

Vibrant Communities Housing Support Service Housing Support Service

East Ayrshire Council
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Unannounced

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Service provided by:
East Ayrshire Council

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SP2003000142

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About the service

Vibrant Communities is a Housing Support Service which is registered to provide support to people who are over 16 years old, who are homeless and / or at risk of homelessness. The provider is East Ayrshire Council.

The team works between two office bases, one in the town of Kilmarnock and one in Cumnock.

At the time of inspection, the service was providing support to 121 people.

The service states their aims are: 'To provide a friendly, non-judgemental service to all tenants of East Ayrshire Council, supporting people where they are and coaching people to be self managing, confident and successful at sustaining a tenancy'.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 8, 9 and 11 October 2024. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about this service. This included registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with 15 people using the service
- spoke with six staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- reviewed feedback forms which were returned from eight staff members and eight external professionals.

Key messages

- Staff had positive relationships with people they were supporting, where they were able to promote and encourage independence in their lives.
- The staff team were involved in quality assurance processes which ensured they could see the impact of their work and promoted accountability.
- The manager had clear oversight of what was going on within the service.
- Staff took part in regular team meetings, supervisions and training which enabled them to reflect on their practice.
- The service would benefit from more appropriate cover when the manager is absent.
- People's running notes would benefit from being more consistent across the staff team.
- We were able to see examples of case studies carried out by some staff members which captured the positive work being carried out by the service.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
How well is our care and support planned?	4 - Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

During the inspection, we were able to see that the service makes referrals to health services where necessary. Staff supported people to make their own appointments. This encouraged independence and promoted life skills. If people required assistance to attend appointments, staff supported them with this.

We sampled personal plans and were able to see that those who used the service were heavily involved in setting their own goals. The service used an electronic system which had an outcome tool. We were able to see that other services who supported the service users also used this electronic system, therefore communication about people's needs and progress was available. People reviewed their progress using the outcome tool. This gave them an insight into the work they were doing to reach their goals and encouraged motivation.

Staff had positive relationships with people they were supporting where they were able to promote and encourage independence in their lives. Staff were kind, caring and responsive to people's health and wellbeing needs. Each person was allocated a particular worker who was fully informed of their circumstances and needs. Staff were therefore able to utilise relevant tools in order to support them and signpost to relevant agencies where appropriate. We shadowed some team members and were able to see that they had good knowledge and understanding of the service user group they supported. This was due to the extensive training they received.

We were able to see that people had choice when deciding on which type of support they required to meet their own individual needs. Staff signposted people to various community groups or recovery groups depending on their need and want. Staff would also attend these supports with people if required. This helped reduce any anxieties. For those supported, being able to access these groups was beneficial to their wellbeing.

During the inspection, we observed staff at drop in sessions at recovery groups making themselves available for anybody who required support. We were able to see that staff were well known and people appeared to be comfortable in approaching them. Staff used their knowledge and skills to facilitate in a manner that was thoughtful, compassionate and helpful. The groups gave people the resources and tools to deal with issues personal to them.

The staff worked hard to cultivate relationships within the large area the service covers, including more rural areas. We could see that the staff team had a very good knowledge of local supports and utilised this in a way that supported people to get the most out of life. This was evidenced through the service's ability to work with a multi-agency approach.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore we evaluated this key question as very good.

We were able to see that there was a detailed service improvement and development plan in place. This was informed by the quality assurance processes. There were clear set timescales, records of responsibility and updates on progress made. It was clear to follow the improvement journey. Where actions involved the team or individual team members, these were discussed through regular team meetings and supervisions. The staff team were involved in quality assurance processes which ensured they could see the impact of their work and promoted accountability.

There were a range of trackers in place, such as professional registration, supervision and training. We were also able to see records of achieved outcomes, caseloads and statistics related to all cases. These trackers gave the manager a clear oversight of what was going on within the service.

We were able to see some records of feedback from service users and stakeholders which was gathered through feedback forms and emails. We could see from the service improvement and development plan that this was an area that the team had identified as something they would like to improve on in terms of consistency in gathering feedback.

Where complaints were received, these were addressed appropriately and timeously in a consistent manner

We reviewed accidents and incidents and found that there had been issues with the system in logging these under the right service. This was discussed with the manager who immediately took the necessary steps to address this.

Throughout the inspection, we received very positive feedback from staff about the manager and heard about how approachable and supportive they were.

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Staff had their own caseloads and managed their time to suit the needs and availability of the service users they supported.

Staff told us they worked well together as a team to meet the needs of the service users. This included where there was any staff absence, they would work together to provide cover to ensure that this did not impact the service users. We saw positive working relationships between staff and service users and we were confident in staff's capabilities. We were able to see that they were putting their training into practice.

Staff took part in regular team meetings, supervisions and training which enabled them to reflect on their practice. The team worked together to share experience and problem solve.

We found that in the absence of the manager of the service there should be more appropriate cover. The service would benefit from someone being in charge who has good insight into the staff team and the people they are supporting, who also has responsibility for supporting staff and following up on incidents when they occur. This was discussed with the management team who were keen to improve this.

How well is our care and support planned?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

During the inspection, we sampled people's personal plans. These were informed by the outcome tool used by the service. Using this outcome tool allowed service users to identify specific issues that they wanted the service to support them with. These included; accommodation, health, safety and security, social and economic wellbeing, employment and meaningful activity. Using the outcome tool, people were able to visually see the progress that they had made in their journey.

We sampled people's running notes and found that there were inconsistencies in the level of detail documented. For some, we could clearly track the progress people had made; however, this was not the case for all. We suggested that a more consistent approach is used in recording people's running notes to ensure that what people have done to achieve their goals is captured in a meaningful way.

We were able to see recordings of staff case studies which demonstrated the positive work being done by team members. However, as mentioned above, the running notes did not consistently capture this work and we found that not all staff were completing the case studies. The manager was aware of this as it had been highlighted through the quality assurance processes and was taking the necessary action in working with the team to improve these.

The service had appropriate risk assessments in place.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	5 - Very Good
How good is our staff team?	4 - Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	4 - Good
How well is our care and support planned?	4 - Good
5.1 Assessment and personal planning reflects people's outcomes and wishes	4 - Good

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