



Department for
Communities

An Roinn
Pobal

Department fur
Commonities

Regulatory Framework

Ark Housing Association – Regulatory Judgement

Report 2019/20



Introduction

The Department for Communities (DfC) is the Regulatory Authority for Registered Housing Associations (RHAs) in Northern Ireland. Housing Regulation Branch within DfC undertakes this Regulation activity on behalf of the Department and we seek to protect the interests of tenants, homeless people and others who use the services provided by RHAs. To ensure this is achieved, RHAs must provide us with the necessary information on a regular basis to demonstrate how the Regulatory Framework Standards are being achieved.

RHA Background

Founded in 1987, Ark Housing Association (Ark Housing) provides social rented accommodation throughout Northern Ireland for families, the elderly, those with disabilities, single persons and others in housing need. In addition, Ark Housing works with various partners to provide housing and support services to individuals recovering from mental illness and those with learning difficulties.

Ark Housing is the only Housing Association in Northern Ireland to own, manage and directly deliver support services to homeless families at its own centres in Belfast.

Regulatory Approach

Through our risk-based and proportionate approach to regulating RHAs, we focus our attention on the important risks and key aspects of the RHA's performance. This includes having different levels of engagement depending on the RHA's risk and performance profile.

When we refer to risk, we are referring to the risk to the interests of tenants and other service users. This may not always be the same as an RHA's own detailed assessment of the operational risks it faces. This judgement is completed in accordance with the risk based approach to Regulation introduced in April 2017.

Overall Opinion

Regulatory Judgement:

Ark Housing

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Meets the requirements

Based on a review of the evidence submitted, Housing Regulation Branch has determined that Ark Housing has demonstrated that it meets the Regulatory Standards for Governance, Finance and Consumer in respect of the 2019/20 year. Further information on our Regulatory Standards can be obtained within the following Advice Note - [How we Regulate](#).

Assessment Findings

Outcome of Governance Standard - MET

Governance Standard 1:

Ark Housing has demonstrated that it has effective governance arrangements in place that deliver its aims, objectives and intended outcomes for tenants and potential tenants in an effective, transparent and accountable manner.

Governance Standard 2:

Ark Housing adopts a robust approach for the assessment and management of risk. In addition, it has an effective decision-making process in place which allows informed and transparent decisions to be made.

Outcome of Finance Standard - MET

Finance Standard 1:

Ark Housing has demonstrated that it manages its resources effectively to ensure financial viability is maintained in the short, medium and longer term.

Finance Standard 2:

Ark Housing has articulated and delivered a comprehensive and strategic approach to achieving value for money in meeting the organisation's objectives.

Outcome of Consumer Standard - MET

Consumer Standard 1:

Ark Housing has managed its business so that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence at a level they feel comfortable with.

Consumer Standard 2:

Ark Housing has demonstrated that it provides 'Decent Homes' standard accommodation with good service quality choices appropriate to the diverse needs of its tenants.

Consumer Standard 3:

Ark Housing has illustrated how it contributes to supporting vibrant communities encouraging tenant opportunities and promoting well-being.

Anticipated Level of Engagement for 2020/21:

Level 1 – Where following submission of the Regulatory Standards Annual Return (RSAR) and required financial information, we are content there is sufficient assurance and little additional contact is required unless other matters arise.

Further information on how we reach our Regulatory Judgement decision and the different levels of engagement can be found in the following advice note - [Regulatory Judgements and Engagements](#).