

FRAMEWORK & GROUND RULES FOR TENANT LED INSPECTIONS

1. The subject of inspection will be identified by the Tenant Inspectors, or requested by the Area Committees.
2. It is recommended that an Inspection Team has no less than 2 members, and no more than 4 members, for practical reasons. The maximum of 4 inspectors in a team should only be exceeded if the team feels comfortable with expanding to 5 in order to include a new tenant inspector undergoing induction.
3. The Inspection Team will agree their remit with the Manager(s) of the staff working in the area being inspected, prior to the start of the inspection. This is important to ensure the co-operation and support of the staff.
4. The Inspection Team will draw up an outline plan of the inspection for approval by the Housing Operations Manager for purposes of payment of the expenses allowance. This plan will include the:
 - schedule of meetings and inspection visits,
 - start and end date of the inspection
 - date by which the team will be ready to present their findings.
5. When drawing up the plan for the Inspection, sufficient time should be left between identifying the subject of the inspection and the start of the inspection, to allow time to recruit the Independent Advisor.
6. It is recommended that the inspection period is limited to a maximum of 6 weeks from start to finish, to keep it manageable and focused.
7. All Tenant Inspectors must sign a 'Confidentiality Agreement' before starting to inspect. The 'Confidentiality Agreement' is an undertaking not to discuss or disclose any information seen or heard during the course of the inspection outwith the inspection team.
8. The Inspection Team should write to local Tenants' groups in the area being inspected to advise them that an inspection is being carried out on their patch.
9. Findings should not be attributed to individuals: specific cases, customers or members of staff should not be identified or identifiable.
10. The Inspection Team is expected to produce a written Inspection Report outlining:
 - the methods used in the inspection,
 - the strengths identified,
 - their recommended areas for improvement identified.

11. Administration assistance, such as typing of Inspection Reports, is available from West Lothian House.
12. West Lothian Council will produce an Action Plan in response to the areas for improvement identified, within 28 days of receipt of the written Inspection report. This will:
 - Respond to each of the recommended areas for improvement
 - Identify a lead officer for each action
 - Give a target date for completion of each action
 - Set timescales for feedback to the Inspection Team
 - Be published and made available alongside the Inspection Reports in the CIS offices and on the Internet.
13. A progress meeting will be held after 3 months. The purpose of this meeting is for the lead officers to update the Tenant Inspectors on progress against each action point.
14. Members of the Housing Policy Working Group and the Tenants Panel should be invited to hear the Inspection Team present their report, and also to the subsequent feedback and progress meetings.
15. The Inspection Team will carry out a brief follow-up inspection to check the implementation of the action plan, 6 months after the latest target date for completion in the action plan. The team will sign-off the action plan if satisfied with its implementation. Team members may carry out spot checks at any time even after the inspection has been signed off to ensure improvements are maintained.