



WALES AUDIT OFFICE  
SWYDDFA ARCHWILIO CYMRU

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# Inspection of Cymdeithas Tai Dewi Sant: a Summary Report

## Cymdeithas Tai Dewi Sant

1. Cymdeithas Tai Dewi Sant (CTDS or the Association) was formed in 1991 and was a medium sized general needs and supported housing association. In November 2006, the Association had 1,548 properties. The Association had 68 staff and its head office was located in Port Talbot.
2. In April 2008, the Association merged with Swansea Housing Association to create the new Coastal Housing Group. The findings of this inspection relate to services provided by the former Cymdeithas Tai Dewi Sant, not Swansea Housing Association or the Coastal Housing Group. Although the findings of this inspection were not agreed with Cymdeithas Tai Dewi Sant, they have been accepted by the Coastal Housing Group. The Group is now responsible for acting on the report's recommendations.

## The inspection

3. The Welsh Assembly Government (Assembly Government) has commissioned the Wales Audit Office, an independent agency, to carry out a programme of inspections of all of the larger housing associations in Wales. The inspection of CTDS took place in November 2006. In carrying out the inspection, inspectors work to the Regulatory Code for Housing Associations in Wales (the Regulatory Code). This is explained in more detail in the full inspection report.
4. The inspection assessed whether the Association delivered good quality services? To answer this question, the inspection looked at eight areas of the Association's work. These eight areas are listed in the table below, along with a summary of the inspection findings and the inspectors' rating of how well the Association did.
5. 'Satisfactory' services are what inspectors would expect to find; 'good' or 'excellent' services exceed those expectations. If services do not meet expectations, they will be found to have 'scope for considerable improvement' or to 'fail to comply with the Regulatory Code'.

## Does the Association deliver good quality services?

6. The Association was providing good services in one service area, satisfactory services in three service areas and had scope for considerable improvement in four service areas.

| Service Area              | Findings                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Judgement                          |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Relationship to Residents | The Association had a tenants panel which it was developing but did not have a clear framework for tenant participation.                                                                                            | Scope for Considerable Improvement |
|                           | The information available to tenants was limited in range and usefulness and not available in a wide range of formats, e.g. Braille, other languages.                                                               |                                    |
|                           | Tenant involvement in reviewing and improving services was not strong.                                                                                                                                              |                                    |
|                           | The Association had some service standards and a complaints procedure but it wasn't clear how these were used to help tenants understand what service they should be getting, or how their landlord was performing. |                                    |
| Equal Opportunities       | Whilst the Association had policies in place and staff had had some training they had not met their own targets for equal opportunities.                                                                            | Scope for Considerable Improvement |
|                           | A Welsh language policy was in place but the Association was not treating Welsh and English equally.                                                                                                                |                                    |
| Providing Housing         | The Association worked well with local authorities to meet housing need.                                                                                                                                            | Good                               |
|                           | Dewi Sant were working to develop and renew their stock of houses but had no clear policy for community development.                                                                                                |                                    |
| Rents Service             | The Association had arrangements for controlling and recovering arrears and performed well in this area.                                                                                                            | Satisfactory                       |
|                           | Advice and assistance to tenants in difficulty could be improved.                                                                                                                                                   |                                    |
| Letting Housing           | Tenants were offered properties which did not meet Dewi Sant's own standards. The speed with which empty properties were turned round was also a concern.                                                           | Scope for Considerable Improvement |
|                           | The Association was not ensuring those in need of housing could access it. Information provided to applicants and Dewi Sant's procedures for handling applications needed to be improved.                           |                                    |
|                           | Whilst the Association had policies in place and staff had had some training they had not met their own targets for equal opportunities.                                                                            |                                    |
| Housing Management        | Tenants had the most secure form of tenancy possible.                                                                                                                                                               | Satisfactory                       |
|                           | The Association had an Anti Social Behaviour officer and worked with other organisations to keep its estates safe. Estates were kept in good condition by a dedicated estate management team.                       |                                    |

| Service Area              | Findings                                                                                                                                     | Judgement                          |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Maintenance Service       | Day to day repairs was not managed well. The Association did not gather all the information needed to help improve its services.             | Scope for Considerable Improvement |
|                           | Longer term works were not being done effectively, although the Association had good systems for making sure gas servicing was done on time. |                                    |
|                           | Plans for getting the Association's homes up to Welsh Housing Quality Standard were needed.                                                  |                                    |
| People with Support Needs | In its own schemes Dewi Sant provided support, but tenants outside these schemes were not always provided with appropriate support.          | Satisfactory                       |
|                           | Information about tenants hadn't been gathered systematically, so services couldn't be adapted to suit tenants' needs.                       |                                    |

## What happens next?

7. Within eight weeks of the full report being published, Coastal Housing Group should circulate this Summary of the report to the former tenants of CTDS.
8. The Coastal Housing Group needs to ensure the recommendations made in relation to one of its predecessors are considered and addressed where relevant.

**This document is a Summary. The full report is available from the address on the back page of this document.**





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