

QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 We recognise that we have a responsibility to deliver the highest quality services that we can in order to meet the needs of our service users, and tenants. We aim to ensure that service users, tenants and stakeholders participate in assessing and improving the quality of the services that we provide, as well as in discussions in relation to future direction and business plans. To that end we are committed to providing information to tenants and service users in a variety of formats to ensure that they can participate as fully as possible in these areas.
- 1.2 ARK's policy is to provide services which are in line with:
- the National Care Standards for care at home and housing support, as well as to promote the overarching principles behind the National Care Standards, namely dignity and respect, compassion, being included, responsive care and support, and wellbeing;
 - The Scottish Social Services Council's Codes of Practice for Social Service Workers and Employers; and
 - The outcomes identified in the Scottish Social Housing Charter developed by the Scottish Housing Regulator.
- 1.3 We aim to ensure that all our service users and tenants can make individual choices and can be supported to achieve their potential, using person-centred values.
- 1.4 We aim to ensure that we play our part in meeting the health and wellbeing needs of our tenants and service users.
- 1.5 In order to monitor and enhance the quality of the systems that we deliver we require to develop, implement and review quality management systems and mechanisms.
- 1.6 This policy describes how we will seek to monitor and develop the quality of the services that we provide, in order to satisfy ourselves, our service users, tenants and stakeholders, and where relevant our regulators, that ARK is providing a high quality service.
- 1.7 This policy complies with Scottish Social Housing Charter Standard 1 on equalities, Standard 2 on communication and Standard 3 on participation.
- 1.8 This policy should be read in conjunction with the following:
- Risk Management Policy (G08)
 - Learning and Development Policy (LD01)
 - Tenant Consultation and Participation Policy (HM10)
 - Equality and Diversity Policy (HR04)
 - [Staff Code of Conduct](#)
 - National Care Standards
 - Scottish Social Services Council Code of Practice.

2.0 CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

- 2.1 We recognise that the feedback that we receive from our tenants, service users and stakeholders such as family members, or professionals such as social workers and doctors,

is paramount in measuring the quality of our service and in gauging the need for changes or improvements. We will obtain regular feedback from our tenants, service users and other stakeholders such as family members or professionals as follows:

Service User Groups: As part of ARK's Participation Strategy we have dedicated a resource to offering all our service users the opportunity to participate in local 'Speak Out Groups', which meet regularly and afford an opportunity to feed back on issues which individual groups wish to highlight. ARK's Service User Voices Group comprises service users from across the organisation who meet regularly in Edinburgh to discuss issues relevant to the organisation, with member of ARK's SLT and Board of Management in attendance.

Service User and Tenant Scrutiny: ARK's Service User and Tenant Hub Group is an independently facilitated group of ARK service users and tenants with a remit to scrutinise any aspect of ARK's business or operations which it chooses, and to report its findings and recommendations directly to ARK's Board of Management.

Service User and stakeholder surveys: ARK will implement annual stakeholder and service user surveys to measure its performance against the ARK Charter. The ARK Charter is attached at Appendix 1.

Tenant surveys: ARK will implement regular Tenant surveys, which will help ARK measure performance against the Scottish Social Housing Charter.

Complaints: ARK recognises that feedback obtained from complaints can provide a valuable indicator of performance and areas for improvement. All of ARK's tenants and service users have been provided with a copy of ARK's Complaints Policy. Feedback from complaints is reported on a monthly basis to ARK's SLT, and regular quarterly updates on ARK's complaints performance are provided to service users, tenants and stakeholders, through ARK's website and relevant newsletters.

3.0 INTERNAL QUALITY MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

3.1 We recognise that we need to implement certain internal systems and processes to ensure that we monitor our performance in relation to delivering a high quality service. We will implement and maintain the following internal systems:

Risk Registers: We will develop and maintain risk registers, covering all areas of our business. We will regularly review and monitor our risk registers, as well as the mitigating actions that we put in place to manage those risks, and we will report on risk performance regularly to our SLT and Audit Sub-Committee in behalf of our Board of Management.

Exception Reporting: We recognise that one-off incidents which may pose a risk to ARK's business or reputation can provide a valuable source of learning. We will implement a system to report on and to monitor such exceptional incidents, as well as to monitor delivery of relevant remedial actions.

ARK Care and Support Audit Checks: We will implement a series of regular audit checks in our Care and Support services. Such checks will include, but not be limited to regular review (at least every 6 months and within 3 months of the start of new services) of support plans and risk assessments, regular checks of the support we provide in relation to managing service users' finances and medication, regular review of the Restrictive Practice in place in each services, and regular audits by management of the service delivered to service users within each service.

Health and Safety Audits: We will implement a rolling programme of Health and Safety audits in all of our services, assessing all aspects of compliance with ARK's Health and Safety Manual, and compliance with completion of regular health and safety checklists within services.

Internal Audit: As a Housing Association ARK benefits from an internal audit service which is provided by an independently appointed auditor. The internal audit function will provide at least three audits per annum on different aspects of ARK's business processes and systems, including where appropriate ARK's Care and support services. The internal audit programme will be developed by auditors and ARK's SLT, and will be approved by ARK's Audit Sub-Committee on behalf of the Board of Management. Internal auditors will report to the Audit Sub-Committee.

4.0 REGULATORY FEEDBACK

4.1 We recognise that the feedback that we receive from our regulators, and particularly the Care Inspectorate in terms of its regular programme of inspections, plays an essential part in measuring the quality of our service and in gauging the need for changes or improvements in our services. ARK will use the feedback obtained from Care Inspectorate inspections to improve our services in the following ways:

Copies of reports: We will share Care Inspectorate reports (where necessary in 'easy read' format) with all affected service users, in order to ensure that they are fully appraised of the feedback in relation to their service, and to support them to participate in delivery of improvements as appropriate.

Delivery of actions identified in reports: We will deliver all actions identified in care Inspectorate Reports, including requirements, recommendations and areas for improvement. ARK's Quality and Compliance Team will follow-up with local services to ensure that relevant action plans have been developed and are implemented.

Monitoring of Care Inspectorate Grades: We will monitor our performance in respect of Care Inspectorate grades, and will report on performance on at least an annual basis to our SLT and Audit Sub-Committee.

5.0 QUALITY KITE MARKS

5.1 Our aim is to measure and improve the quality of the services that we provide, seeking external accreditation from independent assessment bodies wherever possible. ARK will identify quality 'kite marks' applicable to our areas of business, and in keeping with our business plan and corporate vision as set out in our corporate objectives. We will work towards achieving or maintaining relevant accreditation in identified areas. Examples of previous kite mark accreditations include Investors in People Gold Award, Autism Accreditation through the National Autistic Society, EFQM Committed to Excellence, and the Healthy Working Lives Bronze Award.

6.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

6.1 The Chief Executive is responsible for ensuring that all staff comply with this policy.

6.2 The Chief Executive will ensure that this policy is reviewed by the Board of Management at least every three years.

Approved by the Senior Leadership Team in:

September 2016

Approved by the Board of Management in:

March 2016

Next review of policy due by:

September 2019

Complies with:

Standards 1, 2 and 3

THE ARK CHARTER



ARK CHARTER

What ARK promises to do for you



1. Being supported and valued as an Individual

ARK promises to recognise and value that people are individuals with different needs, wishes and dreams. ARK will respect this and support you to develop the way you want to.



2. Being supported to have Choice and Control over your Life and Relationships

ARK promises to support you in a way that allows you to have control over your life, to encourage your independence and to provide choices in all areas of your life.



3. Being supported to be part of the Community

ARK promises to provide you with the choice and the support to get involved in the local community and to make sure that it is safe for you to do so.



4. Having a say in ARK and the decisions it makes

ARK promises to support you to take part in decision-making in ARK if you want to. You will also have the chance to tell us what you think about your housing and support.



5. Your Housing & Your Housing Support

If you get your housing from ARK we promise, as a minimum, to meet the outcomes identified by the Scottish Social Housing Charter. They can be found in the Charter Booklet.



ARK QUALITY MONITORING SYSTEMS

