

Improving Services for Disabled customers

Pennine Housing works hard to make sure that our homes and services are right for all our customers, including getting it right for disabled people.

To help us improve, we drew up our first Disability Equality Scheme and Action Plan in December 2007, with disabled people. We agreed with our disabled customers to do three main things:

- ✓ Make our homes more accessible
- ✓ Make our services more inclusive
- ✓ Make sure disabled people are brought into the heart of our Organisation, as customers and staff.

Based on the things that were most important to disabled people, we then drew up a list of priorities to be done in 2008.

We recently asked disabled customers what they thought about the things we have done since Jan 2008. Overall, the group said:

- **You have made a good start Pennine**
- **And at least you have started**
- **And, even although it's not all perfect, some things are being done better than before.**

The things that customers think are starting to make a difference are:

- ☺ **Knowing Your Customers** - for those who have filled in a "Knowing Our Customers" form, we now know if that customer has a disability. This then means we can tailor services to accommodate their specific requirements
- ☺ **Better information** - some of our information is now provided in the way that best suits people with disabilities e.g. large print versions of Homing In
- ☺ **Better understanding** - through training, staff do seem to understand things better and try to do the right thing
- ☺ **Improving design** - we have made a good start to designing things better for older and disabled people and not just doing things in the same old way

- ☺ We are making changes to Keychoice so we can help disabled people make a better match to a home that will be suitable

But some of the things that tenants hoped would be improved by now haven't been. And they really want to see some progress soon on:

- ☹ Getting adaptations done quicker
- ☹ Better heating for disabled tenants
- ☹ Having one person in Pennine to contact for help and advice

We are now drawing up the priorities for 2009. This will include the things that still need to happen and new priorities too. If you have a disability and have any suggestions about what we could do better, then please tell us. We want to know what you think!

Sue Lewis
Head of Supported Housing Services