

**Investors in People
Review Report**

Pickering & Ferens Homes

Commercial in Confidence

Produced on behalf of:

Yorkshire & Humberside Assessment Ltd

By: Lydia Wiffen MBA, FCIPD, FInstLM, MIBC

Date: 31/03/08

Contents

1. Assessment details
2. Recommendation
3. Background information
4. Objectives for the review
5. Acknowledgement
6. Assessment outcomes summary table
7. Areas of good practice
8. Summary of recommendations for improving effectiveness
9. Findings against the Investors in People Standard
10. Additional information

1. Assessment details

Organisation Name:	Pickering & Ferens Homes
Organisation Address:	The Maltings, Silvester Street, Hull, HU1 3HA
Telephone Number:	01482 223783
Nature of Business:	Provider of housing for people over the age of 60 in Hull & The East Riding
Contacts:	Pam Stamp
Number of Employees:	54 (42 members of staff & 12 trustees)
Number of Sites:	6
Type of Assessment:	Review
Site Visit Date:	11 & 27/03/08

2. Review Decision

Having carried out the review process rigorously and in accordance with the guidance for Assessors by Investors in People UK, I am satisfied that Pickering & Ferens Homes continues to meet all the requirements of the Investors in People Standard. It is therefore my decision that the organisation maintains recognition as an Investor in People.

3. Background to the review

Since the last review in 2005 the structure and staffing have remained fairly stable, however there have been 5 staff on maternity leave over the past year which has meant that temporary staff have been recruited to cover. In addition the organisation has had to manage the significant impact of the Hull floods in June 2007 on their properties which led to many residents having to leave their homes whilst repairs and refurbishment was carried out. The floods caused great pressure of work for the staff of Pickering & Ferens and many people worked long hours in the wake of the crisis, a significant number of residents had to be found temporary housing until their properties could be repaired and refurbished. It is anticipated

Investors in People Review

that the vast majority of residents will be back in their accommodation by June 2008 thanks to the very hard work and long hours that the staff at Pickering and Ferens Homes have put in over the past year.

As a result of the impact of the floods on the organisation the Investors in People review date was extended by 3 months.

A plan for the review was produced after initial emails, phone conversations and an initial visit with Pam Stamp the HR manager. A total of 18 people were interviewed, interviews were either individual or in groups of 2. Further evidence was provided via sight of useful documents provided by Pam Stamp during the site visit.

A feedback meeting took place on 27/03/08 and this was used to update some senior team members and the HR manager on the strengths and areas for development in relation to the Investors in People Standard. In addition a number of areas for continuous improvement were also identified, discussed and agreed.

Health and Wellbeing at Work

Pickering & Ferens Homes agreed to participate in a pilot exercise currently being managed and funded by IIP UK which entailed further evidence being collected against new indicators relating to Health and Wellbeing at Work. Additional feedback is included in the report but does not affect the potential for maintaining recognition. This activity has been provided at no additional cost to the organisation.

4. Review objectives

The Investors in People review provided an ideal opportunity to look at ways in which people are managed and developed. The following objectives were agreed:

- To provide objective third-party feedback to aid continuous improvement.
- To establish whether the organisation continues to meet the Standard.
- To provide feedback on staff perception of the impact of the post flood work on morale and stress levels.
- To provide a focused report on the review findings.
- To provide feedback on Health & Wellbeing at Work.

5. Acknowledgement

My thanks go to all concerned for helping to make my return visit to the organisation enjoyable and very interesting. I would particularly like to thank Pam Stamp for organising the room, providing refreshments and refining/updating the interview schedule.

6. Review assessment outcomes table

	All ERs met? (Y/N)	Potential improvement areas? (Y/N)
Developing strategies to improve the performance of the organisation		
1. A strategy for improving the performance of the organisation is clearly defined and understood	Y	N
2. Learning and development is planned to achieve the organisation's objectives	Y	N
3. Strategies for managing people are designed to promote equality of opportunity in the development of the organisation's people	Y	N
4. The capabilities managers need to lead, manage and develop people effectively are clearly defined and understood.	Y	Y
Taking action to improve the performance of the organisation		
5. Managers are effective in leading, managing and developing people	Y	Y
6. Peoples contribution to the organisation is recognised and valued	Y	N
7. People are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility by being involved in decision making	Y	N
8. People learn and develop effectively	Y	N
9. Investment in people improves the performance of the organisation.	Y	Y
10. Improvements are continually made to the way people are managed and developed	Y	N

7. Areas of good practice

- There is a clear and concise long term vision and strategy in place for 2006 – 2036.
- The underpinning business plan is reviewed and updated on an at least a biennial basis, if need be it is reviewed and updated more frequently as in the case of the 2007 floods;
- Staff surveys and stress surveys are regularly conducted on a 3 year cycle;
- There is a good evaluation process in use that involves form completion and report to the Personnel committee;
- Training is regarded a significant contributor to success, low turnover and good staff morale;

- Generally communications are seen as effective by employees;
- Good evidence of the management team having a supportive and caring attitude to staff;
- People believe the management team to be very effective and committed to staff training and development;
- The induction process is well regarded and comprehensive;
- Many different types and methods of training are used and training activity is high;
- Staff feel very valued and appreciated for their contributions and have the autonomy to make decisions within the remit of their jobs;

8. Summary of recommendations for improving effectiveness

- Review the current management requirements and reiterate the key points to staff in simple terms to ensure that both line managers and staff fully understand what is expected of managers in leading, managing and developing people. these key points could be included in the staff code of conduct and used as a basis for discussion during team leaders and managers appraisals, and to support the recruitment and selection process for promotion candidates or new managers (indicator 4);
- Continue to collate the information gained from individual training evaluations, and further develop the report to the personnel committee to include the annual costs and resources used for training, compare these to the improvement to services/performance that result, discuss findings amongst the senior management team; (indicator 9)
- It would be beneficial to carry out a management skills audit in order to identify which managers/team leaders could benefit from introductory or refresher training; (Indicator 5)
- Use the Plan, Do, and Review cycle of the Investors in People standard to continue to help shape the organisations improvements to people management and development; (All)
- Consider the Investors in People Profile tool for the next review. This would provide stretch for the organisation and enable benchmarking with other organisations in the same sector;
- Consider submitting an application to Investors in People for 'Champion' status when the next selection round commences. Information can be found on www.investorsinpeople.co.uk

- Keep up to date with YHAL information via www.yhal.org.uk

9. Findings against the Investors in People Standard

Principle 1. Plan			
These 4 indicators refer to the overarching strategies and plans that the organisation develops to help clarify: its business direction (1), learning and development needs underpinning this (2), how they will achieve equality of access (3) and the capabilities managers will need to help the organisation succeed (4).			
Indicator 1.	Indicator 2.	Indicator 3.	Indicator 4.
A strategy for improving the performance of the organisation is clearly defined and understood.	Learning and development is planned to achieve the organisation's objectives.	Strategies for managing people are designed to promote equality of opportunity in the development of the organisation's people.	The capabilities managers need to lead, manage and develop people effectively are clearly defined and understood.

The interview and documentary evidence which supported these indicators being met included: -

Documents

- Plan 2006 – 2036;
- Annual Review and Plan for 2007/38;
- Training Summary Plan;
- Staff Opinion Survey 2005;
- Mission Statement;
- Equality & Diversity \policy;
- Communications Strategy.

Verbal Information

- Interviews with staff confirmed that they are aware of the purpose of the organisation, the key objectives for 07/08, and their team and individual objectives;
- The planning processes are well established and comprehensive and include a long term strategy (2006 – 2036) and short term goals. The plan is reviewed and new goals added appropriately;

Investors in People Review

- Staff feed ideas in for the annual plan through regular meetings and their appraisal process;
- The Board of Trustees discuss, agree and sign off the business plan;
- Staff experience an annual appraisal where they identify individual training and learning needs and discuss why they need to undertake training, this is across the board for all staff;
- Trustees carry out a self appraisal exercise and from the results of these the director develops an annual training plan for trustees;
- The vast majority of interviewees described similar things that they expected of a manager in Pickering & Ferens Homes, for example, to be available to staff, be approachable, to keep people informed, be supportive, carry out appraisals and inductions, run meetings, provide advice. The definition of what skills knowledge and behaviours managers need to lead, manage and develop staff could be updated and reiterated to staff so that all staff are aware of and understand it;
- People were unanimous in their belief that managers in Pickering & Ferens Homes were very effective in their roles and good role models for staff. Positives mentioned included the way the managers handled the aftermath of the floods in 2007, and the fact that people were given positive constructive feedback at appraisal time and through the year;

Quotes

“We have to offer the best service possible to residents, and continue to provide new accommodation in the city if appropriate, and maintain our properties to the highest standard”

“The business plan is reviewed regularly, it is all very regulated, and we refer to the business plan often and discuss it at management team meetings, we are all involved in producing the plan”

“Training is identified through I-Is, appraisals and we can talk to XXX(manager) at any time about training”

“They (managers) are very genuinely committed to training everyone, they encourage people to learn and there are lots of different types of training going on like in house health & safety, risk assessment, data protection, everyone gets all these”

Managers here do appraisals, inductions, and lead meetings, and they are approachable, knowledgeable about housing issues, flexible and good communicators”

Health & Wellbeing at Work – Good Practice Indicators I - 4

Senior managers recognise the importance of good health and wellbeing at work, and provided information on the various activities in place to support staff, for example:

- Stress management policy;
- Staff opinion survey;
- Flexitime working;
- Additional concessionary holidays for all staff;
- Kiddie vouchers for child care;
- Free eye tests;
- Contributions towards health care costs;
- Family leave;
- Water coolers available for free use;
- High level of health & safety training;
- Health & Safety working group;
- Suggestion scheme for improvement ideas.

Some of the above activities are measured for impact in a general way, for example, senior managers relate the low staff turnover in part to supportive working policies as noted above. However as there is currently no formal and specific health & wellbeing at work strategy or plan with goals/objectives in existence then focused impact measurement cannot take place.

Managers are provided with training in relation to appraisal, health & safety which supports health & wellbeing at work.

Health and Wellbeing at Work Recommendations – Indicators I - 4

The senior team could consider drawing together all the activities that support staff health and wellbeing under one comprehensive statement/section within the business plan. Ideally the strategy would also include reference to the appraisal process, consultation processes and identify goals/objectives so that the impact of health and wellbeing activities could be measured and monitored.

There is opportunity to include health & wellbeing management requirements in the management capabilities reviews. (Recommended in the main Investors in People review report) Doing this will be useful in measuring managers performance for example at appraisal.

Principle 2. Do			
These 4 indicators refer to the way in which previous strategies and plans within Principle 1 are put into practice. Managers have a key role to play in terms of fulfilling the expectations of their role (5), helping to give feedback and support which creates a positive climate in which staff thrive (6), people feel they are engaged and involved in the success of the organisation (7) and receive the learning and development they need to do their jobs effectively (8).			
Indicator 5.	Indicator 6.	Indicator 7.	Indicator 8.
Managers are effective in leading, managing and developing people.	People’s contribution to the organisation is recognised and valued.	People are encouraged to take ownership and responsibility by being involved in decision-making.	People learn and develop effectively.

The interview and documentary evidence which supported these indicators being met included: -

Documents

Training record;
 Training Summary;
 Appraisal forms;
 Induction folder.

Verbal Information

- Managers were able to pinpoint the things they do to develop staff. They mentioned appraisals, being open with staff and supporting them, for example throughout the flooding crisis when support and good communications were very important;
- Positive and constructive feedback is given on an ongoing basis but also through the annual appraisal process with interim reviews after 6 months. People felt that the appraisal was indeed a positive experience for them and because managers did carry out 6 monthly reviews of progress they knew where they were with objectives. Some people mentioned that appraisals and reviews had slipped a little due to the pressure of the work rate needed to sort the resident’s accommodation out after the flooding, however they had all now taken place.

Investors in People Review

- Everyone interviewed, without exception, said they felt valued for their contribution to the organisation, they said that managers were always saying thanks, and were appreciative of people's efforts.
- Interview evidence showed that people are encouraged to contribute and input ideas into the pot and to make decisions within their remit. One example of this was of a staff member ordering Hull City Council flood leaflets without going to the manager for approval because the leaflets were relevant to residents;
- Induction is thorough and effective, recent recruits felt that they were well informed about the organisation, their job and all the policies, they were also introduced to staff in other departments and as a result they settled in quickly;
- People talked about the various training, learning and development that takes place, citing external courses, in house sessions, coaching on the job, and day release on topics such as data protection, welfare benefits, manual handling, IT skills, management training, first aid;
- People interviewed generally believed that the organisation and managers had handled and organised the work resulting from the floods well, they pointed out that when the enormity of the impact on the work of staff was recognised temporary staff were employed to help. Although people said they felt the strain they also said that morale was maintained and everyone pulled together to get through the work;

Quotes

"Managers are effective here, we have a very good senior team, they treat people as they would like to be treated, it is a very inclusive culture, people get involved in decisions and issues"

"My line manager is effective, we talk about training and if we agree I need some it happens. XX (manager) is very positive and open; I have never had negative feedback from XX"

"They look after staff here, in the last 6 – 9 months since the floods it has been very hard, there has been a lot of pressure for everyone but staff views were taken on board and temporary staff were brought in to help"

"I am very valued and my manager has said if I am not here I am missed. I also get thanked, XX (manager) helps others if they are under pressure"

"I am trusted to make decisions in my job, once we have discussed things I am left to get on with it, but XX (manager) is there if I have any problems"

The Induction system is very thorough, you work through the whole process, meet people in different teams and talk about their job roles and you also complete an induction checklist"

“I have done training in data protection; fire training and I attended a pensions seminar”

Health & Wellbeing at Work – Good Practice Indicators – Indicators 5-8

Interviewees reported very positive views regarding their managers support for the health and wellbeing aspects, they felt managers were all supportive of flexitime, were open in communications, approachable, and staff felt they could go to their managers with any work related problems and be sure to get the support they needed. In addition people said they had discussed personal issues with managers and that managers had listened and been helpful and supportive.

The health and safety working group, the stress survey and the staff opinion survey are all ways in which staff are involved in shaping activities for aspects of health & wellbeing. However there is currently no process for recognising and rewarding staff for improvements or contributions to health and wellbeing.

Managers and people talked about how health & wellbeing needs are met within the activities that the organisation employs. For example, people are encouraged to use flexitime, kiddie vouchers and family leave etc. Lone workers or people out on appointments are required to note all appointments on the electronic in/out system and to call in at the end of the appointment and day so everyone knows they are safe.

Health & safety training does go beyond the legal minimum requirements and includes lone working training, new starters are provided with comprehensive health & safety training and policies that relate to health & wellbeing at work.

Health and Wellbeing at Work Recommendations – Indicators 5 - 8

There is room to develop further manager’s and team leaders awareness in this area, perhaps linking in to the suggested strategy and training plan above and consequently agreeing individual objectives with managers in their appraisals. Providing a session on a Pickering and Ferens manager’s role in health & wellbeing would be beneficial.

Consider how people could be recognised and rewarded for their input to health and wellbeing improvements.

<p>Principle 3. Review</p> <p>These 2 indicators ‘test’ the extent to which the strategies and actions of Principles 1 and 2 respectively, are making a difference to organisational success. There needs to be evidence that learning and development is improving organisational performance (9), and that feedback on the effectiveness of people/management practices leads to improvement in the way they are being developed and managed (10).</p>	
<p>Indicator 9.</p>	<p>Indicator 10.</p>
<p>Investment in people improves the performance of the organisation.</p>	<p>Improvements are continually made to the way people are managed and developed.</p>

Documents

- Training report sheets;
- Personnel committee report;
- Training summary plan;
- Training record;
- Staff opinion survey;

Verbal Information

- Staff opinion survey results are analysed and discussed by senior managers as part of general review processes, there are questions in the survey about management effectiveness, support provided and satisfaction with training, responses to all these areas were very positive in the most recent survey.
- One example given about the benefits of training was that a staff member who went on a welfare benefits course was subsequently able to offer advice to a resident that resulted in the resident being awarded additional benefits of £50 per week;
- Senior managers feel that the investment in training and development is worthwhile. There is a training budget and spend is reported to the personnel committee on a regular basis. The housing sector is heavily regulated and it is a must for people to keep up to date with current legislation, so refresher and update training is a regular occurrence. The last staff opinion survey noted that 84% of staff were satisfied with the training and development received, this is a very positive response;
- Manual handling training has resulted in staff using equipment like trolleys when moving heavy objects as a result of the training, staff now recognise this protects them from back and knee injuries;

Investors in People Review

- Residents surveys continue to be carried out and the feedback from the surveys inform discussions about and improvements in service;
- People felt that improvements to the way people are managed and developed have included:
 - Self appraisals for Trustees;
 - More health & safety training;
 - Induction is better structured;

In addition people said that the good practice in people management was being maintained despite the pressure of work on everyone due to the floods;

One interviewee felt that the Investors in People process provided a valuable opportunity to look at different aspects of how things were working in the organisation.

Quotes

“Training is necessary, we need to be up to date in the housing field, we analyse the residents and staff survey results and make changes and improvements as a result”

“A member of staff needed to improve I T skills, so an Excel course was organised, now they can produce monthly pre and post inspection reports on Excel, it is more efficient and looks professional”

“On the welfare benefits training I learnt about the appeal process and gained knowledge of legislation, now I can advise people on the appeal process”

“There has been more health & safety training, I feel up to date on risk assessment”

“Induction is a lot better, temporary staff couldn’t believe how good the induction was when they started here”

“I don’t think they can improve on anything, this is a very good organisation to work for”

Health and Wellbeing at Work Recommendations – Indicators 9 - 10

Managers link low staff turnover to the good staff practices they have in place, like flexitime, kiddie vouchers, the option of part time working for maternity leave returners etc.

Sickness rates did increase slightly in the past 9 months and analysis has shown this has been a result of high pressure of work caused by the flooding; steps have been taken to support people through this period.

Anecdotal evidence along with some quantifiable evidence in the shape of low turnover and normal sickness rates is considered to be a result of staff friendly policies and the health & wellbeing aspects noted above in this report. .

Health and Wellbeing at Work Recommendations – Indicators 9 - 10

Setting in place a specific strategy, plan and measurable objectives for health & wellbeing related practices would enable the organisation to accurately measure the impact.

10. Additional Information

Further information about Investors in People UK and the Models of Good Practice e.g. Leadership and Management, Recruitment and Selection, Work Life Balance and Profile can be sought by accessing the Investors in People UK Website. There is also information on the Investors in People Champion programme.

www.investorsinpeople.co.uk

Information about Investors in People in Yorkshire and Humberside can be found at www.yhal.org.uk. In addition Opportunities for staff to attend workshops and seminars on related Investors in People activities and liP Advisor support (including information on its Staff E Survey) can be accessed via the YHAL website at www.yhal.org.uk and/or phoning them on 01423 531133