

Customer Intelligence End of Year Report 2016/2017

“You said – we listened”

Introduction

The aim of Landlord Service is to provide a high quality service which is responsive to, and driven by, the needs of our customers. Each year we produce an Annual Report which shows achievements for the previous year and plans to maintain and improve the service we provide in the future. The Annual Report to tenants contains a wealth of informative information on key performance, customer satisfaction, complaints, achievements and more.

This report sets out an analysis of all customer intelligence received within Landlord Services between 1 April 2016 and 31 March 2017 and will contribute to the production of the Council’s Landlord Annual Report to tenants (2016/17) complying with required governance under the Landlord Regulatory Framework.

Local Offers

The Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England (From April 2012) sets out the regulatory standards for registered providers of housing; these place emphasis on the relationship between landlords and their tenants at a local level. There are two types of Standards: consumer and economic. Consumer standards apply to all registered providers, including local authorities. Economic standards apply only to private registered providers; these include organisations’ who were previously known as housing associations (HA’s) or registered social landlords (RSL’s).

Consumer Standards

- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment
- Home
- Tenancy
- Neighbourhood and Community

Economic Standards

- Governance and Financial Viability*
- Value for Money
- Rent*

*This does not apply to local authorities

The standards aim to put tenants at the heart of shaping, influencing and monitoring the services they receive. The HCA (Homes and Communities Agency) expects tenants and landlords to work closely together to set local service standards/offers. Landlord Services Local Offers was reviewed early 2015 in consultation with tenants.

How do we compare!

	2013/2014	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017
Complaints	241	213	224	216
Compliments	105	68	51	53
Service Requests	159	171	137	171
Total	505	452	412	440

What we know at a Glance!

	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017
Tell Us'	215	159	196	203
Complaints	141	108	149	155
Compliments	61	37	26	17
Service requests	13	14	21	31
MP Enquiries	30	38	20	12
Complaints	1	2	3	/
Compliments	/	/	/	/
Service Requests	29	36	17	12
Councillor/Other	90	110	69	82
Complaints	5	11	5	/
Compliments	2	1	1	/
Service Requests	83	98	63	82
Other	170	145	127	143
Complaints	94	92	67	61
Compliments	42	30	24	36
Service Requests	34	23	36	46
Cabinet Requests*	/	/	/	52
Year Total	505	452	412	492
Response time	6 days	5 days	4 days	4 days

*Cabinet request logging and monitoring commenced partway through quarter 2 (2016/17)

Complaints & Compliments

	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016	2016/2017
Number of complaints	241	213	224	216
Number of stage 1 complaints	213	189	204	195
Number of stage 2 complaints	22	18	17	16
Number of stage 3 complaints	6	6	3	5
Number of complaints upheld	17	16	8	30
Number of compliments	105	68	51	53
Number of service requests	159	171	137	223

A total of 492 complaints, compliments and service requests were received within Landlord Services during 2016 – 2017. Of the total number received, 44% were classified as complaints, 45% service requests and 11% compliments.

The number of service requests has increased significantly, partly as a result of the introduction of the Cabinet Housing Enquiry process introduced August 2016. All Cabinet Housing Enquiries are initially directed to the relevant service area manager for investigation and response within 5 days

Across the total number of 216 complaints:

- **48%** relate to Mears (inclusive of Mears Gas)
- **18%** relate to Housing Solutions
- **16%** relate to Tenancy/ASB issues
- **8%** relate to TBC Repairs
- **5%** relate to Property Services

Across the total number of 53 compliments:

- **21%** relate to Housing Solutions
- **21%** to Tenant Involvement
- **13%** to Tenancy/ASB issues

In summary, only 216 complaints were received within Landlord Service during 2016/2017. This is a significantly small proportion in relation to 4952 household and garage tenancies.

5, Stage 3 complaints were investigated by an independent member of staff. 1, stage 3 complaint was upheld.

Complaints upheld

During 2016/2017 there was a total of 30 complaints, that following investigation, were classified as upheld. Of the 30 cases 7% were associated with Mears.

There were 4 complaints in which a compensation payment was made. For the remaining upheld complaints, a formal apology was made to the customer.

Common themes and trends for upheld complaints

- Lack of communication between the repairs contractor and the tenant
- Plumbing jobs not completed within timescales and below standard
- Out of hours (repairs) staff not ascertaining if a tenant is vulnerable/golden ticket
- Repairs contractor cancelling jobs at the last minute
- Housing applications not being input within a reasonable period of time
- Compensation requests for damage caused by leaking pipes not being repaired correctly
- Damp and mould. It should be noted that in the majority of cases the issue around damp/mould is investigated and concluded to be the result of household lifestyle.
- Homeless applications requesting timescales of when a property will be offered

Ombudsman

- 2 Ombudsman cases were received around:
- Damp and mould
 - Disability adaptation

Recommendations were made for both of the Ombudsman cases which were actioned accordingly

Cabinet Enquiries

Cabinet Enquiry Housing – 22.08.2016 – 31.05.2017

64 enquiries

Breakdown of enquiries by Service Area:

Service Area	Total No Enquiries
Mears /Property Services	2
Tenancy Sustainment/Mears	1
Mears/Repairs	12
Wates/Repairs	6
Tenancy Sustainment - Income	1
Housing Options	1
Housing Solutions	23
H Solutions/H Conditions & Supply	1
Tenancy Sustainment – ASB/Tenancy	10
County Council	1
H Solutions/H Options/B Support	1
H Solutions/H Options	2
Property Services/Asset Management	3
Total number	64

Total number of enquiries from Councillors

Councillor	Total No Enquiries
Cllr Doyle	25
Cllr Thurgood	22
Cllr Cook	11
Cllr Pritchard	2
Cllr Claymore	4
Total number	64

Summary Findings

- Cabinet Housing Enquiry was introduced week commencing 22/8/16 to support cabinet members in resolving enquiries

Information	Summary Headlines
<p>Summary information for 2016/17 setting out complaints and learning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints have reduced from 241 to 216 over the last 4 years. 216 complaints resulting from over c35,000¹ interactions represent less than <1% • 195 complaints are satisfied at stage 1 (90%) • Compliments have reduced, Caretakers do not routinely collect satisfaction anymore • Service requests have increased by 10% from members (159-to-177) • Average response is 4 days • Numbers upheld have increased to 30 and this is part of the continual trend analysis to promote and ensure learning and was

	predictable given end of year position with Mears and challenges around housing need & supply
Summary Cabinet Enquiry since inception (22/8/16-31/5/17)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 64 enquiries received during 32 weeks (2 on average per week) • 25 & 22 from Cllr Doyle & Thurgood • 36% complaints – housing solutions • 18% complaints – Mears (not Wates) • Average response time 1.49 days
Performance table taken from the customer dashboard	Information will be updated and discussed in the cabinet report 17/8/17
Extract of letters	Letters remain under review and part of the learning to prevent escalation

Learning from Complaints

Learning from complaints is crucial and as part of the Landlord Regulatory Framework Complaints Review Panel (sub-group of TCG) was established with terms of reference including a responsibility: -

- to review complaints anonymously and make recommendations for improvement
- To review letters (redacted) and make recommendations for change to simplify and tailor for customer purposes
- To work across key themes to look for business improvement

Together with the Complaints Review Panel, the following service improvements have been made: -

- Contributions to the review of the corporate 'Tell Us' Policy
- Review of all service standards and literature
- Development of peer mentoring to help resolve complaints at an informal level
- Improvements to stage 1 responses to mitigate need for further questions and escalation to stage 2
- Where possible to record responses to complaints face-to-face rather than via letter, recording outcomes in writing
- Prioritising of service improvement, i.e. lettable standard where complaints around condition of empty property
- Forecasting increase in complaints, i.e. on closedown of Mears contract

Areas identified for 2017/18

- Work around damp and condensation – report expected on Forward Plan March 2018
- Development of standard letters linked to formal customer care and letter writing training
- Development of insight and profiling data to tailor service user solutions to service user offer
- Members and Officers collaborating to shift the emphasis from “we will fix it for you” to providing service users with tools to ‘self-empower’; nudge techniques around digital connectivity that seeks to reduce waste demand
- To identify letter writing skilling/customer care training as a core competency requirement and make recommendations for a training plan as part of the DQS

process; concurrently underway elsewhere and as part of the council's corporate ambition around managing demand more effectively


- Continued contribution to the development of the Corporate 'Tell Us' policy
- Potential to extend cabinet housing enquiry to all members subject to further CEO & Leader discussions





Compare our Performance April 2016 – March 2017

Landlord Service continues to review key performance indicators, with tenants', to ensure they remain customer focused and are meaningful. We continue with live updating of the customer dashboard, on line, as reporting performance openly builds credibility and satisfaction. The following indicators have been agreed with tenants'.

	2014/15	2015/16	2016/2017	Estimated Top Quartile*
Overall satisfaction with Landlord Services	75%	78%	78%	82%
Average time between lettings	17 days	14 days	17.60 days	17.50 days
Estate Inspections	10 inspections completed	10 inspections completed	10 inspections completed	Not benchmarked
Satisfaction with communal cleaning	87%	87%	87%	Not benchmarked
Number of tenants on the database of involvement	497	561	617	Not benchmarked
% of appointments made and kept	97.86%	94.17%	95.00%	98.06%
Gas servicing – CP12	99.69%	99.37%	99.99%	100.00%
Urgent repairs completed on time	98.02%	98.35%	97.58%	98.04%
Customer satisfaction with repairs	93.76%	97.67%	83%	98.50%
Arrears as a % of rent due	1.96%	1.82%	1.82%	2.13%
Evictions	28	18	10	8

Top performance indicators as at 1 April 2017 as voted for by tenants

Performance Indicator	Target	Current Value	Are we on target	Trend
Percentage of all responsive repairs completed within target	97%	97.58%		↑

Percentage of appointments made and kept	96%	95%		↓
Percentage of repairs completed on first visit	80%	88.75%		↑
Percentage of properties with valid Gas Safety Certificate	100%	99.99%		↔
Average re-let times (in days)	16	17.60		↓
Percentage of closed resolved anti - social behaviour cases	-	96%	-	-
Number of closed unresolved anti - social behaviour cases	-	1	-	-
Current rent arrears as a percentage of annual debit	1.9%	1.82%	-	-
Number of complaints since 1st April 2016	-	216	-	-
Number of complaints upheld since 1st April 2016	-	30	-	-
Number of compliments since 1st April 2016	-	53	-	-

Monitoring performance

Landlord Service monitors performance to ensure its services are delivered to a standard acceptable to tenants and to meet statutory requirements.

A series of performance indicators have been put in place for key service areas. These indicators are used to measure how well we perform in delivering services such as housing management, major works, allocations etc. The **Tenant Consultative Group** has been significantly involved in the development of local indicators determining how they would like to see performance information reported in the future.

Reporting performance

Each year Landlord Service publishes an annual report to tenants which includes a summary of the previous year's activity and performance information across key service areas accompanied by commentary. The production of the Annual Report is advertised on the web, via an e-newsletter and targeted hard copies to ensure value for money.

Feedback received from the Council's formal complaints system 'Tell Us' and recommendations from the Complaints Review Panel are routinely reported at Landlord Performance Management meetings detailing trends and key performance data. The Complaints Review Panel, set up at the beginning of 2012, specifically monitors complaints and emerging trends as part of the wider customer experience.

Customer satisfaction forms a key part of the Landlord Service performance management process and helps to drive improvements through learning from the customer experience. Landlord Service has a robust programme of service satisfaction measures in place to consistently compare tenants' satisfaction with services overtime and in addition, the **STAR survey** – Survey of Tenants and Residents, helps to keep up-to-date with tenant opinion as well as maximising our understanding of overall tenant satisfaction and expectation.

Alongside the above, the results of all customer satisfaction surveys and feedback are reported quarterly to the Tenant Consultative Group and Tenant Involvement Group. These groups provide the opportunity for tenant scrutiny of services with actions/recommendations put forward to resolve issues.

STAR survey – Survey of Tenants and Residents

The **STAR survey** ensures the continued measurement of customer satisfaction with services customers receive from their landlord and how performance compares to other landlords both alike and national. In addition to this, the survey can identify areas for service improvement, compare satisfaction with services over time, specifically with the results of previous surveys of tenant satisfaction, and enable performance comparison with other comparable Borough Councils.

The principal objectives of the STAR survey are to:

- provide robust data which accurately represents the views of tenants on key satisfaction measures
- provide a comprehensive view of other perception-based measures on a range of specific services provided by the Council's Landlord Service
- provide an assessment of progress against the 2008 and 2011 STATUS survey and 2015/16 STAR survey to illustrate how the Council's Landlord Service has performed over time in changing patterns of customer satisfaction and expectation to inform future operational development.

STAR Survey 2015/16 key performance indicators

Key Performance Indicators	2011	%diff.	2015
Overall satisfaction	75%	↑+3%	78%
Quality of home	Aggregate data not available	N/A	79%
Neighbourhood	75%	↑+8%	83%
Rent provides VFM	Aggregate data not available	N/A	73%
Repairs & Maintenance	68%	—	68%
Listens to views*	54%	↑+5%	59%
Keeping tenants informed*	68%	↑+12%	80%

During the interim years of STAR we continue to undertake a series of mini service assessments based on key priorities as part of Landlord Services annual satisfaction Calendar.

During 2016/2017, Landlord Service engaged and carried out significantly more qualitative research, to determine customer opinion and expectation, i.e. ASB telephone surveys/complaint surveys/service charge consultation etc. The primary benefits of qualitative research is that information is considerably richer than a series of numbers on a page and in addition, provides the opportunity to interact with customers more positively at the same time as researching performance. For Landlord Service this provides interaction and communication with those tenants that are ordinarily considered 'hard to reach'

HouseMark

To ensure that we are always looking at ways to improve services, maintain high satisfaction rates and provide good value for money, we subscribe to HouseMark. HouseMark collates information from more than 550 ALMOs, Councils and Housing Associations to compare and benchmark valuable data such as value for money and performance.

Impact Assessments

In addition to satisfaction surveys and tenant feedback, Landlord Service routinely carries out impact assessments for all involvement initiatives and activities. Impact assessments measure not only customer satisfaction but also the overall impact of activity to enable us to learn what has worked well and what can be used successfully for future involvement/activity.

Tenant Inspectors

As part of its Tenant Involvement and Co-regulatory framework, the Council has an innovative scheme to empower customers to act as tenant inspectors. This scheme, which has now been running for over three years, provides tenants with the opportunity to audit the delivery of estate caretaking and cleaning services. The scheme has also been extended to include estate inspections. Tenant inspectors monitor the quality of service delivery against defined standards and undertake on-site inspections. They are empowered to call managers to account if services do not meet required standards and their feedback forms part of overall performance monitoring.

Service assessments 2016/2017

During 2016/2017 we have continued to review and measure tenant opinion in many different ways as the most productive method for measuring customer service levels across one area may differ substantially for other areas. The Tenant Regulatory and Involvement Team are responsible for collating, monitoring and reporting on the following:

Customer intelligence 2016/2017		
	Format	Frequency
Complaints satisfaction (Tell us)	Telephone/postal	As soon as complaint is closed
Repairs/Gas servicing questionnaire – Mears/Wates	Postal/telephone	Half yearly
New Tenant questionnaire	Paper based/postal	Monthly
Open House	Paper based/postal & face-to-face	Bi-annual

Supported Housing moving in survey	Paper based	Quarterly
Supported Housing moving out survey	Paper based	Yearly
ASB resident perception survey	Paper based/postal with rent statements	Yearly
ASB tenant satisfaction	Telephone	Monthly
ASB perpetrator survey	Postal	Monthly
STAR survey	Paper based/postal	Bi-annual
Communal cleaning	Postal/face-to-face	Bi-annual
Local Offers review and consultation	Postal	Bi-annual
Rent and arrears satisfaction survey	Postal	Bi-annual
Service Charge Offer Consultation	Postal/face-to-face	Prior to the implementation of service charges

In addition to the above, the following customer intelligence is also collected:

- ‘Finding a Home’ satisfaction
- Non-Bidders Questionnaire ‘Finding a Home’ – This is a questionnaire carried out to ascertain why some people are not bidding for properties on the ‘Finding a Home’ Choice Based Letting Scheme
- Environmental works programme satisfaction

Landlord Service is committed to providing a high quality service in a responsive and approachable manner. We continue to develop our services to meet the changing needs within the resources available and to demonstrate value for money.

Looking to the future

The current financial climate and the continued national policy changes affecting welfare benefits and housing have implications for the services we provide, and in general will increase pressure on services at a time when resources for public services are declining. Time has been spent focusing on how we can re-design services to minimise the impact of external change on the services we provide. Our priority continues to be to provide a high quality customer experience and to undertake the proactive work that is necessary to ensure we can better meet housing needs in the future.

You said, we listened

<i>You said:</i>	<i>We listened:</i>
The Complaints Review Panel recommended that an acknowledgement email is sent every time a non-urgent repair is reported via the Mears email address	Repairs emails are checked throughout the day and an acknowledgement is always emailed
Residents believe that the time taken to try and resolve damp and condensation issues takes far too long and sometimes	In the majority of cases and after thorough investigation the issue of damp and condensation is often concluded as the result

issues are not always resolved.	<p>of individual lifestyle. When this is proved to be the case, staff will offer advice and assistance to customers along with supporting literature on how they can mitigate risks to condensation/damp. When this is not the cause we will endeavour to work with Oaks preservation to reduce the time taken to diagnose a damp/condensation issues</p> <p>It has been recommended that the Tenancy Sustainment Officer, on the 6 weeks welcome visit, discuss the condensation leaflet and leave it with the tenant to refer to</p>
Residents have requested further information on what Anti -Social Behaviour is and the powers available to deal with it	Anti -Social Behaviour law training was arranged for some tenants on the tenant involvement working groups and proved to be extremely successful
Residents are keen to learn about how other teams/agencies support Landlord Service in dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour	Guest speakers such as the CCTV manager are being invited to future meetings
Residents felt people would be put off by attending an Anti-Social Behaviour Focus Group and recommended individual interviews	Individual interviews for dissatisfied customers instead of focus groups are now being piloted

Landlord Service Achievements 2016/17

Customer Dashboard – Key Performance Indicators as voted for by tenants

Performance Indicator	Target	Year End 2016/17	On Target	Comments
Older people, living independently in Sheltered housing, satisfied with the service	80%	94%	↑	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Embedded the new housing management model Annual Health and safety sheltered inspections & training completed
Current Arrears as a % of the debit	2%	1.82%	↑	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrears down from the start of the year, c£337k to £329k Collected 103% of the debit Arrears lowest in the last 5 years External Accreditation from HQN
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sustained top quartile

Average re-let times for empty properties resulting in reduced rent loss	16 days	17.60		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> performance 92% satisfaction with the allocations and lettings process
% of properties with a valid gas certificate – complying with LGSR	100%	99.99%	↔	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reported performance is good when benchmarked with HouseMark Overall satisfaction of 61% with the repair service
% of all responsive repairs completed within target times	97%	78%	↓	
% of appointments made and kept	96%	95%	↑	
% ASB cases resolved and communicated	95%	99%	↑	
<p>Numbers of Adaptations outstanding at year end outside agreed service standard</p> <p>Minor works – completed within 28 days DFA – within 1 year</p>	-	-	-	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All DFAs (127) have been issued and there is no waiting list
Overall satisfaction with the Councils landlord service	80%	78%	↑	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 75% in 2011/12 via independent Status Survey 78% in 2015 - Star Survey independently commissioned
Satisfaction with cleaning & caretaking services	85%	88%	↑	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aggregate figure of 88% cleaning (measured by tenant inspectors) Communal cleaning survey carried out July 2017 – results ready September 2017

Home Improvement programme 2016/17

Improvement programme	How many	Total spend
Kitchens	295	772,000
Bathrooms	246	927,000
Roofing	16	156,000
Windows & Doors	340	229,000
Disabled Adaptations	127	440,000

Also during the year!

What we achieved in 2016/2017	
Number of needs and risk assessment carried out prior to moving in	48
Number of new tenancy visits completed at sheltered housing schemes within 24 hours of moving in	48
Percentage of legionella checks completed during the year	100%

HouseMark 2016/2017

Responsive Repairs	2015/2016	2016/2017
Average number of calendar days taken to complete repairs	10.00 (club median)	16 (lower quartile)
Percentage of repairs completed at the first visit	87.77% (lower quartile)	88.32% (lower quartile)
Appointments kept as % of appointments made	94.24% (lower quartile)	95% (lower quartile)

Rent Arrears & Collection	2015/2016	2016/2017
Rent collected from current and former tenants as a % rent due (excluding arrears b/f)	100.50% (upper quartile)	103% (upper quartile)
Rent collected from current and former tenants as % rent due (Inc arrears b/f)	98.59% (upper quartile)	101% (upper quartile)
Rent arrears of current tenants as % rent due (excluding voids)	1.82% (club median)	1.82% (upper quartile)
Rent arrears of former tenants as % rent due (excluding voids)	2.96% (lower quartile)	3.32% (lower quartile)
Rent arrears of current and former tenants as % of rent due (excluding voids)	4.78% (lower quartile)	3.34% (club median)
Rent loss due to empty properties (voids) a % rent due	0.34% (upper quartile)	0.54% (upper quartile)
Evictions due to rent arrears as a % of all tenancies	0.42% (lower quartile)	0.23% (club median)
Rent arrears of current and former tenants written off as % rent due	0.14% (upper quartile)	0.11% (upper quartile)

Void works & lettings	2015/2016	2016/2017
Average re let time in days (standard re-lets)	14.16 (upper quartile)	17.60 (upper quartile)
Percentage of properties accepted on first offer	82.91% (upper quartile)	76% (club median)