

Wellhouse: the Place to Be



wellhouse
Housing Association

Trust Honesty Integrity Excellence Accountability Sustainability

Martin Wilkie-McFarlane

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People, Places and Partnership



Potted history

1956: the 100,000th Glasgow Corporation house opened by Earl Attlee in Wellhouse.

1989: tenants steering group set up to seek the transfer of homes from Glasgow City Council to community ownership, leading to Wellhouse Co-Op.

1994: Wellhouse HA, registered as a social landlord.

2010: Second successful stock transfer from Glasgow Housing Association in resulted in all the social rented homes in Wellhouse being owned by the housing association.

2019: Wellhouse operates in Easterhouse, east Glasgow with 791 rented homes, 56 factored owners, 1 HMO and 1 non self-contained property.



Some achievements

- ✓ Since we were established we have raised and invested over £40 million in refurbishing our properties and building new homes in the local area. We have significantly transformed the area.
- ✓ We set up Wellhouse Community Trust, which in time transformed into Connect Community Trust, a fully independent social enterprise which offers a wide range of employment, training and community services. CCT has expanded its services and impact well beyond Wellhouse into the wider eastern area of Glasgow.
- ✓ We built a large community facility, The Hub, to bring together housing, childcare, employment and training services all under one roof. The building also contains a community café, an IT learning centre and community space. The facilities are well used by the community and local organisations.



Some achievements

- ✓ We have been a pioneer in promoting an asset-based community regeneration approach. As a community controlled housing association, we recognise the wider benefits such as health, confidence, and wellbeing that come from people having control over the decisions that affect their lives, e.g. the positive psychology and wellbeing project Wellhouse Futures (this project has been formally handed to CCT to deliver).
- ✓ We have enhanced our services by responding to the needs of the local community, e.g. establishing an income advice service, using social media and a text messaging service for our customers. We have invested in our IT systems and processes in our commitment to keep improving customer service. We will always keep services under review with customer feedback, e.g. following input from applicants we joined the common housing register.



Some achievements

- ✓ We have added a shared equity option for people who want to buy a new home in Wellhouse and have secured grants for existing owners so we can deliver energy efficiency improvements for our tenants who live in mixed tenure buildings.
- ✓ We have been through a period of significant organisational change following regulatory intervention and remain a strong, independent community controlled housing association, following an options appraisal.



☹ Intervention

In December 2014 SHR identified “serious weaknesses in Wellhouse’s governance and financial management” and used statutory powers to appoint a manager to Wellhouse under Section 58 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 -

- 99 Point Governance Improvement Plan;
- Changes to the management committee;
- Full review of strategy and policy;
- Interim Management Team;
- New Director appointed in May 2016;
- Statutory appointment ended in November 2016;
- Cost of Statutory Intervention = £222k (much more to ‘put things right’);
- We remained on High Engagement until March 2018.



National Press coverage

23 June 2017

“Catalogue of failings show housing association misled tenants”

'Deeply disturbing' failings.....

“The issues came to light after a whistle-blower ...”

The Scottish Housing Regulator said there was “bad practice, bad governance and inappropriate behaviour” at Wellhouse Housing Association.

Glasgow and West of Scotland Forum of Housing Associations (GWSF) chairman Peter Howden said: “What happened at Wellhouse was deeply disturbing and we must all learn from it.”

☹ Considerations

- What happened?
- How did we get here?
- Do we have a problem with governance?
- Are board and leadership skills good enough?
- Are we isolated/ below the parapet?
- Did we seek help when we felt there was a problem?





Are we stronger now?

- There is effective debate and challenge across the committee and with the management team;
- Committee skillset is mixed;
- Our operational performance has improved along with customer feedback;
- We have a new skillset in the staff team;
- We have a very good relationship with the SHR;
- We are fully networked in the profession;
- We are entering into a new three year business planning period which is more ambitious than the previous one.

Yes we are!



people, places, **partnership**

- ✓ Invite critical friends, who are supportive;
- ✓ Seek peer support for governing body and staff;
- ✓ Seek support from colleagues in the sector;
- ✓ Review subs to membership bodies;
- ✓ Consider accreditations;
- ✓ Rethink profile - in community; across Easterhouse/ Glasgow/ sector; attendance at events; web and social media;
- ✓ Put tenants and residents first;



people, places, **partnership**

What has EHRA allowed Wellhouse to do?

- ✓ Integrate locally;
- ✓ Punch above our weight;
- ✓ Share ideas and information;
- ✓ Gather support for Governing Body Members;
- ✓ Campaign and raise awareness of issues in greater Easterhouse;
- ✓ Take a co-ordinated approach to issues with local and national government;
- ✓ Demonstrate a commitment to partnership;
- ✓ Save money.



Is partnership a panacea?

No, but collaboration is –

- Important;
- Rewarding;
- Comforting;
- Frustrating;
- Hard work....

.....worth it.



Discussion/ Q&A



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