

# Prospect Scrutiny Group

## Report on Scrutiny of Prospect Community Housing's Antisocial Behaviour Service

November 2018



### 1. Prospect Scrutiny Group

We came together as a group of tenants committed to carrying out a scrutiny role with Prospect in late 2016. We completed a training course and decided to call ourselves the Prospect Scrutiny Group or PSG. We currently have four members and have terms of reference which has been approved by Prospect Committee. Our aims are:

***“To collaborate with Prospect for the success of Prospect Community Housing to help ensure it provides services of the highest standard which meet the Scottish Social Housing Charter.***

***To develop greater tenant influence in decision making on services.”***

We see ourselves as a “critical friend” to Prospect.

For our third scrutiny topic, we met in July 2018 and looked at the recommendations from the 2016 Prospect Tenant Satisfaction Survey and the Tenant Satisfaction Survey Action plan. We chose Antisocial behaviour approach as we felt it would be:

- Useful and interesting to Prospect tenants and Prospect Community Housing for us to identify ways to improve satisfaction
- An area with lower satisfaction ratings in the satisfaction survey
- An interesting topic for us to look at. We wanted to see what sort of support tenants can receive when experiencing antisocial behaviour.
- This issue can have a significant impact on people's lives and is important to people.
- We wanted to see how Prospect deals with this issue.
- Wester Hailes has a reputation for antisocial behaviour and some people put the area down. We wanted to see if this is true and we want it to be a lovely place to live. So, we were keen to see what we can do to make this happen.
- Part of Prospect's duty is to provide an environment which is conducive to living, including a safe environment. Prospect's management of Antisocial behaviour needs to meet the Scottish Social Housing Charter Standard 6: *tenants and other customers live in well-maintained neighbourhoods where they feel safe.*

The Prospect Scrutiny Group consists of:

Eunice Main

Cheryl Mabon

Isaac Adejumo

## 2 Scrutinising Prospect's Antisocial Behaviour Process

We carried out the following work:

- We began by looking at the ASB policy and procedures.
- We sent out a survey to tenants who had been affected by ASB
- We looked at Prospect's ASB performance compared to other landlords.
- We interviewed a Housing Officer and a Housing Assistant. We got different feedback from each of them which was quite interesting to hear both sides of the story, different ways of responding to the same sort of issue. They have different perspectives as they have different roles within the process.
- We looked at the information Prospect gives to new tenants including the tenancy agreement and the tenants' handbook.
- We looked at Prospect's website to find out what information there is about antisocial behaviour.

We've all experienced ASB where we live so we wanted to learn more about how Prospect deals with it.

We would like to thank the members of the Housing Management team, Akan Mark and Gillian Scougall for spending time with us and answering our questions so fully.

## 3 Findings and Recommendations

Based on the work we undertook, we would like to share our findings and make the following recommendations:

<b>Antisocial Behaviour</b>
<p><b>Findings:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In more difficult cases Prospect works with other agencies.</li><li>• Tenants said Prospect acted quickly to address the issues.</li><li>• We were disappointed that we didn't receive more responses to our survey (12 responses out of 110). The responses were mixed and there was some dissatisfaction with Prospect's approach.</li><li>• The number of cases which Prospect deal with is actually quite low. This was a surprise and good to find out.</li><li>• We recognised that tenants' mental health can have a big influence how people behave and react to other's behaviour.</li><li>• We were surprised that ASB incidents of a minor nature are held on record for so long.</li><li>• We were interested to hear about the new powers Prospect will have under the Housing Scotland Act 2014 when it comes into force next year.</li><li>• The Prospect website needs improvement with regard to advice about antisocial behaviour as there isn't much information about this.</li></ul> <p><b>Recommendations:</b></p>

1. Prospect should develop a Good Neighbour Leaflet to give to tenants and display on stair noticeboards. This should cover “do’s” and “don’ts”. The aim would be to help prevent antisocial behaviour and reassure people that Prospect are here to support people. The is to help people have happier lives and reduce tension that might arise between tenants.
2. Prospect should carry out a follow up phone call around 6 weeks after a case has been closed to see how the person is and if the issues have stopped. Prospect should also contact the person causing the ASB to positively support them to continue to live harmoniously.
3. Prospect should hold serious ASB on file for 5 years but routine issues for 3 years.
4. Prospect should change their procedures to make use of the new powers offered by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014. We would welcome use of the short Scottish Secure Tenancies.
5. Prospect should update their website to include the good neighbour leaflet and add more information to the Help and Advice section for people experiencing antisocial behaviour.

#### **4 Next Steps**

We look forward to hearing from Prospect’s Management Committee what they think of our report. We would like to work with Prospect staff to agree an action plan to deliver the approved recommendations of this report.

We would also like to invite Management Committee to make any recommendations for a future scrutiny topic which we will take into consideration when deciding our next exercise.

Eunice Main, Cheryl Mabon, Isaac Adejumo, Sylwia Bogusz

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