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Reach for the stars

One of the country's largest stock transfer associations, Whitefriars Housing Group, has been given a 'good' rating with promising prospects for improvement, according to an independent report released today by the Audit Commission.

The housing group, which came into existence in 2000 following the voluntary stock transfer of all 20,000 Coventry City Council properties, has claimed two stars from the commission.

Its policy on gas servicing, which had led to just under 100 per cent of all properties being checked this year, won particular praise, along with its work to ensure the lettings policy is as flexible as possible.

Whitefriars' work to combat anti-social behaviour was also singled out for excellence, along with its asb4 mediation service. asb4 is the Midlands' first complete anti-social behaviour package for housing providers which brings together in one place all the skills and expertise needed to provide a full range of anti-social behaviour resolution services.

Whitefriars is on track to reach the Decent Home Standard well ahead of schedule, and thanks to effective partnership working has delivered its internal improvements programme a year early and on budget.

Chief Executive Howard Farrand said: "We are absolutely delighted with the results of the report. When we took over the 20,000 properties from the council

we inherited a housing stock in very poor condition and to reach two stars and to be given promising prospects for improvement, is a massive leap. It endorses the foresight of Coventry City Council and years of hard work by staff, tenants and partners.

“Back in 2000 the city council had the foresight to see drastic action was needed and we can see today that their approach to ballot tenants for a voluntary stock transfer has been a fortuitous one for tenants and the city of Coventry.”

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