

# City of Edinburgh Council Family and Household Support South West Housing Support Service

Edinburgh

Type of inspection: Unannounced  
Inspection completed on: 19 January 2017

**Service provided by:**  
City of Edinburgh Council

**Service provider number:**  
SP2003002576

**Care service number:**  
CS2004069174

## About the service

City of Edinburgh Council Family and Household Support South West developed from the council's transformation of Safer and Stronger Communities services. The Family and Household Support service began operation in October 2016. It is delivered by an integrated team of housing support, family support and community safety staff working in the south west of Edinburgh. The housing support service is registered with the Care Inspectorate. Family support and community safety do not require to register. Before integration, the council's visiting housing support services were known as the Neighbourhood Support Services.

At the time of our inspection around seventy-five people were receiving housing support. The service supports people to find a home, move house and keep their home. The amount and type of support is agreed with the person and based on their individual circumstances.

The Family and Household Support service's purpose is to promote the well-being of children, families, individuals and communities. The service's objectives are:

- To reduce the incidence of homelessness and eviction, antisocial behaviour, exclusions from school and offending.
- To focus on prevention to help break the cycle of deprivation and low aspiration.
- To help children live in safe and supportive families.
- To ensure vulnerable people are protected.
- To work closely with individuals and communities to increase their participation, voice and influence.
- To maximise limited resources by working collaboratively with all stakeholders.
- The integration of the housing support service with family support and community safety should mean a quicker and more flexible response for people living in the south-west locality.

## What people told us

Eight people returned completed care standard questionnaires to us. They all strongly agreed they were happy with the quality of support they got from the service. Comments included:

- "(Names of support officers) have been very, very supportive of me and my needs. I was seeing (name) weekly for eight months. She's been amazing."
- "Very happy with support."
- "Both my support workers have achieved everything they set out to do."

We spoke to two people on visits with housing support officers, one person at drop in and nine people by phone. They were all very happy with their support and the staff supporting them. They all told us about the difference support had made for them. One person told us about "being in a bad way" a year ago and needing a lot of help. He said that he got a support worker and everything has changed since then. He told us, "Everything is going great." Another person told us she was "immensely happy" with the support. She'd got her benefits all sorted out and a new flat. She was now getting help to move into her new flat. Another whose support was coming to an end said everything was sorted that needed sorted and she couldn't have done it without the support she got.

Everyone spoke highly of support staff, describing them as "fantastic", "very genuine", "lovely", "very helpful". One said their support officer helped them when no-one else would and "fixed things she didn't need to fix". He spoke about her efforts giving him the "push" he needed to start doing things for himself.

People were not sure who their team leader was or who the manager of the service was. This seemed to be because of the changes in the service. We shared this with the managers as its important people know who to contact if they have difficulties. They said they would be able to make sure people had this information and the new service information booklets would help with this.

## Self assessment

The Care Inspectorate received a fully completed self-assessment from the service. They told us what they thought they did well and how they planned to continue to improve the service. They included how people who use the service were involved in the service.

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	4 - Good

## Quality of care and support

### Findings from the inspection

The service was very good at involving people in making decisions about their support. The assessment questions helped people think about things they need and want to change. People's support plans were personal to them. They could feel they were listened to and their choices were respected.

Staff were very good at giving people information, signposting them to other services and supporting them to use other services. They used locality groups to share information with other services so people with more complex issues could get co-ordinated support from the most appropriate services. They were making sure people got the help, care and support they needed.

Positive outcomes for people included;

- moving to more suitable housing
- sorting out their current tenancy
- getting benefits and finances sorted out
- improving their home by getting white goods, carpets, furniture
- accessing health services resulting in better mental and physical health.

The service was developing ways people could hear about the service and get support as early as possible. They were developing "drop ins" at outreach venues in the locality, establishing joint "drop-ins" with housing officers in local flats and meeting daily with local police and, where relevant, following up with people involved in

incidents in past twenty-four hours.

A communication group was developing service information booklets. It's important to have them available as soon as possible so people know what they can expect from the service and how to contact their support officer and team leader.

The process of establishing the new service had disrupted regular support reviews and surveys of people's views during and at the end of support. Team leaders were planning to get back on track with this.

While the short-term service with drop in works well for most people, it can be difficult for people with enduring mental health difficulties to contact the service if issues re-occur. The local housing support services consortia can offer longer term low-level support. The managers agreed they could look at improving how they link people into this service or consider developing a similar service so people don't need to start again with a new service.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 5 - very good

## Quality of staffing

### Findings from the inspection

The housing support officers were knowledgeable, skilled and very motivated to support people well. The service had retained experienced staff who were committed to providing people with the best support possible. People told us staff helped with more than they had to, listened, were respectful and didn't judge them. One person said they were there for them when no-one else would help.

The service had very good systems to support staff's practice and their professional development. These included 1:1 supervision meetings, performance review and development planning and regular team meetings. Staff said they got very good ad hoc support from team leaders and colleagues. With the new service becoming more established, team leaders were beginning regular 1:1 meetings and the PRD process with members of their team. They were also planning to develop team meetings to include more opportunities for staff to share practice and learn from each other.

The new service had developed a twelve month training plan to support staff's development in their role within the team and in working as part of an integrated team. Training information was shared at team meetings, including learning from training attended, information on training opportunities coming up and putting forward ideas for training needed. The service needs to make sure the planned training is delivered to staff and they have access to the learning opportunities they need.

The service was very good at supporting staff's professional practice and development and people felt confident in the staff supporting them.

## Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

## Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

## Quality of management and leadership

### Findings from the inspection

The service had established the management structure with a good mix of skills and experience in the management team. They were working together to make the integrated service work and were positive about the opportunities this brings. They were open to hearing staff's ideas for a successful family and household support service. So everyone can work together to achieve changes, they now need to make decisions, such as:

- how the three teams will operate within the locality
- how workload management will be integrated within each team and across teams, including establishing the service's referral system to teams and the appropriate member of the team.

Team leaders had been working hard to build their team, making sure communication was consistent. Team leaders were beginning to line manage all members of their team, developing the integrated team leader's role. The service needs to make sure team leaders, particularly those who don't have experience in housing support, get the development opportunities to enable them to support the housing support officers in their team.

Staff were involved in developing the service, for example developing service information booklets. Leadership was encouraged, with support officers coordinating people's support, taking responsibility for organising their time to deliver the service and getting involved in projects to develop the service, involvement in the early intervention with police being a good example.

The head of service held workshops with staff during the change process. Staff felt they got information and had some say in the changes. The information on Edinburgh's Family and Household Support Services, developed from these, gave a good basis for developing the service.

The manager attended the integrated working group with all family and household support services managers. They had opportunities to share practice, ideas and solutions to challenges, supporting development of services across Edinburgh.

The biggest concern for staff was the possibility of introducing generic roles within the team. Staff need clarity from the head of service about the future of their role to help maintain their motivation and commitment.

The managers agreed they need to establish team leader and manager's role and responsibilities in quality assurance, including:

- making sure people's views about the service are being sought and used to improve the service
- case file audits are established to make sure the support process is being used effectively
- key performance indicators are agreed and systems to monitor and improve performance based on these established.

The development of the Northgate IT system to provide management information on outcomes achieved will help them plan how the service can continue to improve outcomes for people.

We discussed the need to develop a plan for involving people the service supports and staff in developing and improving the family and household support service in south-west Edinburgh.

## Requirements

**Number of requirements:** 0

## Recommendations

**Number of recommendations:** 0

**Grade:** 4 - good

## What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

### Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

## What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

### Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

## 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).

## Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
5 Feb 2015	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 4 - Good
29 Aug 2013	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 4 - Good
30 Mar 2012	Announced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 4 - Good
27 Jan 2011	Announced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
19 Jan 2010	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 3 - Adequate

Date	Type	Gradings	
6 Jan 2009	Announced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate



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