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## NORTH AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

29 May 2018

### Audit and Scrutiny

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**Title:** Care Inspectorate inspection of North Ayrshire Housing Support services

**Purpose:** The Committee is invited to note the annual Care Inspectorate reports for North Ayrshire Council Housing Support services.

**Recommendation:** That the Committee notes the Care Inspectorate findings as contained in the Care Inspectorate reports at Appendices 1 and 2.

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#### 1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 This paper presents the 2017/18 Care Inspectorate reports following inspection of North Ayrshire Council's Housing Support services.
- 1.2 The Care Inspectorate assessments are attached as appendices and the Committee is asked to note the content of these reports.

#### 2. Background

- 2.1 The Council's Housing Support service and Ardrossan Short Stay Hostel are both registered with the Care Inspectorate. The Care Inspectorate undertook an inspection to assess the quality and performance of each of these services during 2017/18.
- 2.2 The Ardrossan Short Stay Hostel is a 19 bedded unit utilised as emergency temporary accommodation for homeless people. On entry to the unit, service users undertake a housing support assessment to identify their needs. The staff team work with each service user to develop their independent living skills and link them in with services, in preparation for being allocated their own home.
- 2.3 The Housing Support Team work with vulnerable households at risk of homelessness and homeless people resident within dispersed furnished flats. Support Workers deliver a bespoke package of support to prevent homelessness and repeat homelessness.
- 2.4 The Care Inspectorate graded the inspected provision of these services as being at level 6 - Excellent. This performance has been consistent since 2013.
- 2.5 Following inspection, the Care Inspectorate produced a detailed inspection report for each service.

Appendix 1 - Care Inspectorate inspection of Ardrossan Hostel 26 April 2017  
Appendix 2 - Care Inspectorate inspection of Housing Support service 7 Feb 2018

2.6 The Care Inspectorate measures Housing Support providers against three quality standards. The Table below details the performance of the two North Ayrshire Council services measured against each of the quality standards since 2009.

Table 1: Quality of Service as determined by the Care Inspectorate

Year	Type of visit	Quality Measure	Housing Support	Ardrossan Hostel
<b>2017 /18</b>	Announced (short notice)	Care and Support	6 - Excellent	6 - Excellent
		Staffing	6 - Excellent	6 - Excellent
		Management and Leadership	6 - Not Inspected	6 - Excellent
<b>2015</b>	Announced (short notice)	Care and Support	6 - Excellent	6 - Excellent
		Staffing	6 - Excellent	6 - Excellent
		Management and Leadership	6 - Excellent	6 - Excellent
<b>2013</b>	Unannounced	Care and Support	6 - Excellent	6 - Excellent
		Staffing	6 - Excellent	6 - Excellent
		Management and Leadership	Not Assessed	6 - Excellent
<b>2012</b>	Announced (short notice)	Care and Support	5 - Very Good	No Inspection
		Staffing	5 - Very Good	
		Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good	
<b>2011</b>	Announced (short notice)	Care and Support	5 - Very Good	5 - Very Good
		Staffing	5 - Very Good	Not Inspected
		Management and Leadership	Not Inspected	5 - Very Good
<b>2009</b>	Unannounced	Care and Support	5 - Very Good	5 - Very Good
		Staffing	5 - Very Good	4 - Good
		Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good	4 - Good

2.7 The Care Inspectorate are particularly complimentary of the person-centred manner shown by staff in both services and the holistic approach adopted in providing support for service users

2.8 A performance review is currently being undertaken by Housing Services, which will inform the future landscape of service provision, to ensure we continue to provide high quality, outcome focussed services for vulnerable people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

### 3. Proposals

3.1 That the Audit and Scrutiny Committee notes the Care Inspectorate findings as contained in the Care Inspectorate reports.

### 4. Implications

<b>Financial:</b>	There are no financial implications
<b>Human Resources:</b>	There are no Human Resource implications
<b>Legal:</b>	There are no legal implications

<b>Equality:</b>  <b>Children and Young People:</b>	Both of these services have a positive impact on the wellbeing of vulnerable households, including children who are at risk of homelessness.
<b>Environmental &amp; Sustainability:</b>	There are no Environmental and Sustainability implications.
<b>Key Priorities:</b>	The two services subject to the recent inspection contribute to the Council's key priority of supporting all of our people to stay safe, healthy and active.
<b>Community Benefits:</b>	There are no Community benefits.

## 5. Consultation

- 5.1 The Care Commission undertook consultation with service users and Housing staff during the inspection process.



**CRAIG HATTON**  
Executive Director (Place)

For further information please contact **Janeine Barrett** on **01294 314602**.

### Background Papers

Care Inspectorate report North Ayrshire Council Short Stay Hostel 26 April 2017

Care Inspectorate report North Ayrshire Council Housing Support 07 Feb 2018



## North Ayrshire Council Short Stay Hostel Housing Support Service

87 Princes Street  
Ardrossan  
KA22 8DQ

Telephone: 01294 468562

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)  
Inspection completed on: 26 April 2017

**Service provided by:**  
North Ayrshire Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003003327

**Care service number:**  
CS2003055552

# Inspection report

## About the service

North Ayrshire Council, Short Stay Hostel in Ardrossan, provides temporary accommodation for up to fifty-one homeless people. It caters for a diverse client group, ranging from families, some with children and single adults of all ages. The accommodation consists of eleven single en-suite rooms and eight furnished flats, which have cooking and laundry facilities, a separate sleeping area and toilet with a shower. Residents share the communal facilities within the hostel, which includes kitchen areas, laundry and communal lounges. The service was being used by nineteen people at the time of our inspection.

"The ethos of Ardrossan Hostel is to provide short-term housing related support to residents whilst promoting independent living."

## What people told us

Service users with whom we spoke and those who completed questionnaires were very happy with the service and the way in which they were supported by staff. Many had been through the homeless system a number of times and had experience a variety of services and approaches. They considered the Short Stay Hostel service to be amongst the best they had experienced. In particular service users were appreciative of the time, care and understanding given by staff and the thorough assessment process which ensured that the issues and needs which were a priority for them were recognised as such. Service users commented that although a temporary housing situation, while there, the service would provide a holistic support service to improve their skills, knowledge and self-esteem thus better preparing them for a move to their own tenancy. We noted that although service users came to the service with a variety of presentations, circumstances and challenges all were treated with the same level of enthusiasm and respect.

## Self assessment

Not applicable for 2017/18 inspection year.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
Quality of staffing	6 - Excellent
Quality of management and leadership	6 - Excellent

## What the service does well

During our inspection we spoke with service users and observed the interaction between them and staff. We were aware that this was a vital but often complex area of support and that service users, at the time of referral, were often in a chaotic and vulnerable state. We found that the service responded to these challenges in a systematic, caring and person centred way.

While certain procedures had to be followed within the referral and admission process we found that there was a great deal of emphasis upon engaging with the person, securing their participation in and ownership of the process. In this way individual needs and wishes could be prioritised and the process of re-housing begun in conjunction with issues such as physical and mental health, benefits and employment assistance. We noted that

the service, as part of the wider local authority housing support network, completed a detailed and comprehensive assessment which was started at the point of referral and completed during the days which followed. We considered this to be pivotal to the effectiveness and high level of service user satisfaction achieved by the service. By necessity the service operated in a multi agency way making good use of the professional and often reciprocal relationships built up with other agencies and departments. The result of this was that something of a 'one door' approach was possible ensuring that each service user was received, assessed and supported through the complexities of homelessness while simultaneously addressing any other issues which may be present. This holistic approach meant that the person as a whole was supported and much more prepared and ready for when they would be offered their own tenancy.

During our inspection we spoke with service users and viewed the questionnaires completed by them. We also spoke to staff of varying positions and read questionnaires completed by them. We observed staff interacting with service users in differing situations. We examined staff records including training files, supervision and appraisal. From this evidence we concluded that staff were motivated, skilled and caring within their respective roles. Service users were complimentary about and appreciative of the care and time taken by staff to understand their circumstances, needs and wishes and thereafter support them through the homelessness process in the way and at the speed which best suited them individually. Most staff had been in post for some time and were skilled, knowledgeable and experienced in all areas of housing support and related issues. We also found staff to be well-trained and aware of the many other circumstantial issues commonly present around homelessness including physical and mental health problems, Criminal Justice, benefits issues and drug and alcohol misuse. We found staff to be skilled and effective communicators who could quickly form a rapport with service users thus making the process more relevant and personalised to the individual. We found staff to be well-trained in all essential areas and subjects and further training was available as and when required. Staff were regularly supervised and appraisals and personal development programs were on-going. We noted that senior staff were working towards the completion of SVQ level 7. The roles of individual staff members often required them to work in an autonomous way and we considered that they were both willing and able to do so.

Prior to our inspection we had discussed with the Registered Manager (substantive post of Housing Support Manager) the management and supervision of the service following the local authority's reorganisation of the Housing Department as a whole and their relocation to the main housing office in Irvine. During our inspection we learned that in response to a review, the local authority had elected to create a post for a Service Manager of the service, located within the service, with shared responsibility in other areas. However, having taken up this position for a short time, the newly appointed Service Manager was, at the time of our inspection, about to move to another post. We were advised that a new Service Manager was actively being sought. Meanwhile, the service would be managed as before by the Registered Manager assisted by senior staff located within the service.

Despite these changes and pending vacancy, we found the service to be managed well with team working very much to the fore. Staff reported being well supported by their managers who were seen as credible, available and very 'hands on'. We considered that the Managers' knowledge and experience enabled them to lead from the front and provide effective and efficient support, advice and supervision to staff when required. We found numerous examples of quality assurance and monitoring systems in operation ensuring that the high level of efficiency and quality of service provision which existed could be maintained. These systems had been developed and put into place by experienced Managers, in consultation with others, to the benefit of the service and those whom it supported. Autonomy and responsibility were traits which were encouraged and developed within senior staff and we found that they were willing and able to deputise for Managers whenever necessary. Service users and staff with whom we spoke found Managers to be supportive and approachable.

## What the service could do better

# Inspection report

We noted that the 'declaration' signed by the service user on admission to the service was general in terms of the sharing of information with other departments and agencies. We felt that it was important to include a statement about the service's duty to share any information which they deemed to be relevant to child and adult protection matters which became apparent. We found the supervision process and records adopted by the service to be basic and lacking in detail in parts. While we did not doubt that regular, effective and participative supervision took place both formally and informally, the recording format used did not reflect this. The service may wish to review its recording process in this regard.

We learned that following the impact of the revised benefits system, service users were, by necessity, remaining within the service for more extended periods of time. In some cases support was for six months or more which then required a statutory six monthly review of care and support to take place. The service should identify with whom this responsibility lies within their organisation and ensure that said reviews are carried out as and when the need arises.

It is not uncommon for service users to be unclear about when and to whom they can make a complaint. We felt however that the service could make improvements in the way this information was made available to service users and others. This was especially relevant to service users with a chaotic and disrupted lifestyle who may not remember having been advised of same.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
28 Apr 2015	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	6 - Excellent
		Management and leadership	6 - Excellent
16 May 2013	Unannounced	Care and support	6 - Excellent

Date	Type	Gradings	
		Environment Staffing Management and leadership	Not assessed 6 - Excellent 6 - Excellent
22 Jun 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed 5 - Very good
31 Jan 2009	Announced (short notice)	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed 4 - Good 4 - Good



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## Housing Support Housing Support Service

Galt House  
31 Bank Street  
Irvine  
KA12 0LL

Telephone: 01294 317370

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)  
Inspection completed on: 7 February 2018

**Service provided by:**  
North Ayrshire Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003003327

**Care service number:**  
CS2003055547

# Inspection report

## About the service

North Ayrshire Council's Housing Support service is based in Irvine having formerly been based in Ardrossan. It is one of the registered Housing Support services operated by North Ayrshire Council's homelessness services. The service is provided to council tenants in North Ayrshire who may have been homeless, are at risk of becoming homeless or who are having problems keeping their tenancy.

The staff team consists of a clerical worker, housing support worker, a housing support co-ordinator and the housing support manager. The service also has access to a health and homeless co-ordinator (CPN trained) and a registered general nurse.

The aims of the Housing Support service are to:

- provide support, advice and assistance to people in temporary accommodation and continue to do so when they move into a mainstream tenancy
- assist people to maintain their tenancies
- assist people with support needs to comply with their tenancy and prevent it from breaking down
- provide a quality service to those affected by homelessness or the threat of becoming homeless regardless of their circumstances
- promote acceptance without judgement
- promote a service which understands the range of issues people face with regard to homelessness
- ensure people can access a range of suitable housing support options if they become homeless or at risk of becoming so.

## What people told us

The people we visited and spoke with were very positive about the quality of service they received. They told me that the service was reliable and that staff always visited at the agreed time. They told us how supportive staff had been and gave examples of the specific things that staff had helped them with. Service users told us, 'The support has been fantastic'. 'I feel they care and don't make me feel useless.' 'I feel I can contact them at any time and they will help me, I don't feel on my own'.

## Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self-assessment in advance of the inspection. We did take account of the service development/improvement plan in this inspection.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	6 - Excellent
Quality of staffing	6 - Excellent
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

## What the service does well

The service continued to use a number of strategies to seek the views of service users throughout the time they were supported by the service and beyond. Service users' co-operation and participation was developed over time as relationships of trust and confidence in staff was built. Service users were given very practical support to attend and contribute to meetings and activities. This included providing crèche and nursery care, transport and venues in convenient community locations. We saw examples of how some of these views had been actioned by the service which included changes made to the assessment process following feedback from service users and a recently completed information booklet designed by service users. One person told us 'Our opinions matter and we have a real say in the way things are done not just for ourselves but the way the service is run'.

The service had robust referral, assessment and support planning processes appropriate to the different kinds of support provided. This ranged from individuals presenting as homeless to people needing support to prevent homelessness and those requiring additional ongoing support to sustain long-term tenancies.

Initial assessments were holistic and thorough to ensure that individuals' full circumstances were taken into account and included health, welfare, employment and education. Individuals were assisted to identify priority areas of support. Service users had access to a health and homeless co-ordinator (CPN) and registered general nurse, where required, and staff were able to access services from partners including the Addictions Service and Criminal Justice Services.

Service users we spoke to continued to be very happy with all aspects of the service provided and were very grateful for the high level of support they received from their allocated housing support worker and other members of the team. The majority of service users accessed the service at a time of crisis and extreme stress in their lives and told us about the intense and personalised support they received that gave them renewed hope and belief in achieving a brighter future. A service user said 'I don't know where I would be without the support I have been given I was in a bad place but things are much better now, but it's down to them'.

The provider's quality assurance systems identified a need to improve support to people when leaving prison to achieve sustained tenancies and break repeated patterns of offending. The service piloted a Housing First initiative to provide intensive support from a multidisciplinary team. The service user remained very much at the centre of support planning and decision making process. A recent evaluation of this pilot showed positive progress in meeting the goals of this initiative. We spoke with two people currently being supported in the pilot. One person told us, 'I have been in and out of jail most of my life. This is the longest I have managed to stay out of prison and I have my own house which I could not have done without the support I have been given'. Another said, 'They have been brilliant and helped me turn my life around'.

We found that staff employed by the service were properly recruited, inducted and trained for their role. Individual staff members were enthusiastic and very committed to providing good outcomes for those they supported. We were given many examples from service users where staff had gone 'above and beyond' to ensure they were well supported, particularly at a time of crisis.

We examined staff training and supervision records and found staff to be appropriately trained in a range of role-specific subjects. Training was delivered by face to face trainers, e-learning and self-study. Staff were trained to SVQ Level 3 in Health and Social Care.

There was a clear culture of learning and development within the team. This was supported with monthly half-day development sessions which could involve invited speakers or reviewing new practice guidance and policies. We found staff to be highly enthusiastic, empathetic and keen to embrace the many complex situations

# Inspection report

presented to them. They were motivated to enhance their skills and learning in order to provide the best level of service possible. Some were being supported with additional study to achieve leadership and housing qualifications. Other staff had pursued self learning opportunities and had utilised working partners, such as mental health addiction services to further enhance their knowledge. One member of staff told us 'I am able to access the training I need to do my job. However, the most effective training for me is working alongside our partners who are experts in their field and where the learning is invaluable'.

We noted that staff were monitored on a regular basis for acceptable performance including observation by the Housing Support Manager. A Personal and Performance Development (PPD) process was utilised to monitor performance and identify any areas of weakness or training requirement. This was in line with North Ayrshire Council's Competency Framework. Staff were supervised on a regular basis by senior staff and managers.

Staff were supported to pursue specific area of interest as part of their individual development plan. This included having lead responsibility for specific areas of work such as service user participation, supporting members of the travelling community and facilitating wellbeing groups such as fitness and football.

We observed staff interacting with service users with different support needs. We found staff to be very knowledgeable about the service user's situation and circumstances and witnessed a positive rapport and saw staff promoting service users' independence and autonomy.

## What the service could do better

We saw that staff received frequent supervision where they had the opportunity to discuss caseloads, practice issues and consider areas for training and development. Staff told us that these one to one sessions were meaningful and supportive. We suggested that supervision records could be improved to reflect the quality of discussion and any agreements reached.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

## Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
7 Aug 2015	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	6 - Excellent
		Management and leadership	6 - Excellent
16 Aug 2013	Unannounced	Care and support	6 - Excellent
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	6 - Excellent
		Management and leadership	6 - Excellent
26 Oct 2012	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
2 Jun 2011	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
26 Jan 2009	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good

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