

<b>Meeting:</b>	Customer Committee	
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	12 February 2026	
<b>Agenda number and title of report:</b>	Agenda item 4.1 - Safety and Quality Standard	
<b>Author name and role:</b>	Christine Harrison Stream Lead	Email: customer.engagement@thirteengroup.co.uk
<b>What do you want the Committee to do:</b>	Consider and discuss the matters included within the report, and a) Approve our assessment as being met in all areas.	
<b>The Committee is recommended to:</b>	a) Approve the assessment b) Agree and acknowledge that customers findings show that Thirteen have met all areas of the Safety and Quality Standard.	

## 1 Summary Report

The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) has set consumer standards which all registered providers (housing associations and housing organisations) must comply with. These standards were revised as of 1 April 2024. This is our assessment of how Thirteen meets one of these standards.

- 1.1 We are required to present this assessment to Thirteen Customer Committee and publish it on the Thirteen website so all customers can view it following the implementation of Thirteens new website in February 2026.
- 1.2 There are four consumer standards:
  - Transparency, Influence and Accountability
  - Safety and Quality
  - Tenancy
  - Neighbourhood and Community
- 1.3 Within Thirteen's Customer Involvement Framework, a group of customers are dedicated to testing Thirteen's compliance with the Consumer Standards.
- 1.4 This report gives details of our customer reality checks against the Safety and Quality Standard

## 2 Summary of the decision

- 2.1 This report and supporting evidence show that through our assessment, we have rated this standard as being met in all areas and as a result there are no recommendations.
- 2.2 The customer group consisted of myself as Stream Lead and 12 customers who met on a regular basis across 7 weeks depending on the needs of the group members and the activities to be carried out.
- 2.3 All the checks carried out were to ensure that Thirteen is compliant with the Safety and Quality Standard.

## 3. Background and context - assessments of the Safety and Quality Standard

### Process

- 3.1 We held our first meeting to review the standard, agree the scope and plan the project. In this meeting we agreed the methods to be used to establish compliance.

## **Project Plan**

- 3.2 The project plan was made up of 73 checks/tasks to be carried out across the 7 weeks.

## **Consultation & communication**

### **Group Meetings**

- 3.3 Meetings were held in a hybrid format using Microsoft Teams with a choice of joining online or in person.
- 3.4 Following the initial planning meetings there were 4 further meetings held for the full group to attend. These included meetings with colleagues to discuss the Safety and Quality Standard and how their service area complies with the standard. We were given the opportunity to ask questions prior to and during these meetings, and we were happy that these were answered thoroughly.
- 3.5 We met with the Investment Team who are responsible for undertaking surveys of Thirteen's properties to assess the condition of each home, including any shared or communal areas. The surveyor also gathers data on properties that have undergone retrofit works and records the EPC rating of each property to ensure Thirteen is meeting its targets.
- We are pleased to note that any issues identified in communal areas are referred to the Building Safety Team.
  - As an external contractor is sometimes used to carry out these surveys, we welcomed the reassurance that sample checks are undertaken on stock condition surveys to ensure they are completed to the standard required by Thirteen.
  - We found that where customers have identified vulnerabilities, including mental health needs or religious considerations, this information is shared with the surveyor, and an appropriate plan is agreed with the customer in advance.
  - During the meeting, we also reviewed the content of communications sent to customers in advance of survey visits. This included the initial and reminder letters, as well as the authorisation letter carried by the external surveyor confirming they are acting on behalf of Thirteen.
  - We welcomed the introduction of an FAQ section within the initial letter and asked if this could be included in all correspondence. We also made suggestions to simplify the wording to make the letters clearer and more accessible for customers.
  - We have since been shared the final version of the letter that will be used going forward and we are satisfied that our observations and suggestions have been fully considered.
- 3.6 We met with a Repairs Manager who is responsible for Thirteen's Adaptations Service. During the meeting, we were shown an electronic referral form used by Occupational Therapists when contacting Thirteen on a customer's behalf to request an adaptation, along with a new case management system used to record and manage all adaptations cases.
- The electronic form ensures that all required information is captured at the point of referral, reducing the need for repeat contact. It also enables the Occupational Therapists to request updates on previously submitted adaptation requests.
  - The case management system records all referrals received and allows the team to track the progress of each request.
  - Looking ahead, the system may also be used to communicate directly with customers on the waiting list, providing updates on their current position in the queue and estimated waiting times. We welcome this development as improved communication with customers is vital and will also help to reduce contact with the Touchpoint Teams.
  - The Repairs Manager also outlined the newly introduced viewing and allocations process for adapted properties. A member of the Adaptations Team now attends viewings of adapted properties alongside the Housing Services Coordinator and the prospective customer to ensure properties are suitable both for current and future needs.
  - We were advised that fortnightly meetings are held with the Local Authorities to ensure all parties remain informed and to support effective partnership working.

- 3.7 We met with members of the Building Safety Team who are responsible for ensuring the safety of customers living in multi storey buildings.
- We reviewed the Customer Engagement Strategies developed for each high-rise block following customer consultation in September 2025. We found these strategies to be informative, accessible and well-designed, and we were particularly impressed with the team's efforts to communicate building safety messages through a range of methods, including bingo sessions with small prizes to encourage customer participation.
  - We found that the strategies outline the 'stay put' guidance; however, it is made clear that this is not a legal requirement, and customers may choose to evacuate if they feel safer doing so.
  - We were shown examples of PEEPS (Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans) and PCFRA (Person-Centred Fire Risk Assessment), which are completed with customers living in buildings over 11 metres. We were impressed with the level of detail recorded for each customer and the actions identified to support those who may require assistance in the event of an emergency.
  - We were pleased to hear that all but 1 of Thirteens high rise buildings have been fitted with sprinkler systems.
  - We also discussed the clear instructions provided to customers regarding the use of communal areas, emphasising that no items should be left in these spaces due to potential safety risks. Members of our group who live in flats with communal areas confirmed that, where items are left such as door mats, customers are asked to remove them.
- 3.8 Our final group meeting focussed on reviewing the checks we had completed and the evidence collected, ensuring they were sufficient to inform our overall decision.
- 3.9 As part of the Customer Involvement Framework, meetings have taken place with Thirteen members of staff and involved customers over the last 12 months and have been recorded. We are happy to use these meetings as evidence as no other questions were deemed necessary. These meetings include:
- Performance Monitoring Meeting – Customer satisfaction is shared with involved customers including for the Repairs, Investment and Adaptations services. We are pleased to see that overall customer satisfaction with the Repairs Service is increasing, and most customers find it easy to report a repair, convenient appointments are offered and the attitude of the Repairs staff is positive.
  - Repairs Customer Group Meetings – Involved customers meet quarterly with the Repairs Team where they discuss performance, spending, the cost of 'No Access' appointments and a Damp and Mould update. As part of this the group, involved customers will be carrying out a project over the next few months to gather feedback on why customers book an appointment but are not home on the day to allow the repair to go ahead. This project will include phone calls to customers who have recently missed an appointment to understand their reasons.
  - Investment Customer Group Meetings – As part of the Investment Customer Group involved customers have met with the Investment Team to look at performance information, investment progress, customer satisfaction and future plans. This group was put on hold while a new team was put in place, and the customers welcome the reintroduction of this quarterly meeting in 2026.
  - Complaints Monitoring Meetings – involved customers analyse Complaints data every quarter and the reports received following investigations by the Housing Ombudsman.
  - Environmental Updates – During a meeting with the Environmental Team involved customers were informed that 75% of homes are now at EPC C or above and were advised of the changes implemented to improve homes and make them the homes of tomorrow.
  - Building Safety – Involved customers attended a meeting with the Building Safety Team who shared the results of a recent survey carried out with customers living in high rise properties. A total of 250 customers responded to the survey which was above the recommended 20% for optimised reliability. The results demonstrated that a high majority of customers felt safe in their home, were aware of what to do in a fire and knew that the building was registered with the Building Safety regulator. If a customer did not show awareness or had concerns over their safety, the Building Safety Team contacted them on an individual basis to go through the relevant information to ensure they felt safe.

- Cleaning Service Charter – involved customers met with the Cleaning Manager and discussed repairs identified in communal areas by the cleaning team. We were pleased to hear that cleaners actively report any issues they find, and that this process is monitored and reviewed monthly.
- Thirteen Home standard – During a meeting with the Investment team we discussed the Thirteen Home Standard and compared this to the Governments Decent Home Standard. We are happy with what is offered for Thirteens customers.

## Customer Journey Map

- 3.10 We carried out a Customer Journey Map with a customer who had recently had a minor adaptation carried out at their property. Due to a disability the customer was unable to reach the stopcock to turn off his water supply, and he was concerned what he would do in the event of a leak. The customer visited one of the Touchpoint stores and within 2 weeks an adaptation had been made to his home to enable him to turn off his water supply using a push-button. The customer was very happy with the service received and the speed in which it was carried out. It put his mind at rest that he would be able to take preventative action if needed.

## Mystery Shopping

- 3.11 Mystery shopping was carried out through website checks:
- Building Safety - we looked for information on the Building Safety Campaigns and if it was clear what a customer should do if they have concerns over building safety.
  - Investment – we looked for the Investment plans, information on the Investment process and what is included in Thirteens home standard
  - Adaptations – we looked for information on what a customer should do if they require adaptations to their home
  - Repairs – we looked for information on how to report a repair, what to do if damp and mould is found in the home and information on Gas Safety Checks

The main findings from mystery shopping were as follows:

- We found the information on Building Safety to be clear, concise and interesting to read.
- Some of us found the Investment Plans more easily than others however we found the guidance on what happens when a customer's home is having investment work carried out to be clear and thought the video showing what a customer should expect if having an electrical rewire to be excellent.
- We found the adaptation information to be helpful however made observations that there could be more signposting to help customers contact the correct service.
- We found the information on repairs very informative and helpful.

We are aware that a new website is under development and following early testing by involved customers the site is much clearer and easier to use than the current site.

We also carried out mystery shopping on the Repairs service by reporting repairs to check for ease and communication with customers. We found it easy to report a repair and a variety of methods were available. We also received communication via text to let us know the repair had been booked and reminders were sent 1 week before, the week of and the day of the repair which we found useful.

## Document Checks

- 3.12 The group members agreed that they needed to check a range of documents to support our work. We looked at:
- Thirteen Home Standard
  - Environmental, Social and Governance Report

- Repairs and Maintenance Policy
- Damp, Mould and Condensation leaflet

The main findings from the document checks are as follows:

- The Thirteen Home Standard explains the full range of improvements Thirteen offer when investment work is being carried out and what Thirteen do to keep customers safe and healthy in their home. We found this document to be very clear and accessible.
- The Environmental, Social and Governance report is available for all customers and outlines the work Thirteen have carried out over the last financial year to ensure customer safety and to confirm the number of homes that meet Thirteens Home Standard.
- The Repairs and Maintenance policy was last reviewed with customer consultation in April 2024. We gave assurance that the policy was clear, with customers at the heart of the policy and their needs taken into consideration. This policy covers the repairs and adaptations service.
- The Damp, Mould and Condensation Leaflet is an information leaflet shared with customers experiencing Damp and Mould. This leaflet informs customers that Thirteen are working to a 60-day timescale for damp and mould repairs as opposed to the 90-day dictated by Awaab's Law.

## Other Information

3.13 To support assurance other information was used as evidence, such as:

- Presentation on Awaab's Law – as part of the Repairs Customer Group involved customers were shown a presentation on Awaab's Law, including what the law is, why it was introduced, what the new legal timeframes are and what this means for Thirteens customers.
- Awaab's Law app - we were shown how the Awaab's Law app will work following a surveyors visit to a property and how this will automatically produce letters for the customers within the required timescales.
- Damp, Mould and Condensation letters – a letter sent to customers who have reported damp and mould has been implemented with customer consultation to ensure the information included is relevant, appropriate and easy to understand.
- Stock Condition Survey database - involved customers have been shared the database of the results from the stock condition survey showing what data is collected and how it is used to plan the Investment programme.
- Visit to Kitchen warehouse – involved customers have been invited to the factory where Thirteens new kitchens are made to see the designs and quality of what will be offered to all customers
- New Build Design – involved customers will be meeting with members of the Development Team over the next quarter. We will be looking at the design and layout of Thirteens new build properties including visiting a new build site and gathering feedback from customers living in new build properties to influence future developments.
- High-Rise – we are aware that the Customer Involvement Team are working with the Building Safety Team and will be reaching out to the High Rise Champions over the next few months. They will be looking to get more customers from high rise buildings involved, giving them the chance to share feedback on the services they receive from Thirteen. This will help support and add to the work already being done by Building Safety Team.

# thirteen

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#### **4. Which of our strategic priorities does this support and how?**

Happy Customers – Customers are happy living in a well-maintained home with access to a repairs and adaptations service if and when required. Customers living in high rise flats and buildings with communal areas feel safe in their homes.

Fantastic Homes – Homes are well maintained to the Thirteen Home Standard. Repairs and adaptations are carried out to improve the quality of the home.

Brilliant People including strong foundations – Thirteen staff members demonstrating the great work they do every day that allows them to meet the Safety and Quality Standard.

#### **5. Conclusion(s)**

- 5.1 The group members were happy that the information and supporting evidence received demonstrated compliance with the standard. We are therefore happy to give assurance that all elements of the Safety and Quality Standard are being met.