

Delivering Service Standards

Local Offer



Aiming High



1 April 2012 - 30 March 2013

The six service standards

The six standards cover:

- Tenants involvement and empowerment
- Home
- Tenancy
- Neighbourhood and community
- Value for money
- Governance and viability

The 'Local Offer'

This document sets out the service standards for The Industrial Dwellings Society (1885) Limited (IDS), for the period 1 April 2012 until 30 March 2013. This is in the form of a 'Local Offer which will cover the whole of IDS housing stock.

Annual Surveys

We carry out tenant satisfaction surveys each year . The results are presented to the Forum meeting, and published in the IDS Annual report and specific Newsletters.

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Tenant Forum

The Tenant Forum is made up of tenant representatives from all the local tenants and residents associations from our estate and street properties. Tenant Members are elected to sit on the various Committees and the Board.

Training and empowerment

Members of the Tenant Forum Meeting and local Tenants Associations will offered training to aid them to cover their roles and responsibilities in developing and monitoring the Local Offer.

Approval of Local Offer

The Local Offer will be considered by the Board at the first meeting following its approval by the Tenants Forum.

Monitoring delivery of the 'Local Offer'

The Tenant Forum members will review the performance data of section 2 (Home) and section 4 (Neighbourhood and Community) against the agreed standard quarterly and the results of the remaining sections will be reviewed annually. Results will also be reported to the committees and the Board. The targets will be those agreed in 2011- 2012.

An annual review of results will be included in the IDS annual report presented at the annual general meeting and board meeting normally held in September of each year.

Becoming involved

IDS has a strong commitment to tenant involvement and empowerment. Tenants are represented on the Board and all of its Committees. There are tenant associations and tenant representatives on our Tenants Forum representing 87% of our tenants. Young people are also represented on the Forum through our youth group 'Makin it Happen' and other local groups. The Forum elects the tenant members to the Board and its Committees on an annual basis. IDS will provide support to ensure that tenants of diverse needs have the opportunity of being involved and that support continues.

If you would like to know more about becoming involved please contact Ernest Lee our Tenant Participation and Community Development Officer. He can be contacted on 020 8800 9606

Tenant Forum Members

Mr L Newmark - AJEX House

Mrs P Douieb - AJEX House

Mr P Jean-Baptiste - Clifford Lawton House

Mrs M Schofield - Evelina Mansions

Mrs M Cooke - Evelyn Court

Mrs R Joseph - Evelyn Court

Mrs D Crump - Evelyn Court

Mrs T Berger - Nathaniel Court

Ms M Bedassie - Navarino Mansions

Ms K Skerrit - Navarino Mansions

Mr R Jones - Imperial Avenue

Ms T Adair - Coronation Avenue

Ms C Bassi - Stepney Green Court

Two members of Makin it Happen Youth Group

Tenant Associations

Evelyn Court T A (ECAT)

Stepney Green Court & Mocatta House T A

Mansions Court T A (Evelina Mansions)

Nathaniel Court T A

Navarino Mansions T A

Imperial & Coronation Avenue T A

The Local Offer

1. Tenant involvement and empowerment

1. We will provide tenants with a handbook containing details of all our services and the contact details of all appropriate staff members. The handbook is also available on our web site, hard copies and large print versions can be viewed at estate offices. Translation will be available upon request.
2. IDS will work hard to provide an excellent service, but we accept that we do not always get it correct and will apologise when we are at fault. Any complaints can be reported in person at our estate offices, by telephone or via our web site. Translation services are available if required.
3. IDS will support all tenant and resident groups representing its tenants and assist the setting up of new groups where groups do not exist at present.
4. We invite representatives from all IDS Tenant Associations and Resident groups to elect members to the Tenants Forum. The Tenants Forum will elect members to our Board and its Committees.
5. We encourage young people to become involved and to elect representatives to the Tenant Forum, the Board and its Committees through our youth group 'Makin it Happen' and other local groups.
6. All policies and procedures will be approved by the Tenants Forum before being presented to the Committees or the Board.
7. A quarterly Newsletter will be sent to all tenants.
8. A twice-yearly Community Safety Newsletter will be sent to all tenants containing information on Anti Social Behaviour and other community safety issues.
9. Training will be provided to tenants and resident groups to develop their members and to encourage their involvement.
10. We will treat all tenants fairly and try to meet their diverse needs.
11. We will provide information in a range of formats.
12. IDS will undertake an annual census of its tenants, using the information to supplement its current database. The database will be used to help it to understand and respond to the diverse needs of its tenants.

2. Home

1. The common areas of all properties will normally be redecorated every five years. All tenants will be consulted prior to the commencement of works.
2. Annual safety inspections of all common areas will be undertaken.
3. Energy performance certificates will be issued for all vacant properties prior to re-letting.
4. Housing Health and Safety Rating Act inspections will be undertaken on all vacant properties prior to re-letting.
5. All vacant properties will be re-serviced within 3 weeks of the vacancy date. Properties requiring major repairs will be completed within 4 weeks.
6. Boiler servicing and the testing of the gas installations will be undertaken annually and tenants will be provided with a copy of the certificate.

The Local Offer

2. Home continued

7. IDS will undertake regular servicing of all its equipment and plant, for example lifts and communal boilers. In addition to this, independent safety inspections will be undertaken. There will be an annual inspection of all boilers and safety equipment, and twice yearly inspections of lifts and playgrounds.
8. IDS will consult with its tenants regarding its repairs service and 18 months prior and during major repair and redecoration projects. Consultation will be via, Tenants and Residents Associations, 'Core Groups' of tenants and contractors, Tenants Forum, Questionnaires, Annual Statistical return questionnaire, special focus groups, Newsletters and our web site.
9. Core groups will be established for all projects over £30,000 or where more than 6 tenants are involved due to the works to be undertaken.
10. Condition surveys of all common areas will be undertaken every five years along with internal inspections of 10% of our properties as part of a rolling programme of inspection.
11. As part of our welfare service we will undertake the decoration of tenants flats for the elderly and others, where there is a need. Once a request is approved the work will be undertaken within six months.¹
12. Compensation will be offered when we fail in our repair and service provision.²
13. We aim to make appointments for 70% of repair requests at the point of request and keep 97% of appointments.
14. We aim to achieve a 95% level of satisfaction of any work undertaken.
15. As part of our welfare services we will fit grab rails and stair rails within one month of the request.
16. IDS aims to treat all tenants with fairness and respect, taking into consideration the diverse needs of its tenants.

3. Tenancy

1. IDS will liaise with Registered Providers, Local Authorities, Sub-regional groups, and homelessness managers to ensure we meet our legal obligation and to put forward the views of our tenants.
2. IDS will continue to meet its obligations as specified within all the various nomination agreements.
3. IDS will participate in Local Authority Choice-Based Lettings (CBL) schemes and use CBL to let its own properties to internal applicants.
4. IDS will participate in the Local Authority 'under-occupation schemes'.
5. IDS has signed the Sub-regional Domestic Violence (DV) reciprocal agreement via the East London Housing Partnership (ELHP) and will work closely with those groups.
6. Vacant properties will be re-let in accordance with our allocation policy. The lettings will be audited each year.
7. We will rarely exclude Local Authority nominated applicants and where we do it will be in accordance with set criteria within the allocation policy.
8. IDS will report to the Housing Committee the annual lettings data and the forecasted lettings plans for the coming year.
9. Translation services will be available to tenants.
10. Support and assistance will be provided by our welfare officer overseeing any cases where vulnerability or disability is an issue.

The Local Offer

3. Tenancy continued

11. IDS will provide free subscriptions for all its tenants on the Home-swapper website via a central subsidy payment.
12. IDS will strive to minimise void losses but is flexible and supportive where new tenants need longer to move in due to exceptional circumstances or individual needs.
13. IDS will set its rents in line with Government policy and guidelines laid out for 'Target Rents', by the Tenants Services Authority (TSA).
14. Fair rents will be set by the Rent Officer as part of the 'Fair Rent' system. Government caps are applied by the Rent Officer on all rents set under this system.
15. IDS rents will be increased/reduced by RPI + 0.5% + £2 until the Target Rents are reached.
16. Rents that have reached the Target Rent will be increased/reduced annually by RPI + 0.5%.
17. Where rent caps apply, rents will be increased/reduced annually by RPI + 1%
18. Articles on the Target Rent regime and the size of any increase/reduction will be published in the IDS Autumn Newsletter.
19. Tenants will be sent letters informing them of rent and service charge changes at least four weeks before any change is due.
20. Schedules of services with a breakdown of costs will be provided to each tenant annually.
21. Copies of IDS policies will be available to tenants, these can also be located on our website.
22. Consultation with the Tenants Forum will take place when policies are to be reviewed or updated.
23. IDS aims to treat all tenants with fairness and respect, taking into consideration the diverse needs of its tenants.
23. IDS will follow the Possession Protocol to ensure that tenants are informed if their account falls into arrears. Every effort will be made to resolve the issue and welfare advice will be offered. Liaison will take place with any homeless prevention team operated by the local authority and cases will be presented to the Housing Committee before any eviction is approved.
24. A census of tenants will be carried out regularly and cases of suspected unauthorised occupation will be investigated in conjunction with anti-fraud investigation teams. Legal action will be pursued to gain possession of properties with unauthorised occupants or where the tenant has alternative accommodation.

The Local Offer

4. Neighbourhood and Community

1. IDS will introduce an 'Enhanced Neighbourhood Agreement' based on the existing 'Good Neighbourhood Agreement' with priority across the larger estates. The proposals will be based on data collection and consultation with tenants.
2. IDS will aim to extend the existing availability of printed forms, policies and what to do in the event of Anti-social behaviour (ASB) through the development of the IDS website.
3. If agreed by the Tenants Forum IDS will create quarterly awareness / empowerment seminars and community meetings to increase engagement with tenants.

5. Value for money

1. An annual budget will be drawn up by the senior staff team. This will be considered by the Finance & Development Committee (F&D) and approved by the Board.⁵
2. Budget holders will have continuous access to financial information including budgets, expenditure and committed expenditure. Overall performance will be compared to the budget on a quarterly basis by the F&D Committee.³
3. The budgets for day to day, redecoration and major repairs will be based on the condition of the properties. Information will be obtained through on-going condition surveys and data held on the Assets Management program.
4. Standing orders will set out the requirements for the procurement of works. Long term partnership agreements will be entered into if these will provide value for money.
5. Arrangements for the procurement of services, major repairs, redecoration and other projects and their value for money will be considered by the Technical Services Committee (TSC).⁵

Notes ³ Tenants are members of the Board and Committees.

The Local Offer

6. Governance

1. IDS will continue to operate under the terms of its Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Financial Procedures.
2. IDS has adopted the National Housing Federation (NHF) Code of Governance. Areas of departure from the Code will be recorded in the Annual Report.
3. The role of the Chairman and Board members has been produced and is currently under review to ensure consistency with regulatory standards.
4. The Regulatory Statistical Return (RSR) and National Register of Social Housing data (NROSH) will be submitted annually.
5. A long term budget, covering the next 30 years, will be produced and reviewed by the Finance & Development Committee annually.
6. Compliance with loan covenants will be reported every six months to the F&D Committee.
7. An internal audit will be conducted annually by external independent consultants. This will ensure that IDS is adhering to its policies & procedures, regulatory & statutory requirements and best practice. The report will be reviewed by the Finance & Development and Risk Management Committees and any necessary action will be agreed.
8. Returns to the TSA and other statutory bodies will be produced in a timely manner.
9. Attempted fraud will be reported to the Board as and when they may occur.⁴
10. The Target Rent Regime will be reviewed regularly to ensure any adverse effects on IDS viability will be reported to the F&D Committee.

Notes

- ¹ Works for the elderly and others is restricted to an annual budget
- ² Compensation will be offered in accordance with our agreed policy
- ³ Tenants are members of the Board and Committees.
- ⁴ There have not been any significant losses identified in previous years.

Large print version of this report is available upon request