

## NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL

## REPORT

TO: Social Work Committee	Subject:
FROM: Jim Dickie Director of Social Work	NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL INSPECTION UNIT
DATE OF COMMITTEE: 22 April 1997	ANNUAL REPORT 1 APRIL 1996 - 31 MARCH 1997
REF: ANNREP97/REM	

**1. BACKGROUND**

- 1.1 Scottish Office Circular SWSG 9/90 sets out the requirement for an Annual Report on the inspection functions of the Department to be prepared and presented to the relevant local authority committee, and indicates that the report should be published and circulated widely.
- 1.2 Circular SWSG 7/96 re-stated this requirement and elaborated on the proposed format and content of the Annual Report.
- 1.3 SWSG 7/96 also re-emphasised earlier guidance that an Advisory Committee on Inspection be put in place as a source of independent advice to enhance the objectivity of the Department's inspection function.

**2. REPORT FORMAT**

- 2.1 The Inspection Unit Annual Report is attached for members information and consideration as Appendix One.
- 2.2 Scottish Office Guidance on report format outlines minimum content in relation to methods, approach and outcomes.
- 2.3 Guidance requires explanation where the minimum of two inspections of establishments per year is not achieved. Members will note from Section 6 of the Annual Report that in the first year of operation North Lanarkshire establishments will have been inspected only once, therefore achieving 50% of the target.

**3. MANAGEMENT ACTION**

- 3.1 Arising from the shortfall in inspections undertaken, the adequacy of the present structure of the Unit to undertake both the registration and inspection functions of the Council, will be reviewed.

3.2 A report will be tabled for Committee's consideration within 3 months indicating progress towards inspection targets and identifying any staffing or resource implications.

#### 4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Committee is asked to:

- i) note receipt of the Annual Report on Inspection and to accept the findings therein;
- ii) note the Management actions proposed to ensure inspection targets are met in the year 1997/98.



**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**April 1997**

*For further information on this report please contact Dennis O'Donnell, Principal Officer (Registration & Inspection)*  
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# NORTH LANARKSHIRE COUNCIL INSPECTION UNIT - ANNUAL REPORT 25 MARCH 1997

## Introduction

This, the first report on inspection in North Lanarkshire, is produced one year after the reorganisation of local government, which saw North Lanarkshire Council replace Strathclyde Regional Council as the inspection authority in the areas of residential and daycare.

Within North Lanarkshire, inspection of services to under 8's, namely childminding and non domestic day care, is the responsibility of the Education Department and so not referred to here; similarly, responsibility for inspection of nursing homes lies with Lanarkshire Health Board.

Nationally, a pattern is emerging of the organisational arrangements for inspection services being located alongside different functions within local authorities. In North Lanarkshire the inspection service is one of the functions of a Unit which has both the statutory responsibility for registration of private and voluntary care establishments and inspection of these, plus inspection of local authority residential provision. In its first year of operation the main aims have been to establish a credible inspection service following the reorganisation of local government.

In early April 1996 Scottish Office Guidance was provided to local authorities on the setting up of units to deal with their statutory inspection functions. The Guidance re-emphasised the need for improved openness and availability of information arising from inspections, and to provide this in ways useful to those who commission or provide services, as well as to users or those considering using services. The measure of effective inspection is whether, within the process of inspecting services, it informs such a widespread readership and contributes effectively to the development of standards, locally and nationally, through the information gathered.

This report is intended to inform readers and to assist in identification areas where the inspection functions of the Council can be improved and better targeted in the coming year. Material included cannot cover all aspects of the service, and for any further information or to make any comment on the inspection services please contact *Dennis O'Donnell, Principal Officer, Registration and Inspection (01698 332058)*.

Jim Dickie  
Director of Social Work

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## 1. Function

The inspection function in North Lanarkshire is carried out by staff from the Inspection Unit. The Unit is managed at arms length by the Head of Social Work Development who has delegated responsibility from the Director of Social Work for the inspection function.

## 2. Statutory Basis for Inspection

The Social Work (Scotland) Act 1968 Sections 67 and 68, as amended by Section 51 of the National Health Service and Community Care Act, 1990 sets out the basis of local authorities' inspection responsibilities.

## 3. Context

The inspection responsibilities of the Unit relate to residential establishments provided by the private and voluntary sectors, as well as local authority provision; day care services in the private and voluntary sectors are subject to inspection, but to date this responsibility has not been extended to local authority run day care services.

At present in the North Lanarkshire Council area there are 63 inspectable residential establishments and 6 inspectable day care services. With the proposed closure of two local authority and one privately owned establishment imminent, and alongside planned developments, it is envisaged that during 1997 this figure will settle around the 70 mark.

## 4. Establishments: Sector and Users Profiles

The tables below outline sector differences. Table 1 outlines the composition of inspectable establishments by sector; Table 2 by client group.

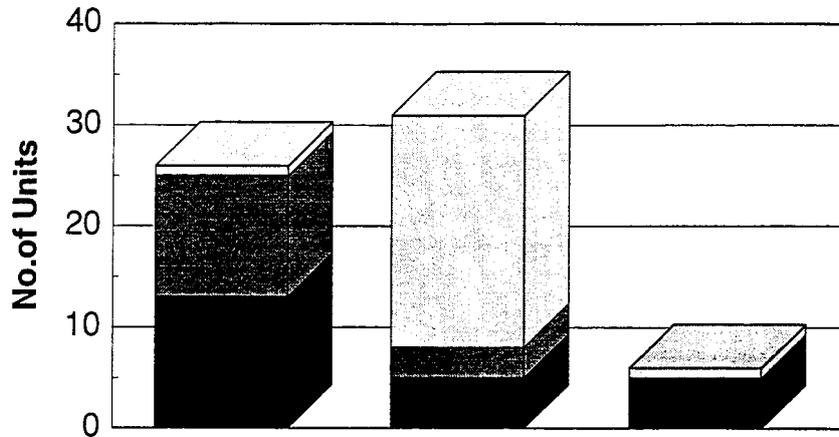
From these it is evident that the local authority and the private sector are the main providers of care for older people, each with a similar number of establishments, but the local authority is the main provider due to the total number of beds in its establishments.

The main voluntary sector provision is in the adult care field, predominantly providing services for those with a learning disability or mental health problems. Here establishments tend to be significantly smaller and more diverse in their design than in other sectors.

Residential childcare, with the exception of one residential school within the voluntary sector, is largely provided by the local authority. A small number of respite care establishments in the voluntary sector provide services both to children and adults with disabilities.

**Table 1**

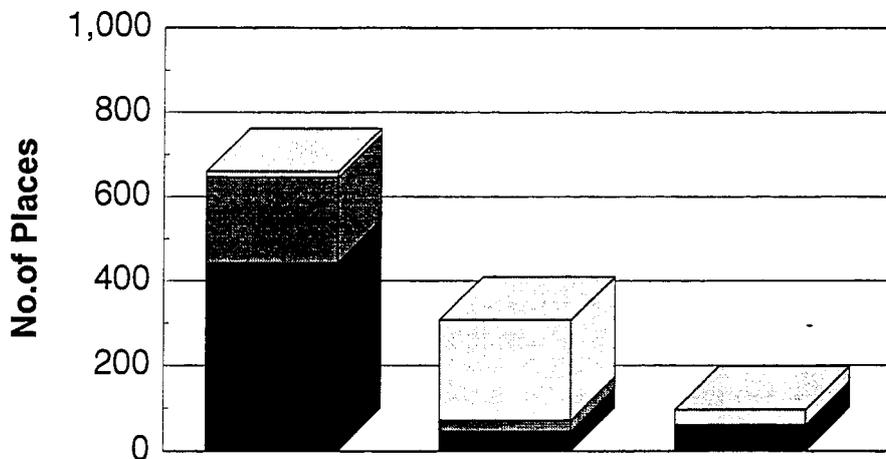
**Inspectable Residential Establishments by Sector**



Sector	Older People	Adults	Children
Local Authority	13	5	5
Private	12	3	0
Voluntary	1	23	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>6</b>

**Table 2**

**Inspectable Residential Places by Sector**



Sector	Older People	Adults	Children
Local Authority	442	46	60
Private	204	25	0
Voluntary	14	237	36
<b>Total</b>	<b>660</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>96</b>

## Day care

There are 6 inspectable day care establishments. Three providing services for elderly people are located in the private sector and are linked to nursing homes; the remaining three are in the voluntary sector and provide service for persons with a wide range of learning and/or physical disabilities.

## 5. Staffing

The Unit staffing comprises 1 Principal Officer, 5 Registration and Inspection Officers and 2 Administration/Clerical workers. All are full-time employees who in addition to their inspection duties, have registration responsibilities .

Staff have a range of social work experience relevant to management and development of residential and day care services, and have accumulated substantial inspection experience. Access to relevant training opportunities for Officers undertaking the inspection task have been limited in the past year. At a national level, consideration is being given to training needs of Officers to assist in developing their skills in carrying out the inspection task.

## 6. Inspection Targets

Scottish Office Guidance indicates that 2 inspections of each establishment should be carried out annually, one of which should be unannounced.

By 1 April 97 all North Lanarkshire establishments will have been inspected only once. This performance is attributable to a range of factors, not least demands placed on the Unit in consolidating existing registration work, new registrations, monitoring of registered establishments and the investigation of serious complaints.

Measures intended to address this shortfall include the temporary secondment of staff, review of staffing requirements and the re-assessment of the split of inspection and registration workloads to specific staff. It is envisaged that through reorganisation the targets set for inspection will be achieved during the 1997/98 period.

In 1997/98 it is intended to further develop information systems relevant to both the registration and inspection functions, so providing clearer data on the frequency and specific nature of contact with establishments. This adaptation to the existing database will help to monitor inspection patterns and assist further in the evaluation of service.

## 7. Inspection Methods

Inspections have largely been based on cross-evaluation of the following areas:

**observations:** to assess staff practice, skills, organisation, working methods and approach in providing relevant care and support to residents.

**examination of essential records** : to assess the manner in which establishments are administered and managed and to ensure accountability. A range of records relating to health and safety, routine administration, care management and staffing arrangements are subject to inspection.

**interviews with managers and staff**: to assess staff structure, recruitment processes, staff development arrangements, staffs' knowledge, attitudes and general understanding of, and commitment to the care task;

**interviews with residents**: these take place on an individual basis but occasionally, informally with small groups. The aim of these interviews is to receive residents views, at first hand, on the care and support provided, to identify areas of concern and scope for improvement . Interviews with residents are essential in establishing whether individual care needs are being inappropriately identified and met.

An acknowledged gap in the inspection process is in ensuring the participation of relevant others such as relatives, advocates or social workers. The timing of inspections, in many instances exclude contact with certain groupings, such as nightshift workers. In future, where inspections are announced information will be forwarded to establishments to inform all parties of the inspection visit.

## **8. Announced/Unannounced Inspection**

To date in North Lanarkshire a strategy of unannounced inspections has largely been followed; 5 from 6 of all inspections carried out have taken place on an unannounced basis.

All inspections of new establishments in the first instance are carried out on an announced basis. The pattern of mainly unannounced visits appears to have caused few difficulties for providers and service users. Where it has been shown to be essential to revisit an establishment for a specific purpose, conclusion of inspection has been deferred to allow this.

It is envisaged that a regular pattern of unannounced inspection will continue to be a feature of the Unit's approach, although to a greater extent mixed with announced visits

## **9. Inspection Standards and Self-Evaluation**

The basis for inspection in North Lanarkshire has been the document "Seven Objectives for Quality Residential Care". This document, and its accompanying self-evaluation document, invites managers, staff and service users to evaluate standards in their establishment. Although made available to establishments prior to 1st April 1996, the document was not widely used in inspection prior to then.

Standards inspected focus on users' experience of the service provided and attempt to measure "outcomes" and give weight to issues of user satisfaction. Use of the document over the past year has highlighted the need to amend and reduce this, if it is to continue to be purposeful. It is now evident that standards documents in their present form are less applicable to childcare and daycare services than was initially considered to be the case and accordingly work on amended versions has been initiated.

## 10. Inspection Process

There are 4 different stages:

- i) Inspectors evaluate each establishment against the standards, comparing these with the Home's own evaluation.
- ii) These are reported on, unmet standards are identified and, where necessary formal recommendations are made.
- iii) An action plan is required outlining measures taken or intended with regard to the recommendations.
- iv) Action taken on recommendations would be followed up on subsequent inspections.

To date in North Lanarkshire stages (i) - (iii) have been concluded. Prior to follow up inspection, it is difficult to comment on specific attention given to recommendations or to make specific sector by sector comparisons. However, action plans from across all sectors indicate firm intentions to address recommendations made, within reasonable timescales.

A number of establishments inspected have not completed the self-evaluation process and inspection reports have yet to be finalised on others. Therefore Table 3 below, is drawn from a sample of 44 inspections of residential establishments across all sectors and is extracted from the evaluation of performance in relation to the following three care objectives:

- i) that residents personal and social care needs are met;
- ii) that residents live in a homely and comfortable environment, and
- iii) that residents feel safe and secure.

Critically, Inspectors' assessments are that by far the majority of establishments meet the broad care objectives and expected standards as outlined above. However, in highlighting the most commonly unmet standards, providers of service can identify those areas which prominently need attention and which are likely to be given focus on future inspections.

## 11. Inspection Outcomes

**TABLE 3**

Reflects information from a total of 44 Inspections in the North Lanarkshire area :16 in Local Authority establishments, 17 from establishments in the Voluntary Sector and 11 from those in the Private Sector.

ARE RESIDENTS PERSONAL AND SOCIAL CARE NEEDS MET?	DO RESIDENTS LIVE IN A HOMELY & COMFORTABLE ENVIRONMENT?	DO RESIDENTS FEEL SAFE AND SECURE?
Inspectors Assessment: YES 42 NO 2 (of these 1 Private, 1 Local Authority)	Inspectors Assessment: YES 41 NO 3 (of these 2 Private, 1 Local Authority)	Inspectors Assessment: YES 40 NO 4 (of these 1 Private, 3 Local Authority)

MOST COMMONLY UNMET STANDARDS	MOST COMMONLY UNMET STANDARDS	MOST COMMONLY UNMET STANDARDS
Are residents enabled to be independent? YES 39 NO 5 (of these 2 Voluntary, 3 Local Authority)	Do location, appearance & surroundings enhance residents lives? YES 32 NO 12 (of these 4 Private, 7 Voluntary, 1 Local Authority)	Do residents know terms and conditions & have contracts etc.? YES 26 NO 18 (of these 14 Local Authority, 4 Voluntary)
Are residents involved in identifying their care needs? YES 37 NO 7 (of these 4 Private, 1 Voluntary, 2 Local Authority)	Are residents views taken account of in furnishings and decor? YES 34 NO 10 (of these 7 Private, 3 Voluntary)	Are residents surroundings adapted to meet their changing needs? YES 30 NO 14 (of these 2 Private, 6 Voluntary, 6 Local Authority)
Do residents have opportunities to review care? YES 34 NO 10 (of these 3 Private, 5 Voluntary, 2 Local Authority)	Can residents move between public rooms with ease? YES 32 NO 12 (of these 3 Private, 3 Voluntary, 6 Local Authority)	

Main issues arising from this table:

- that more could be done to ensure residents are consulted regarding their care needs and involved in the process of reviewing these;
- that in some establishments independence is not specifically encouraged;
- that the location and design of some establishments are not well suited for their purpose; accessibility throughout establishments is often problematic and adaptation not always possible nor considered
- that residents are often uninformed regarding the terms and conditions of residence and, in the local authority sector in particular, the failure to provide contracts needs to be addressed.

**Table 4** highlights the most common recommendations from inspections of a sample of 50 establishments drawn from all 3 care sectors. It must be emphasised that highlighting areas of concern fails to indicate the positive fact that there are relatively few recommendations being made regarding concerns about the quality of home life experienced by residents in the majority of establishments.

In interpreting recommendations it should be noted that these may not always indicate poor standards, in certain instances these may relate to improving on an existing satisfactory standard. However, Table 4 highlights areas where further developments or improvements are required and in this context these recommendations highlight areas in which providers require to take action.

#### **TABLE 4**

Reflects information from a sample of 50 establishments: 19 in the Local Authority sector, 14 in the Private sector and 17 in the Voluntary sector)

#### **Most Common Recommendations:**

	Local Authority	Private	Voluntary
Refurbishment/Redecoration	8/19	10/14	7/17
Administrative Returns/Records	9/19	4/14	4/17
Contracts	14/19	0/14	2/17
Care Plans	9/19	10/14	10/17
Staffing Deployment/Numbers	11/19	9/14	13/17
Training/Supervision	5/19	5/14	1/17

## **12. Comments on Care Sectors**

From Tables 3 and 4 and from inspections concluded over the past year the following general points are drawn about the provision across the local authority, private and voluntary sectors.

### **Local Authority**

The main issues for the local authority sector relate to care staff deployment, often arising from establishment size/design. Increasing frailty and confusion among residents in elderly care establishments is a growing care management problem for the local authority sector in particular. In the childcare field the transition from large to small scale units and providing care for young people with very complex needs requires adjustments in staff skills, training and support.

Adult residential care provision constitutes a small part of the local authority's services but is of mixed quality. Two units in particular have problems related to their physical environment and staffing structures which make achievement of high standards of care difficult.

Units in the local authority sector benefit from the extensive pool of experience in that sector with associated management strength and commitment to staff training and support.

## Private Sector

Private Sector establishments in North Lanarkshire care predominantly for older people. These establishments tend to have fewer beds than counterparts in the local authority. Residents' dependency levels have risen in this sector and are now comparable to those in local authority establishments. Understanding of formal care management concepts is generally weaker in this sector. Standards of accommodation, staffing and care practice are quite diverse, with examples of high and minimal standards evident. Staff tend to be mixed in terms of experience, there is less investment in training than in other sectors and fewer staff with formal social care qualifications. Staff undertaking combined care and domestic roles is common and can deflect staff from care duties. A number of private home owners are investing in adaptation of accommodation to improve ratio of single to double rooms. Several owners demonstrate a good commitment to retaining staff, whilst others experience difficulty in doing so.

## Voluntary Sector

The voluntary sector is the primary provider in the fields of learning disabilities and mental health. A cluster of well established local and national organisations generally provide acceptable and sometimes innovative and high standards of service. Commitment to staff development and training is high and this benefits users. There is more apparent diversity of services in this sector. Accommodation is often adapted ordinary housing and in several instances this creates problems in group living and for those with disabilities. Promotion and maintenance of independence is most apparent in this sector, although equally examples exist of a paternalistic approach which can serve to discourage this.

## 13. Public Reporting

Scottish Office Guidance was that from the 1st April all inspection reports were to be made publicly available. In North Lanarkshire measures were taken to make existing public summary reports available via Social Work Area Teams, and to supplement these as further inspections were concluded. Recently, inspection reports have also been made publicly available via the Princess Royal Trust for Carers.

Where residential placement is being considered Social Workers are actively encouraged to make inspection reports available to applicants or their relatives to assist them to make considered choice

A firmer strategy to improve public awareness of the availability of reports and to extend the availability of these into other areas such as local libraries will be developed in coming months.

### Reports

A public report is issued following each inspection. Scottish Office Guidance indicates that these should be clear, understandable and written in plain English.

## 14. Links with Lanarkshire Health Board

Since 1995 a small number of residential and daycare units have been developed within nursing home premises registered by the Health Board. A number of meetings with Board colleagues have resulted in work being initiated on drawing up standards applicable to establishments which serve nursing plus

residential or social day care functions. It is intended that this work progresses in coming months and that agreement is reached on shared standards and arrangements for joint inspection of such establishments.

## **15. Advisory Committee on Inspection**

This Committee has now been established and is scheduled to meet for the first time in late March. The broad remit of the group is to examine and comment on all aspects of inspection work undertaken by the Unit.

## **16. Conclusion**

In its first year of operation the Unit has been effectively established and set about its inspection function across the three care sectors in a credible and considered manner. An Advisory Committee is now in place, which it is hoped will contribute to the external evaluation of the inspection service.

The Unit has been unable to meet expected performance targets, but this is largely due to resourcing issues which will be addressed in coming months. The methods of inspection adopted require to be modified slightly but the basis for inspection, through partnership with providers and service users, is now established.

The Unit's findings over the past year positively indicate that the majority of establishments are operating to acceptable care standards, but identifies sufficient areas of concern to indicate that there is no room for complacency. Scope for improvement is identified in all sectors without any one sector having a monopoly on high standards.

The following Unit priorities are identified for the coming year:

- to achieve inspection targets;
- to develop the inspection process to include the views of those not currently consulted;
- to conclude work on inspection standards and self-evaluation documents for adult and childcare sectors;
- to further develop database information to define the nature of all contacts with establishments and improve information available about the inspection process;
- to establish forums for client group and sector to providers to share inspection findings and develop standards;
- to develop opportunities for lay persons to be involved in the inspection process;
- to develop a more prominent and widely available public report strategy;
- to identify relevant training opportunities for Officers undertaking the inspection function.

**Jim Dickie**  
**Director of Social Work**  
**March 1997**