



If you require a copy of this letter or the report in large print, in Braille, on tape, or in a language other than English, please call 0844 798 7070.

Date: March 2010

Dear Resident,

**Re: The results of the short notice inspection at Old Ford Housing Association**

A team from the Audit Commission has recently inspected some of the housing services provided by your landlord. This letter tells you what we found.

We looked at how Old Ford Housing Association (Old Ford) provides the following services:

- How well is the association completing major improvements to your homes;
- carrying out repairs to your homes quickly and to a good standard; and
- ensuring annual gas safety checks are carried out effectively and in a way that reduces risk to you.

We also asked the following questions:

- How easy it is for tenants to access these services;
- how Old Ford caters for different peoples' needs; and
- whether it provides value for your money.

We found that Old Ford is good at completing major improvements to homes and is carrying out annual gas safety checks well. However, access to services, day-to-day repairs and some aspects of the way the association improves value for money are less satisfactory. Below we tell you about some of the key things we found:

**1. Major improvements and gas servicing**

Old Ford is working closely with you to deliver high quality improvement works in your homes. Satisfaction is high and the price that Old Ford pays for having kitchens and bathrooms fitted is very good. Annual gas safety checks are done promptly. This service is well advertised and there is some helpful information available. However, the Association needs to measure satisfaction with gas servicing more effectively to ensure tenants are happy with the service they receive.

**2. Responsive repairs**

Day-to-day repairs are not always done quickly, appointments are not always kept and overall costs are high. Positively, most tenants are satisfied with the service and new improved appointment times will make the service more convenient in the future.

**3. Responding to tenants needs**

Access to services and information can be difficult. For example, telephone answering is sometimes slow and the speed of answering letters and emails or responding to complaints does not meet targets. However, the main office is easily accessible and tenants are effectively involved in shaping the services that they

receive. Old Ford and its staff broadly reflect the community and the Association is good at promoting community cohesion.

To help your landlord improve its service to all residents, we have made a number of recommendations including:

- Improving the performance of day-to-day repairs.
- Improving the associations' response to phone calls and letters.
- Improving the way the association manages value for money.

The report will shortly be available on our website at [www.audit-commission.gov.uk/housing](http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/housing). You can also find further information about housing inspections there. Alternatively the Association will be able to let you have a copy of the report.

### **3. Next steps**

We have asked Old Ford to work with its residents over the next few weeks to develop an action plan showing how it intends to carry out our recommendations.

Once we have their finished action plan we will consider the likelihood of Old Ford improving the inspected services. We will then publish our final report. We hope to publish this by May 2010.

The Association's regulator, the Tenant Services Authority will work with them to make sure that the recommendations in the inspection report are acted on and improvements to your service are delivered.

I hope this letter has been of interest to you. Thank you very much for your cooperation.

Yours faithfully

Audit Commission

cc Tenant Services Authority regulator  
Old Ford Housing Association board members

The Audit Commission uses a four point scale for judging the quality of services, as follows:

- Strengths considerably outweigh weaknesses;
- Strengths outweigh weaknesses;
- A balance of strengths and weaknesses; and
- Weaknesses outweigh strengths.