



**Delivering an
exceptional
housing service**



**Trends arising from complaints, comments and
dissatisfaction during quarter 1**

1. TRENDS ARISING FROM COMPLAINTS, COMMENTS AND DISSATISFACTION DURING QUARTER 1

Recurring issues – complaints, comments and dissatisfaction

As mentioned in 'Feedback reason identified by customer' the main underlying issue arising from feedback so far this year has related to delays in providing a service.

Poor customer service is the second highest reason tenants made contact during quarter 1 which follows the trend from last year. This is echoed in the information gathered from satisfaction surveys which is explored in more detail below:

Headline themes and trends from complaints made during Q1

The main themes that can be deduced from complaints are as follows:

i) Delays providing service

Repair Team

83% of contacts concerning delays in this quarter relate to the repair service. Repairs raised at the end of last year were delayed due to the lockdown in the new year. Once the restrictions were lifted in March, tenants called to rearrange the cancelled work, this combined with new repair reports created very high volumes of work resulting in longer waiting times for appointments. Provided there are no further lockdowns, the waiting time for appointments will decrease.

There continues to be an issue with follow on jobs not being raised in a timely manner resulting in further contact from tenants. This has been caused partly due to the volume of repair requests received, therefore it has been difficult for the scheduling team to keep up with the follow-on requests. It is the intention that operatives will soon be able to raise standard follow on work directly from their handheld, therefore reducing the pressure on the schedulers.

There have also been complaints received from tenants because operatives attended more than once but no work was carried out. This usually happens when a different operative is allocated the follow-on work and is not aware of the work or materials needed. To prevent this, schedulers try to allocate the job back to the original operative although this is not always possible.

Technical Services

Tenants made contact about the length of time taken to carry out work or remove scaffolding. So far, in each case the issue was resolved at site level without the need for investigation.

ii) **Poor customer service**

Repair Team/Customer Contact/Housing

We continue to receive feedback because tenants were not aware of appointments arranged for repairs. This was a recurring issue last year and appears to be mainly due to confirmation by text not being issued at the time the appointment is arranged. Reminder text alerts are automatically issued the night before and the morning of the appointment however this is not a substitute for texts being automatically issued when the job was first raised. The Advisor arranging the appointment needs to issue this manually and unfortunately this is still not happening every time, so the tenant is not aware of an appointment. Tenants have mentioned in satisfaction feedback that, communication needs to be improved as they were not in when someone attended to carry out work or that an engineer turned up unexpectedly.

The timing of appointment reminders have now been changed to provide an alert 48 hours before the visit is due.

Repair Team

Tenants have also raised complaints about the poor customer service received from a contractor. The Repair Manager has raised these issues with the contractor therefore an improvement in performance is expected going forward.

iii) **Property Standard**

Void Team/Allocations

In most cases when tenants complain about property standard this is not long after they have moved into a property and are not satisfied with the standard of work carried out when the property was vacant. This is partly due to high expectations from some tenants and partly due to the repair needed not being obvious during the void period or at the time of letting.

Repairs

During the quarter there was a number of tenants who complained about the property standard due to damp or condensation issues which is leading to several disrepair claims. In the case of condensation, tenants are not always willing to accept that they need to help manage this. In the case of damp, the issues can occur at any time and may not have been obvious when the tenant moved in or external issues could be causing the damp. Unfortunately, there are instances when our Inspectors have missed that damp is the cause of the issue. This has resulted in an independent survey being needed. Once damp or structural issues are diagnosed, remedial work is arranged.

Development

In one case, a tenant of a new build raised a number of issues about his property and it was explained that the building contractors will address the repair issues that cannot wait within a set time, however all minor issues will be picked up at the 12 month snagging visit.

iv) **Staff member issues**

Repairs Team

Feedback was received from tenants stating they were unhappy with the attitude of some repair operatives. One instance related to the language used by operatives carrying out work at a neighbouring empty property which was addressed immediately. In the remaining two situations it was difficult to confirm whether the tradesman had done anything wrong or whether the tenant just did not like what they were trying to explain. Some tenants have also mentioned in satisfaction surveys that some operatives attitude could be better, although this needs to be balanced against the high level of compliments received about repair operatives.

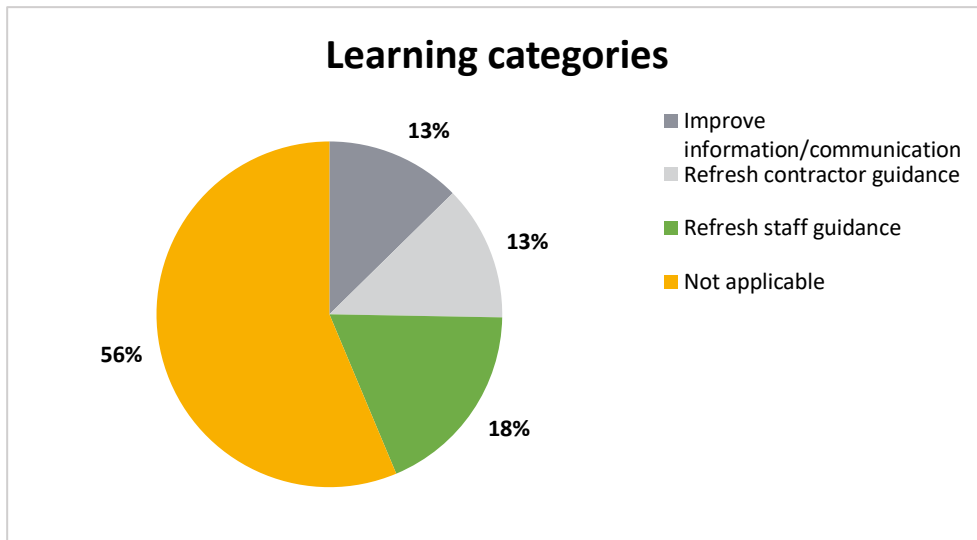
One tenant made contact about a contractor not wearing appropriate PPE. This has also been mentioned in surveys although most comments were again positive as mentioned in section 4 of this report.

Contact Team

Tenants reported being spoken to rudely by call handlers. In most cases the Team Leader listened to the calls and confirmed they were not rude but that improvements could be made. Apologies were made, the calls were discussed with the individuals concerned. Some satisfaction surveys have also mentioned that call handlers were not always helpful, but again this needs to be balanced against the level of compliments received about Contact Advisors.

2. LEARNING

With regard to the trends highlighted above, the learnings that can be taken from these are categorised below:



2.1 The main learning to be taken from feedback is to simply remind staff and contractors of the policies, procedures and standards already in place to ensure these are followed to ensure that:

- Tenants are made aware of appointments arranged.
- Follow on jobs are raised in a timely manner
- All staff are professional when speaking to tenants whether face to face or on the telephone.
- To ensure staff wear appropriate PPE when visiting tenants and following safe working practices such as staying 2 meters apart.

2.2 Two changes to service were also put in place this quarter:

- The Leasehold Manager confirmed that her team will ensure that purchasers receive written confirmation of any charges so there is no misinterpretation about this. This was previously only provided verbally.
- Letters issued to tenants about allocations are to be made clearer.