



Department for
Communities

An Roinn
Pobal

Department für
Commonities

Regulatory Framework

Ark Housing Association – Regulatory Judgement

Report 2023/24



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

Ark Housing Association (Ark HA) is a Registered Housing Association with the Department for Communities (DfC), and Financial Conduct Authority. It is an independent not for profit organisation under the Industrial & Provident Society Act (NI) 1969 and a registered charity. It was established in 1987 as Down and Connor Housing Association to provide social and affordable homes for people in housing need and renamed Ark Housing Association in 1999. Ark HA is based in Belfast but operates across all district council areas, managing more than 810 homes. It provides general needs homes for families, a range of accommodation and support services to enable people to manage and sustain their tenancies and live independently. It also provides a floating support homeless service for families threatened with or experiencing homelessness.

Regulatory Approach

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

1

Meets the requirements

Based on a review of the evidence submitted, Housing Regulation Branch has determined that Ark Housing Association has demonstrated that it meets the Regulatory Standards for Governance, Finance and Consumer in respect of the 2023/24 year.

Assessment Findings

Outcome of Governance Standard - MET

Governance Standard 1:

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

Governance Standard 2:

Ark HA adopts a robust approach to the assessment and management of risk and demonstrates informed and transparent decision-making processes.

Outcome of Finance Standard - MET

Finance Standard 1:

Ark HA 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 HA 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 HA has managed its business so that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.

Consumer Standard 2:

Ark HA 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 HA has illustrated how it contributes to supporting vibrant communities that encourages tenant opportunities and promotes well-being.

Anticipated Level of Engagement following 2023/24 assessment:

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 our Regulatory Standards, how we reach our Regulatory Judgement decision and the different levels of engagement can be found on our website at the following link [Regulatory Framework for Registered Housing Associations in Northern Ireland and supporting advice notes | Department for Communities](#).