

## Residents' Panel inspect caretaking

Resident inspectors give their verdict on your caretaking service

Residents' Housing Regulation Panel are volunteers who test the quality of your housing services. If they find any below the agreed standard, they have the power to get them improved. They recently inspected the Caretaking Service by:

- doing unannounced inspections at 18 of the 24 sites that receive the service
- examining performance information and service feedback provided by residents and staff

### Improvements required by the Residents' Panel

The Council has agreed to make the following deadlined improvements

required by the resident inspectors:

- repair broken doors on rubbish-chutes and clear chute blockages
- ensure *No Smoking* signs and *Fire Notices* are displayed
- make *Caretaking Service Agreements* more widely available (eg. on the Council's website, at housing receptions and in new tenants' packs)
- provide transparent performance information on caretaking
- ensure caretakers wear identity badges
- create better procedures for caretakers to report issues that obstruct their work (like dumped obstructions or damage)
- address problems caused by people



Residents' Housing Regulation Panel members inspect an estate

loitering in communal areas and drinking, urinating, etc.

- clean Kingsway Community Room

these improvements have been made, and will let you know in a forthcoming edition of *Open Door*.

### Resident Inspectors' Verdict

#### Main weaknesses

- ❌ **Main weakness:** poor communication system for caretakers to link back to City Homes
- ❌ The quality of the service is inconsistent
- ❌ Leaflets showing what the caretaking standard should be are only available on request from City Homes offices
- ❌ No information is available on caretaking performance (eg. about complaints, comparisons with other councils, etc.)

#### Main strengths

- ✅ **Main strength:** the caretakers are in touch with residents, as the 'face' of City Homes on estates
- ✅ Hanover and Princess Court residents are very complimentary about the improved standard of their caretaking
- ✅ On estates where it is being properly delivered, the caretaking service provides good value for money

### Other improvements recommended by the Residents' Panel

If funds are available...

- provide on-site notices showing the caretaking provided, with the caretaker's contact details
- steam-clean stairways and walkways as needed
- provide a pressure-washer for Hanover and Princess Courts

### What's next?

The Council agreed to make the improvements requested by the *Residents' Panel*. The *Panel* will check that

Independently, the *Residents' Panel* have decided that their next inspection will be on the quality of the Council's window-cleaning service. They have informed the Council, begun their inspection process, and will report their findings to you in *Open Door*.

### Become a resident inspector

If you're interested in monitoring services in your block or estate or joining the *Residents' Panel*, just phone 01223-458323 or email [yourhomeyoursay@cambridge.gov.uk](mailto:yourhomeyoursay@cambridge.gov.uk)