



0911.07
September 7th 2007

Green lights for Whitefriars

Coventry's leading housing group has been awarded top marks in its latest government health check.

Whitefriars, which manages around 17,000 homes in Coventry, has been given three green lights by the Housing Corporation to show that it is financially sound, well managed and well governed by its board.

The Housing Corporation, which funds and regulates social housing in the UK, assesses all housing associations using a traffic light system in key areas. Red and amber lights indicate concerns while green lights reflect a clean bill of health.

Howard Farrand, chief executive of Whitefriars, said: "We are delighted with this latest assessment by the Housing Corporation which shows that we are achieving high standards and acting in the best interests of our residents.

"The assessment highlights our strengths in managing and maintaining homes to a good standard, giving residents a range of opportunities to get involved and influence our work, and supporting residents affected by anti-social behaviour.

"It demonstrates that Whitefriars is providing a good service to residents, while maintaining strong foundations for future growth and development."

The report highlights that Whitefriars is making good progress in bringing its former local authority housing up to government standards. The government has ruled that by 2010 all social housing must meet the Decent Homes Standard – covering things like insulation, glazing and the quality of kitchens and bathrooms.

The report says: "The group has continued to make progress with its programme of improvements. As at 31 March, 2006, 81 per cent of stock met the Decent Homes Standard. The group is confident that, on the basis of the current business plan, it will meet the Decent Homes Standard prior to the government's 2010 deadline."

Elsewhere in the report, the Housing Corporation also highlights the wide range of opportunities for residents to be involved and comment on Whitefriars' performance, through initiatives such as mystery shopper surveys, residents' groups and focus groups.

And the housing group's mediation service, Asb4, also comes in for special mention as helping to provide a "robust approach to dealing with anti-social behaviour", according to the report.

Margaret Allen, director for the Housing Corporation, said: "We are very pleased to announce that Whitefriars has gained three green lights in its latest Housing Corporation assessment.

"This demonstrates that they have successfully met or exceeded the standards set across all four key performance areas needed to ensure the quality of the services they offer to the people of Coventry."

A full copy of the report is available from www.housingcorp.gov.uk

-2-

ENDS

**For further information please contact Michelle Hallmark at The Bridge Group on
024 7656 0448 or m.hallmark@bridge-group.co.uk**