

Title: Neighbourhood and Community Consumer Standard
Report of: Involved customers (Pauline Brace – stream lead)
Status: For information

1 PURPOSE

1.1 The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) has set consumer standards which all registered providers (housing associations and housing organisations) must comply with. This is our assessment of how Thirteen meet these standards.

1.2 We are required to present this assessment to Thirteen Board and publish on their website so all customers can view it.

1.3 There are four consumer standards:

- 1. Tenant Involvement and Empowerment.**
- 2. Home.**
- 3. Tenancy.**
- 4. Neighbourhood and Community.**

1.4 This report gives details of our customer reality checks against the Neighbourhood and Community Standard.

1.5 Within Thirteen's Customer Involvement Framework, a group of involved customers are dedicated to testing Thirteen's compliance with the Consumer Standards, which includes the Neighbourhood and Community Standard.

2 SUMMARY OF THE DECISION(S)

2.1 This report and supporting evidence, shows that through our assessment, we have rated this standard as being met in all areas.

3 SUBJECT

3.1 The customer group consisted of myself as stream lead and 7 involved customers who met on a regular basis depending on the needs of the group members and the activities to be carried out.

3.2 All the checks carried out were to ensure that Thirteen is compliant with the Neighbourhood and Community Standard.

4 Process

4.1 It was recognised that the group needed to look at the Consumer Standards in more detail than previous years to ensure compliance.

5 Covid-19

5.1 Due to the Covid-19 pandemic the checks that were carried out were done so digitally. Meetings were held online using Microsoft Teams, documents were sent to customers using email and job shadowing was carried out by video.

6 Project Plan

6.1 The group's first meeting was used to plan out the project and agree tasks to be completed to give assurance against each statement on the standard. The group members picked the tasks they were interested in completing.

6.2 The project plan was made up of 64 checks/tasks to be carried out.

7 CONSULTATION & COMMUNICATION

7.1 Job Shadowing

Due to the current situation we were unable to carry out job shadowing, however, the Customer Engagement Coordinator videoed the teams we wished to job shadow whilst they were carrying out their duties. This was then shared with us via email.

- Cleaning Team – The Customer Engagement Co-ordinator attended one of the high-rise blocks owned by Thirteen to video two members of the mobile cleaning team as they carried out their duties. The

video included a short interview where the cleaners spoke about what they do on a daily basis and showed the cleaning they undertook whilst in the block.

- Caretaking Team – Videos had already been created showing the work that that Caretaking Team carry, out along with interviews of members of staff from the team. The Customer Engagement Co-ordinator shared these with the group therefore we felt that no further videos were needed.
- Community Engagement Champions – The Customer Engagement Coordinator visited the neighbourhood where the Community Champions pilot is taking place. The video included interviews with the members of staff, footage of them carrying out their role and a litter picking event that was taking place. It also included interviews with customers who live in the neighbourhood and are benefitting from the work the team carry out.

7.2 Visits

7.2.1 No visits were carried out due to restrictions surrounding the COVID 19 pandemic.

7.3 Group Meetings

7.3.1 All meetings were held using Microsoft Teams.

7.3.2 An initial meeting was held with the full group to discuss the standard and the evidence we wanted to collect to be able to provide assurance that Thirteen is compliant. After the initial meeting there were a further 5 meetings held for the full group to attend. Of these 5, 4 of the meetings were held with members of staff from across the business and the final meeting was held with the full group to ensure all statements from the standard were covered.

- Meeting with Senior FM Manager (Estate Services) –We were shown the service standards of both the Grounds Maintenance and Caretaking team along with the customer promise. The GIS maps were shown to demonstrate to us how much detail can be provided. We were also shown the way in which the operatives report the work they have completed; including photographic evidence of how they have left an area. We discussed the various partners Thirteen work with.
- Meeting with FM Services Manager (Cleaning) –We were sent the cleaning specification prior to this meeting which the manager

discussed with us. We were advised how the shift patterns work and the new app the cleaners have access to on a handheld device. This gives them the job for the day including the best way to get there with up to date traffic conditions and what is expected of them once they get there. We were also told about the BICS accreditation that all cleaners are completing.

- Meeting with Senior Tenancy Support Services Manager and Tenancy Support Services Manager – During this meeting we were given a brief overview of the ASB Team, what Thirteen consider to be ASB, how hotspot areas are identified and managed. We also discussed what preventative measures are used, what support is offered to witnesses and victims and were given an update on the new triage system. The Financial Support Service Manager joined the meeting to give an overview of the work the Money Advice Team do and the partnership work they are involved in.
- Meeting with Tenancy Specialist – We were shown the Neighbourhood Toolkit that is used daily by the neighbourhoods teams.

During all meetings we were given opportunities to ask any questions.

7.4 Mystery Shopping

7.4.1 Mystery Shopping was carried out through website checks and checklists to be completed whilst adhering to the COVID19 lockdown rules and regulations.

- Walkabouts – We checked our local neighbourhoods were kept tidy and presentable. We also checked indoor communal areas were kept clean, tidy and safe.
- Community Fund – We checked how easy it was to apply for funding, if help was available and if previously funded groups were promoted on the Thirteen website.
- ASB – we checked the information on the Thirteen website to make sure it was easy to report ASB, the support that was available, what is classed as ASB, what can be done if and when it is reported and the partners that Thirteen work with.
- Support Services – We checked the website to make sure that there is relevant information on walkabouts, neighbourhood plans, the Money Advice Team, the Employability Team and evidence of partnership working.

7.5 Customer Journey Maps

7.5.1 Due to the COVID19 pandemic no journey maps were carried out.

7.6 Document Checks

7.6.1 The group members agreed that they needed to check a range of documents to support their work. We looked at:

- Grounds Maintenance Specification
- Caretakers Specification
- Operation Cleansweep Report
- Complaints information
- Strategic Plan
- Walkabout Template
- Social Value Report 2018/19
- Mini Annual Reviews
- ASB and Hate Crime Policy
- Tenancy Agreement
- ASB Letter Templates
- ASB Procedure

7.7 Other Information

7.7.1 To support assurance other information was requested. Some of the main points we requested were:

- Community Fund – information on projects supported and the number of people living in Thirteen neighbourhoods that benefitted.
- Satisfaction information – Customer satisfaction figures for the ASB, Money Advice and Universal Credit teams
- Fly Tipping – information on how Thirteen is responding to fly tipping, especially during the pandemic. We were shown videos and newspaper articles that have recently been produced to support this.
- Noise app – we were advised how this works and shown how to gain access on the website and using our own mobile phones.
- Neighbourhoods – we asked for information from Neighbourhoods on the work they do to support this Consumer Standard. We were sent a video that Thirteen had produced in May 2020 showing the achievements of Neighbourhoods across Thirteen.
- Support Services – We were sent a link to a video that Thirteen had recently produced showing the services that are offered to its customers on top of the neighbourhood services.

7.7.2 The information and supporting evidence were received and the group members were happy with what this demonstrated/evidenced. We were therefore happy to give assurance.

8 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED

8.1 The details of this report are regulatory and legislative requirements and form part of our Customer Involvement Framework and therefore no other options were considered.

9 RECOMMENDATION(S)

9.1 The Board is recommended to approve the customers' assurance report on compliance with the Neighbourhood and Community Standard.

10 REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATION(S)

10.1 The recommendations ensure we meet our regulatory requirements and continue to enhance co-regulation frameworks and arrangements

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