 2009/10, the savings totalled

over £1m across the Group and further savings are expected.

We also appointed Resident Regulators last year. The Resident Regulators have full access to all areas of the business, with the ability to examine our performance and service delivery as

- How we feel we currently meet with the requirements of the National Standards
- Where we need to improve and what we will do
- Plans to develop 'Local Offers'
- How Erimus Housing and its tenants will monitor and report future performance and outcomes from Improvement Plans

A full performance information report was provided to all of our tenants in June 2010 as part of the Insight Newsletter; we have therefore not repeated it in this first report. Future reports will include performance information that shows how we are meeting the National Standards and Local Offers.

Survey information shown throughout the report refers to results from the Status Survey (Tenants Satisfaction) carried out with our tenants in 2009.

We hope that the information is interesting and look forward to receiving feedback from you on how we can improve the reports for the future.

2. Introduction

The way in which housing associations are regulated changed with the introduction of the Tenant Services Authority (TSA) in December 2008. The TSA replaced the Housing Corporation. It is responsible for ensuring social housing landlords provide decent homes and services to their tenants

The TSA has launched six National Standards which are designed to help improve the services provided for you. They have been set to ensure that we as your landlord, deliver the services that we say we will provide and to ensure that we tell you how we are doing this, and where we need to make improvements for you.

There is also the opportunity to set Local Offers and these must be agreed with our tenants to ensure they meet and contribute to the needs of the local community.

Each year, we must publish information to you about meeting the Standards, any Local Offers we have agreed and any changes made as a result of feedback from you.

We must also give tenants the opportunity to examine our performance relating to the above and challenge any areas of concern.

We will report annually on the above through the Tenants Annual Report.

Further detailed information on the above can be found on the TSA website at www.tenantservicesauthority.org.

3. Preparation and Consultation

In April 2009, we set off on a journey to consult with our tenants on the services we provided and to only measure and feedback on what actually mattered to you. We called this 'Project Weave',



and many of you have taken part in consultation events, focus groups and service improvement groups.

Project Weave has put us in a very good position for reporting and measuring what matters to our tenants. When the TSA launched its National Standards in March 2010 we had already done a lot of the work with tenants and staff to ensure we could meet the requirements of them.

We have carried out an assessment to see where we meet the National Standards, and an action plan has been put in place to ensure that work is carried out on areas where we do not currently meet the requirements and where we need to improve.

4. What are Local Offers?

In addition to the six National Standards, housing providers are also required to develop Local Offers based on what tenants want. We must ask our

tenants what they want and tell you how we will put these Offers in place. The Local Offers must be in place and being worked to by 1 April 2011 and performance on delivery reported to you.

5. What have we done so far?

Following a number of consultation events about Local Offers, we published the initial outcomes in the June 2010 Insight newsletter, asking for feedback from tenants. Once agreed with tenants the final Local Offers will be published, and we will be delivering them to you by 1 April 2011.

The Local Offers will continue to be updated to meet the needs of our tenants, local communities and special interest groups as they change, or where the organisation is able to make you a better offer based on your feedback from other sources, e.g. surveys.



6. How do we meet the National Standards and Improvements?

National Standard 1 - Tenant Involvement and Empowerment

Our customers have a right to be treated with fairness and respect and we must ensure that we consider all equality issues in the way in which we deliver services to you.

Customer Service and Choice

There are a number of key issues that we must consider. This includes:

- Offering our tenants a choice of the services they receive
- Designing and delivering services to the needs of our diverse communities, and which are easily accessible to all
- Communicating with tenants

How are we meeting this Standard?

- We know how our customers currently contact us and we have consulted widely to find out how they want to access our services in the future. The consultation has told us that customers are satisfied with the service we provide and the length of time it takes for us to deal with their calls, as the quality of our response is more important to them than the time it takes to answer their call
- Staff have been trained to deal with a wider range of enquiries. Analysis of our contacts has shown a reduction of 30%, in 12 months, where people have had to contact us about something that has not been dealt with right the first time. This shows us that we are providing the majority of our customers with the information they need and we are dealing with enquiries more effectively at the first point of contact
- We are gathering a range of information about our customers including ethnicity, disability, age, gender and sexual orientation. This will ensure that we can provide services that meet the needs of all our customers
- We currently have service standards in place which were agreed with customers. Anyone accessing our services will therefore be clear about the level of services that they can expect
- We publish regular newsletters, have a website and use a range of consultation mechanisms such as Housing Area Forums and 'You Said We Did' events, ensuring that tenants are kept informed and that they are given the opportunity to inform policy and decision making

- 8 out of 10 of our tenants surveyed told us that they were satisfied with the way we delivered services, and 7 out of 10 said that they felt that we took their views into consideration

Improvements

To improve we need to:

- Explore ways to develop the way that we communicate and share information with our tenants. We will also ask how tenants would prefer to receive information from us
- Develop packages of service choices for our customers. These could include garden maintenance and handy man services that could be bought in. We have already started consultation on these and existing choices with our tenants, in particular where they are older or more vulnerable
- Improve our processes for collecting all forms of feedback and ensure that service improvements are recorded and published
- Develop a process to allow an annual review of how we meet the TSA National Standards and our Local Offers with tenants leading the way in which we do this
- Develop a formal framework for tenant scrutiny in consultation with tenants

Involvement and Empowerment

All tenants should have the opportunity to be involved in the management of housing. This includes:

- Influencing housing related policies and how services are delivered
 - Being involved in scrutinising performance of housing services
 - Supporting tenants so that they are able to effectively be engaged, involved and empowered
-



How are we meeting this Standard?

- We have a Resident Involvement Framework, developed with customers, which allows them to participate at a level that suits them
- A range of consultation mechanisms such as Housing Area Forums and 'You Said We Did' events are used to communicate with our tenants. These allow tenants to inform policy and decision making
- We provide training and personal development for our tenants through in house providers and local colleges to enable them to participate more fully
- Our Resident Regulators review service area performance and are part of the Board's Operations and Development Committee. Their findings are presented at Committee and Board ensuring that tenant views are presented at Board level
- We have a number of service standards and performance indicators and provide information on these for our tenants in our newsletters and on our website. This allows our tenants to see how we are performing and provides them with the opportunity to challenge any areas of concern

Improvements

To improve we need to:

- Complete the consultation on new Local Offers and create up to date standards that can be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis
- Develop a procedure to deal with areas where tenants feel we do not meet the National Standards and Local Offers
- Further develop the role of our tenants in scrutiny and link this to the Board.



average number of days taken to deal with a complaint is 12.

- Information on what tenants need to do if they are not satisfied with the outcome of a complaint is always given. This allows those making a complaint to decide on what the next course of action is for them
- We have introduced a system that allows us to analyse all feedback, and identify any learning and improvements. This will help to inform any service improvements
- Information about the number of complaints received and the reasons for them is provided in newsletters to tenants and on our website

Improvements

To improve we need to:

- Revise the information available to our tenants to ensure that they are aware of the changes and how this has improved the process for them
 - Analyse the findings and publish them within our performance information
 - Carry out satisfaction testing on the process to ensure that tenants are satisfied with the way we handle complaints and that our staff are dealing with them effectively
 - Reduce the average number of days that it takes for a complaint to be dealt with
-

- Continue to build the capacity and confidence of tenants to carry out scrutiny of performance
- Continue to work with tenants on reviewing our policies and the way in which we deliver services

How are we meeting this Standard?

- Complaints can be made in a way that people wishing to make a complaint feel is most suitable for them, e.g. telephone, letter, email, office visit or they may wish to have someone deal with the complaint on their behalf
- We have consulted with our tenants and developed a new two stage process which allows tenants to provide feedback in a number of ways. This has also reduced the time it takes to process a complaint and provides a final decision about a complaint sooner. The current

Responding to Complaints

We must have a clear and accessible policy to ensure that we:

- Deal with complaints and any other feedback promptly, politely and fairly
- Show how we use the information received to change the things that we do and improve services



National Standard 2 - The Home Standard

We must ensure that we provide tenants with homes that are warm, weatherproof and have modern facilities.

How are we meeting this Standard?

- All Erimus Homes exceed the Government's Decent Homes Standard and future investment plans will look to enhance this. Our recent tenant satisfaction survey showed that 9 out of 10 of our tenants are happy with the quality of their home.
- Our average rating for energy efficiency for our properties is in the top 25% of the country. This places us in the top performers when compared to other housing providers. This also assists our tenants financially with the costs of heating their homes.
- Through focus groups, we will ensure that tenants continue to have a say in the Local Offers

Improvements

To improve we need to:

- Complete the 30 year planned maintenance programme to ensure that properties remain above the Decent Homes Standard, and any asset management work will be set at a level not less than Decent Homes Standard and Government guidelines
- Communicate future investment plans to our tenants and explain the reasons for the decisions that are made
- Use information gathered from condition surveys of our properties and we need to use this information to inform future decision making.
- Aim to increase the number of people who say that they are "very satisfied" with the quality of their home

Repairs and Maintenance

We must ensure that:

- We provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service that meets your needs and offers choice to you

- We meet all statutory requirements for the health and safety of our tenants

How are we meeting this Standard?

- Tenants have told us that they want repairs carrying out 'right first time' and at a time that suits them. We have therefore changed the way in which we respond to repairs, giving the tenant more say in making an appointment for their repair to be carried out
- The average time to complete a repair is five days
- 9 out of 10 of our tenants have told us that they were satisfied with the repairs service
- We have developed an Asset Management Strategy, in consultation with our tenants. This ensures efficient use of resources by providing a mix of responsive, planned and capital repairs. Planned repairs are usually external work where it is more cost effective to replace items on a bulk basis. Capital work is carried out on an improvement programme and is for such items as kitchen/bathroom replacements

- Adaptations are identified during surveys for improvement works. Any work identified is then carried out as part of the improvement works. This reduces any disruption for vulnerable tenants and it is a cost effective way of using resources
- We have a budget that allows us to carry out adaptations to properties that are not due for improvement works, and an assessment is made by our Occupational Therapist to ensure the needs of our tenants are met. This allows our tenants to remain independent and to occupy their homes for longer. Where properties are not suitable for adaptations we discuss the alternative options available with them
- We carry out annual gas safety checks and periodic electrical tests as well as gas and electricity checks on all of our empty properties before

they are relet. Only 13 out of over 8,500 properties did not receive a gas safety check. This was due to us not being able to gain access to properties

- We have an Excellent Tenants scheme This rewards tenants who look after their homes and neighbourhoods

Improvements

To improve we need to:

- Ensure that our workforce is trained to carry out more than one job to enable more repairs to be carried out by one person in one visit
- Work towards reducing the average number of days taken to complete a repair
- Continue to raise tenant awareness on the importance of gas servicing to ensure that we gain access to all of our properties

- Look at the way in which we carry out fire risk assessments and develop Personal Evacuation Plans for all of our tenants in shared entrance properties
- Complete our 30 year Investment Plan and improve the way in which we ensure that there is a balance of responsive, planned and capital works
- Through Focus Groups, ensure that tenants continue to have a say in influencing any asset management work
- Assess work required when properties become empty, and if repairs are not due to fair wear and tear the previous tenant will be asked to repay the costs for such work. This ensures effective use of resources and gives responsibility to the previous tenants. However we need to take stronger action when payments are not made.





National Standard 3 - Tenancy Standard

Allocations

We must ensure that we let our properties in a fair and transparent way taking into account:

- Housing needs of applicants
- The need to demonstrate best use of available housing
- The need to contribute to sustainable communities in accordance with any Local Authority Plans
- The need to have a clear decision making and appeals process

How do we meet the Standard?

- Our Choice Based Lettings service, Homelessness and Disabled Persons Housing Service are located together at our Homechoice office, ensuring that services are linked and that applicants for rehousing can have their needs assessed and dealt with in a co-ordinated way
- The Choice Based Lettings system (Compass) was developed in partnership with other housing providers in the area. This increases customer choice
- Our Homechoice service helps applicants to access housing that meets their needs. Priority on the Choice Based Lettings system is

based upon a number of areas, for example, personal circumstances, over and under occupation of properties and medical needs

- Properties with adaptations are allocated to applicants with relevant medical needs, ensuring best use of stock and value for money
- Where applicants for housing require support, we offer a supported bidding process with support packages provided to increase the chance of our more vulnerable tenants retaining tenancies, for example, furnished properties



- Customers are told how long they may have to wait for a property in a particular area, allowing them to reassess their choices if they wish to
- We provide a weekly lettings announcement showing which properties have been relet and the priority banding of the successful applicant. This ensures that we operate an open and transparent service
- We have an agreement with the local authority that a certain number of properties will be made available to people referred for rehousing from them
- In line with best practice, we have an exclusion policy. However, applicants are advised of the reasons for any exclusion from the waiting list and what actions they need to take to remove the restriction. This ensures that all rehousing applicants are treated fairly and provides the applicant with the opportunity of putting things right and to have the exclusion lifted, where it can be
- Tenants who wish to leave our properties are offered information on alternative landlords, how to exchange tenancies and how to process any applications for exchange. This gives more choice to our tenants and does not restrict them to remaining in the local area
- We have arrangements in place through the Language Line Translation service for those whose first language is not English
- Full details of the service including our appeals process are published on our website and are available in all our offices if applicants require further information on such issues
- We monitor our lettings, the reasons that people are leaving tenancies and the reasons for any refusal of a property to make sure that we can identify areas of low demand or emerging issues on an estate, and take appropriate action to ensure that our communities are able to continue to thrive
- Currently it takes us an average of 24 days to relet a property. This places us in the top performers when compared to other housing providers
- 8 out of 10 tenants who used the lettings service said that they were “satisfied” with the service we provide

Improvements

To improve we need to:

- Consider the benefits of participating in national rehousing schemes to address housing need
- Understand why some housing applicants are not happy with the lettings service and make changes where required
- Continue to ensure that future housing schemes offer a range of tenancy types to meet the needs of applicants requiring housing
- Reduce the number of days it takes us to relet properties
- Continue to have the best support services in place

- Look at demand where we have properties that are difficult to let and, where applicable, develop local lettings policies. This will ensure that we can assess demand and make best use of our housing stock, assess demand and develop property types in areas where our customers want to live

Rents

We must charge rents in line with the framework set out within Government policy and guidelines.

How are we meeting the Standard?

- We have a rent and service charge policy that ensures we follow the Government's policy and guidance
- We notify our tenants of any changes to rent and service charges on an annual basis. This keeps tenants informed and provides an explanation of the reasons for the change at least 28 days before it takes effect
- We have a rent and income focus group that reviews the policies, literature and rent statements we send out to ensure that they are customer-friendly

Improvements

To improve we need to:

- Develop a customer friendly guide on how rents and service charges are reviewed

Tenure

We must offer and issue the most secure form of tenancy matched to:

- The purpose of the housing provided
 - The sustainability of the community
 - The legal requirements in relation to tenancy agreements
-

How we are meeting the Standard?

- We have recently reviewed our tenancy agreements in order to make clear landlord and tenant responsibilities so that anyone taking a tenancy knows what will happen if they do not meet with their responsibilities, and what action we may take if evidence of this is found
- We provide a wide range of services that support tenants in retaining their tenancies and avoiding unnecessary evictions. This includes:
 - Our Financial Inclusion Team, Tandem which offers welfare and debt advice
 - Floating support services who assist our more vulnerable tenants
 - Our Enforcement Team which works with both victims and perpetrators of anti-social behaviour with the aim of resolving issues

- Furnished tenancies and other types of support packages
- We publish all our policies on how we deal with the management of tenancies. This keeps tenants informed on how we manage tenancies and what procedures we will take on particular matters. Our leaflets also provide information for you on these policies
- We carry out regular property and tenancy inspections and work with housing benefits to reduce the risks of fraud and illegal occupation of tenancies. If this is found, we will take legal action to remedy the matter. This ensures that tenants do not misuse stock or benefits.

Improvements

To improve we need to:

- Continue to work with our existing partners and identify new partners to ensure that the best support services are in place when they are needed





National Standard 4 - Your Neighbourhood and Community

Neighbourhood Management

We must keep common areas associated with your home clean and safe, working in partnership with tenants and other providers.

How we are meeting the Standard?

- We carry out estates inspections at least every eight weeks to identify any acts of vandalism, repairs, fly tipping, overgrown gardens and open spaces and to identify future environmental improvements
- We carry out regular checks of communal areas to monitor the service standards for cleaning, grounds maintenance, and for health and safety. issues
- The tenancy agreement information is available so that tenants are clear

about their responsibilities in looking after the estate or any communal areas.

- Our new tenancy agreements place a responsibility on those living in property with communal facilities to keep the area hazard free in the interests of safety.
- Our tenants continue to play a fundamental part in designing the service standards for estate management and monitoring performance against these standards so that we provide a service that meets the needs of our tenants
- Service level agreements are in place with the contractors who provide services on our behalf, such as grounds maintenance Arrangements are in place to ensure that monitoring their work is of a high standard

Improvements

To improve we need to:

- Create opportunities for our tenants to monitor services. We will provide a schedule of work that can be expected and train them so that they are able to monitor the service standards, including grounds maintenance and cleaning of communal areas
- Further develop current service standards to include estate standards
- Develop a way of measuring how we are doing compared to other organisations similar to ours, and, identify how we can monitor improvements.

Local Area Co-Operation

We must ensure that we co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic well-being in the areas where they own properties.

How we are meeting the Standard?

- We have begun meeting with other landlords to, in consultation with tenants, agree common Local Offers
- We work closely with the Council to deliver affordable housing in the area
- Local Area Agreements are in place to ensure that we provide thriving communities
- Our Group-wide Middlesbrough Gateway project offers help to tenants who are interested in self-employment
- Our Financial Inclusion team promote the take up of benefits and provide financial advice to Erimus tenants. Last year the team assisted 764 of our tenants to access additional income
- Working in partnership with Safe in Tees Valley, a number of courses have been run including a 'Learn and Let Live' course that provide healthy eating, budgeting and DIY skills to teenagers

- We are committed to providing apprenticeship places and have a number of apprentices throughout the organisations in areas such as IT and administration

Improvements

To improve we need to:

- Work with other registered providers of housing to establish Local Area Agreements that identify clear roles and responsibilities
- Look to reduce our carbon footprint and develop a way of making Erimus Housing more environmentally friendly

Anti Social Behaviour (ASB)

We need to ensure that we work in partnership with other public agencies to prevent and tackle ASB in the neighbourhoods where you live

How we are meeting the Standard?

- We take the PIER (Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement and Rehabilitation) approach to help resolve ASB. Using this approach we are able to provide those causing ASB with the opportunity to correct their behaviour and identify any additional support they may need before enforcement is carried out
- We have recently reviewed our tenancy agreements to ensure that tenants are clear about what their responsibilities and rights are in relation to ASB
- We have a clear policy and procedure for dealing with ASB and this is made available to all our tenants. Leaflets also provide information on how we deal with ASB





- We work closely with a number of agencies to tackle and reduce incidents of ASB ensuring multi-agency approach to resolution, especially in complex areas such as drug dealing. These agencies include the Police, Social Services, Education and local authorities Community Safety teams
 - We have a schools educational programme known as PEER kids that promotes citizenship and good behaviour, and which is delivered to primary schools in Middlesbrough
 - We use a range of tools and powers to tackle problems quickly and efficiently such as Acceptable Behaviour Contracts, Anti-Social Behaviour Orders and Anti-Social Behaviour Injunctions. These have proven to be effective in tackling serious cases of ASB. Last year we issued 636 warning letters, gained three Anti Social Behaviour Orders and evicted six households
 - We have allocated a number of our offices as Hate Crime reporting centres and our staff have been trained to deal with any reports, making reporting easier for victims
 - We have budgets from Secure by Design Estates and area/estate budgets which can be used to reduce risk of crime / ASB by paying for appropriate schemes. We also have tenant incentive schemes to promote positive behaviour
 - We have reduced the amount of time it takes for us to deal with ASB. If we are contacted about ASB we will contact the person making the report within one working day. A dedicated named officer is allocated to the case and an action plan will be agreed with the complainant so that all parties are clear about what to expect. Officers will provide regular updates as a case progresses
 - In serious cases of ASB, we may appoint an independent person to provide evidence and witness any activity. This protects tenants from concerns about reprisals
 - Mediation services and referrals are offered for some neighbour disputes as this is often a cost-effective way of resolving matters
 - Our recent tenants' survey showed that 9 out of 10 tenants reporting ASB were satisfied with the service
-
- Improvements**
- To improve we need to:**
- Look at the options for providing a 24- hour response service to ASB and how we can develop a victim and witness support service to those experiencing ASB
 - Increase the number of people reporting that they are “very satisfied” with the ASB service.
-

National Standard 5 - Value for Money

In meeting the National Standards and our Local Offers we must provide cost-effective, efficient, quality services and homes to meet our customer needs.

How are we meeting the Standard?

- We hold annual consultation events where tenants tell us what their priorities are. We use this information to prepare our budgets and business plans to make sure they reflect our tenants' priorities
- We compare our costs and performance to similar organisations through benchmarking activity
- We consult tenants on any changes to services that result in changes to service charges
- We involve tenants in major procurement exercises
- We have helped to set up a procurement consortium called North East Procurement (NEP). This is a partnership with other housing organisations in our region which enables us to buy goods and services cheaper. Residents from all member organisations have been involved in setting up the buying arrangements of NEP
- 8 out of 10 of our tenants have told us that they felt that for the rent they pay Erimus Housing provides value for money

Improvements

To improve we need to:

- Publish and improve the information about how our rents and other costs compare to similar organisations locally
- Explore ways to involve more people in procurement activities, particularly where there are service charge implications
- Improve the way that we benchmark our performance against other housing providers



National Standard 6 - Governance and Financial Viability

Governance

Governance is the way in which a company is run. We must ensure that effective governance is in place to deliver the aims, objectives and outcomes for our customers and be effective, transparent and accountable in our manner.

Erimus Housing is part of the Fabrick Housing Group. Fabrick provides corporate and development services to Erimus Housing as well as contributing to the objectives and strategy for the Group and ensuring that customers receive the services they want.

Whilst Erimus Housing is part of the Fabrick Housing Group, the Erimus Housing Board is still responsible for setting the objectives of Erimus Housing; agreeing how services will be delivered to you and checking whether these services are being provided the way that they should be.

Currently the members of the board are:

- Mike Carr (Chair)
- Edna Donnelly (Vice Chair)
- Bob Brady
- Moira Britton (Co-optee)
- Brian Kelly
- Hugh McGouran
- Alexander McQueen
- Josephine Pottinger
- Peter Purvis
- Sarah Robson
- Jenny Shepherd
- Nicky Walker

The TSA require that all housing providers adopt a code of governance and we must ensure that we are working to the principles of good governance. We have therefore adopted the National Housing

Federation's Code, Excellence in Governance 2009, and we will carry out an annual review to ensure that we continue to meet with the requirements of the Code and that our governance arrangements remain fit for purpose. Where we do not meet with the requirements, we will inform you and tell you the reasons for this.

We chose to adopt this Code because it has been developed specifically for housing providers and takes into account principles from other governance codes. Although we have adopted this Code, it is not to the exclusion of any good practice identified elsewhere.

We will report directly to the TSA on how we are meeting this Standard. However, if feedback received from our tenants tell us that they wish to see more detail on this area, we will provide this in future reports.

Viability

We have a number of important controls in place to provide us with assurance on specific matters of viability. These include:

- A full programme of internal audit and reviews that examine all of our systems and controls over a specific period

- Robust risk management arrangements that highlight areas of control which need additional action
- An Audit and Risk Committee that reviews risk and internal audit activity on a quarterly basis, and reports annually to our Board
- An external audit process that confirms our annual accounts give a true and fair view of our financial results
- Quarterly reports showing financial results compared to our financial plans which are taken to our Board
- Detailed cash-flow reporting, including performance against conditions attached to our borrowing facilities
- An annual review of our financial viability being carried out by the TSA

Improvements

To improve we need to:

- Ensure that we continue to communicate annually to tenants through the newsletters the outcome of annual viability reviews which are carried out by the TSA
- Include commentary on our financial performance in our future Tenants Annual Reports if tenants indicate that they wish to see this





7. Ensuring Equality and Diversity

We are committed to achieving equality and valuing diversity in everything we do. To make sure our policies, procedures and working practices do not discriminate against anyone, we have developed an Equality Needs Impact Assessment process.

The process is designed to identify any unfavourable impact on particular groups of people. The process also helps us to ensure that our policies and procedures meet with the requirements of the laws on equality and diversity.

8. Who will monitor our performance on the National Standards and our Local Offer to you?

We want to be transparent and open, and give tenants the opportunity to monitor and scrutinise our performance.

Currently the Residents' Panel and the Area Housing Forums are given details

of our performance on a quarterly basis. The groups also have the ability to ask the Resident Regulators to further scrutinise performance in areas where they feel things could be better. The Residents' Panel has the opportunity to report any concerns about performance to the Operations and Development Committee within Erimus Housing.

We want to work with our tenants and leaseholders to offer more people the chance to scrutinise our performance against the Standards and Offers. We will be calling upon all interested tenants to work with us to develop a framework over the coming months. A new robust framework will be in place by April 2011.

9. Going forward and reporting to you in the future

Going forward, we will be confirming the Local Offers and the Neighbourhood Offer. These will focus on things which are important to you within your area. This is particularly

important where there is more than one landlord or more than one organisation providing services, such as grounds maintenance or litter picking.

Further offers are being worked on for our special interest groups such as older people, those with a disability, young people, BME, and any other groups which may emerge as having a requirement for a Local Offer.

Our offers relating to the Neighbourhood and our Special Interest groups will be consulted on over the coming months, with an agreed offer to you by April 2011.

We will continue providing a Tenants Annual Report and we will consult with you again about the format and contents ensuring that you receive the information that is important to you.

10. Feedback request

Your views are important to us. We would be grateful if you could take a few minutes to complete and return the following section to us at:

**Erimus Housing, Business Support Team,
4th Floor Centre North East, 73-75 Albert Road,
Middlesbrough TS1 2RU.**

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

Tel:

Email:

This will help us to improve next year's report to you. **Thank you.**

If you return the completed form by 30 October 2010, you will be entered into a free prize draw for the chance to win a £50 voucher to spend at a store of your choice.



1. How well did this report provide information that was of interest to you?

Please score between 1 and 5, where 1 is the least and 5 is the highest

1 2 3 4 5

2. Please tell us what you found of interest and what you found of no interest

3. How do you think we can improve the Annual Report to Tenants and in what format would you prefer to receive the report, e.g. paper report within the tenants' newsletter or access through Erimus Housing's website?

4. In what areas of performance do you think we need to improve? (Please list up to 3 suggestions and say why)

If you require a printed copy of this report please telephone us on: Freephone 08000 461600



We will make this information available in other languages, Braille, large print or other formats on request.

Arabic

سوف نقوم بتوفير هذه المعلومات بلغات أخرى أو بلغة بريل أو بخط كبير أو بتسقيقات أخرى عند طلب ذلك.

Bengali

আমরা এই তথ্য অনুরোধ করলে অন্যান্য ভাষা, ব্রেইল, বড় হরফ বা অন্য ফর্মতে পাওয়ার ব্যবস্থা করব।

French

Nous proposerons ces informations dans d'autres langues, en Braille, en gros caractères ou dans d'autres formats sur simple demande.

Hindi

आपह मिलने पर हम यह जानकारी अन्य भाषाओं, ब्रेल, बड़े अक्षरों तथा अन्य रूपों में उपलब्ध कराएंगे।

Kurdish Sorani

ئەگەر داوا بکەیت، دەتوانین ئەم زانیاریانە بە زمانەکانی تر، بە بریل (شیوازی ئوسینی نابینا)، بە چاپی پیتی گەورە یان بە شیوازی تر، دا بین بکەیت.

Polish

Na żądanie udostępnimy te informacje w innych językach, wydrukowane dużą czcionką, napisane pismem Braille'a lub w innym formacie.

Punjabi

ਬੇਨਤੀ ਮਿਲਣ 'ਤੇ ਅਸੀਂ ਇਹ ਜਾਣਕਾਰੀ ਦੂਜੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ, ਬ੍ਰੇਲ, ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਜਾਂ ਦੂਜੇ ਰੂਪਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਉਪਲਬਧ ਕਰਵਾਂਗੇ।

Russian

Мы сделаем эту информацию доступной на других языках, в виде шрифта Брайля, широкоформатной распечатки или, по требованию, в других форматах.

Simplified Chinese

本信息能够按需求以其他语言、盲文、大印刷体或者其他格式提供。

Traditional Chinese

本資訊能夠按需求以其他語言、盲文、大印刷體或者其他格式提供。

Urdu

درخواست کرنے پر ہم یہ معلومات دیگر زبانوں، بریل، بڑی چھپائی یا دیگر بناوٹوں میں فراہم کر دیں گے۔

Erimus Housing Ltd, 4th Floor, Centre North East,
73-75 Albert Road, Middlesbrough TS1 2RU.
Tel: 08000 461 600
Email: info@erimushousing.co.uk
www.erimushousing.co.uk

Part of the **Fabrick Group**