

thirteen

Managing and building homes

**Customer  
Annual  
Report  
2018/19**





# Customer Annual Report 2018/19

## Chair's Introduction

I'd like to welcome you to the Customer Annual Report for 2018/19.

We've been really busy working on a new framework to involve customers in having a say and holding Thirteen to account. This is key in creating Thirteen's yearly strategic plan.

The framework will ensure all customers can be involved in shaping and scrutinising Thirteen's services, and testing compliance with the regulatory consumer standards.

We're always keen to hear from new customers who are interested in being involved and support our work. If you would like to get involved, please email [customer.engagement@thirteengroup.co.uk](mailto:customer.engagement@thirteengroup.co.uk) or call **0300 111 1000**.

### **Val Scollen**

Chair of Thirteen's Customer Engagement Framework and Involved Customer



# Thirteen's Customer Engagement Framework

Thirteen is committed to involving customers to scrutinise services and performance, consult on policy and strategy development and provide assurance of compliance with the regulatory consumer standards to the leadership team and Board.

**The framework describes our guiding principles of Customer Engagement.**

- B**uild relationships
- R**eview services
- I**nteract with all areas of the business
- C**onsult with customers and stakeholders
- K**nowledge gained and shared
- S**hare your findings and recommendations

The framework provides a flexible, adaptable, value for money approach designed to support the delivery of strategic plan objectives and business priorities.

## The Customer Engagement Framework:



# Where our priorities lie

We're committed to listening to our customers' voice. This framework puts our customers at the heart of everything we do ensuring that throughout the year, they can have a say, can input in a variety of ways that suit them and scrutinise our services where necessary.

Not just listening but responding and acting is a key element of preparing our strategic plan and a wide range of our customers gave us their input while it was in draft format.

## Involving customers



### Across the Tees Valley:

**106** groups supported by the community fund

Developed the new customer involvement framework to support customers to be involved in the development of Thirteen now and in the future.

We invested **£127,827** to help fund support groups and training opportunities run by residents in our communities.

Introduced Thirteen Academy which has seen nine customers awarded scholarships at Teesside University.







## What have our customers been involved in?

Thirteen involves customers to bring fresh ideas and help us improve services, neighbourhoods and opportunities for all customers.

### Customers have:

- Carried out in-depth reviews of services, surveying customers' views, researching other organisations' practices, job shadowing and mystery shopping. They report findings and recommendations to the leadership team and Board.
- Carried out consultation on policy changes when they are due for review. This is done via email or post with a copy of the policy being sent with a short survey.
- Completed reality checks and mystery shopping to provide assurance to customers and the Thirteen Board that Thirteen are compliant.
- Reviewed and allocated Thirteen's Community Fund. This adds value to the local area and economy, supporting local initiatives and individuals.
- Supported the development of strategic projects by surveying customers on existing services, being a consultation panel for proposed service developments and involved in the post project reviews when the project is complete.
- Surveyed customers to provide feedback on the services they have received, to identify and develop service improvements and help test the impact of services.
- Reviewed operational performance information to understand how Thirteen's performance compares with other landlords. Researched other landlords, if they perform better than Thirteen, to understand how they deliver their services and make recommendations for performance improvement.

## Policy Consultation

Our customers have had an impact and made recommendations to improve many of our policies including:

- Responsive repairs
- Tenancy
- Equality and diversity
- Volunteering
- Information governance framework

## Service Improvement

- Looking at voids, relets and rents
- Looking at quarterly performance figures
- Value for money

## Strategic/Service Projects

- **Touchpoint** – customers have tested new systems and have made some recommendations to change things (e.g. to consider accessibility issues for the visually impaired). A customer was included in the promotional video for the recruitment of Touchpoint hosts.
- **New lettings system** – customers were involved in testing the system and made recommendations for change, including accessibility issues for the visually impaired.
- **Anti-social behaviour (ASB) process review** – customers had an input in changes made to the low-level ASB process.
- **Project clean sweep** – gathering feedback from customers who have benefitted from work carried out by the clean sweep team.



### In-Depth Reviews

#### First Point of Contact/Failure Demand

**14** key recommendations approved by Board

#### High Rise Living - recommendation for

**1** set of service standards for all high-rise customers

### Training, conferences and networking

#### Understanding scrutiny training

**11** customers took part in accredited training

#### NHC Residents Involvement Conference

**7** customers attended

Networking events – customers have attended various networking events.

Customers have been involved in National Policy consultation on the Green Paper, the Hackitt Review and Together with Tenants.



# Last year, customers said:

Customers told us that improving customer satisfaction should be one of our key actions.



## They said:

Improving customer satisfaction should be one of our key actions.



## We did:

We implemented actions including investing in our contact team and improving our repairs service, overall customer satisfaction with the services Thirteen provides increased to 87%.

## They said:

That they wanted us to have a clear understanding of our social impact in the Tees Valley.



## We did:

We have used national standards to calculate that we have gained the equivalent of £1.2m in social value for our area and we published a social value report.

## They said:

They wanted us to build more affordable homes.



## We did:

Last year, we built 401 new homes to rent or buy. We also acquired Gus Robinson Developments to help us deliver more affordable homes.

## They said:

Ensuring we are legal, compliant and safe, and that we deliver a continuous value for money programme was at the top of their list.



## We did:

When we were recently inspected by our regulator, we were given ratings of G1 for governance and V1 for finance – the highest possible rating.

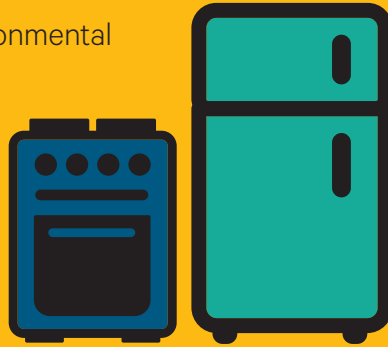
# What we've achieved

## Investment in homes

From April 2018 to March 2019, we carried out £38.2m of improvements to homes throughout our areas.

This included replacing kitchens, bathrooms, boilers, and installing new roofs, windows and doors.

We also carried out environmental improvements, including boundary schemes and work to improve neighbourhoods for customers and the people living around the homes we manage.



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**468** new kitchens installed

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**1,294** new boilers installed

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Over **600** new windows and doors installed

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**544** new roofs installed

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## Repairs in customers' homes

We carry out a range of repairs in our customers' homes to ensure they're kept in a good condition.

Our skilled staff include plumbers, electricians, plasterers and bricklayers who maintain and repair homes, together with gas fitters who service and repair heating systems.

We have continued to improve our repairs system to help better allocate repairs jobs, ensure a better service for customers and increase customer satisfaction.

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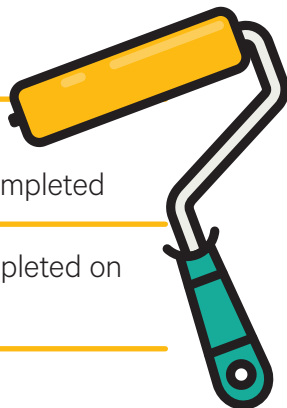
**182,719** repairs completed

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**97.7%** of repairs completed on the first visit

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**91.1%**

of customers satisfied with the repairs service provided

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**9.4 out of 10**

for customer satisfaction with the service of the operative

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**9.6 out of 10**

for customer satisfaction with the quality of the repair

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**9.1 out of 10**

for customer satisfaction with the ease of reporting the repair

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# Customer satisfaction with services

Customer satisfaction is a major focus for Thirteen.

The satisfaction level among customers gives us a good indication as to how effective our services are, and where we need to make improvements.

We listen carefully to what customers tell us through a number of surveys that we carry out with them.



# Improving neighbourhood services

Since April 2018, we have fundamentally changed the way we work in our neighbourhoods.

Customers told us that they wanted our staff to be more visible in neighbourhoods, helping them to deal with the issues they face on a day-to-day basis. We adopted an operating model to put neighbourhoods at the heart of our business, with more neighbourhood co-ordinators managing a reduced number of properties so they can get to know our customers better.

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**560** estate inspections carried out in neighbourhoods

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**3,103** accompanied viewings with new customers helping them get the best possible start to their tenancy

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**3,704** introductory/welcome visits by neighbourhood co-ordinators

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# Supported housing services

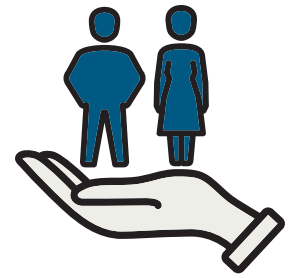
We provide services to meet the needs of vulnerable people and support them to improve their quality of life.

We support a wide range of people who face challenges in their lives including homeless people, ex-offenders, people with mental health issues, people recovering from substance misuse, families, women and young people.

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**3,241** referrals to support services

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## Employment support

We have a dedicated service to help people aged 15 to 29, and customers of any age, to find work, training and education. We also have a team who offer the same support to customers of any age.

Our employability services work with people and businesses across the Tees area and County Durham to match them with jobs, apprenticeships, training and work placements.

The services help people to find quality information, advice and guidance about jobs, training and education; find mentoring and support to plan a way into work or training; develop the skills that businesses need; and overcome barriers to getting a job or training.

### Employment Support - New directions and Core Team

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**1,240** people signed up to the programme

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**527** people took up the offer of employment, apprenticeships or training

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## Developing new homes

We continue to develop new homes for people across the North East and North Yorkshire.

By developing new homes and bringing empty homes back to life, we're supporting the regeneration of the region. We are also helping more people to buy their own home and access properties for affordable rent.

Across our region, we completed 401 new affordable homes and spent £29m on developing them.

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**293** on-site starts on affordable new home builds

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**401** completed new-build affordable homes

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Many new homes are in our development pipeline with

**400** affordable homes to be built in 2019/20.

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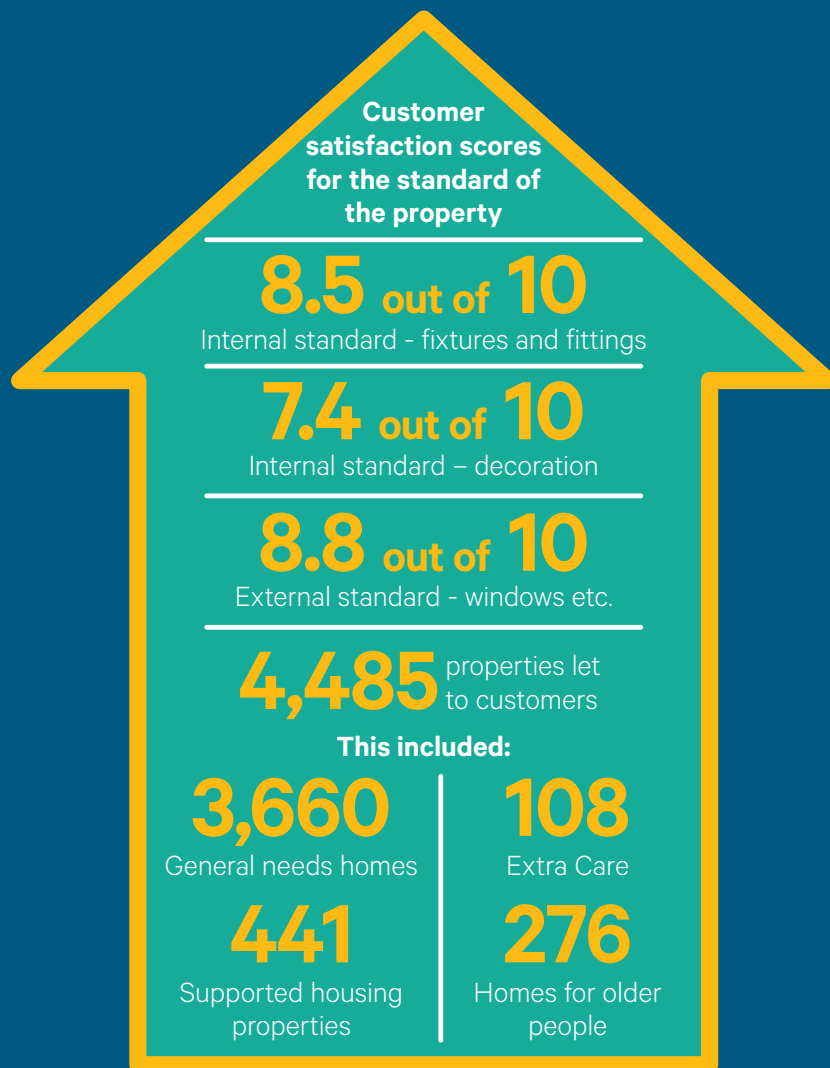




# Lettings

We've continued to create new homes for customers across the North East and North Yorkshire. This includes developing new homes for affordable rent.

We have also brought existing empty homes back to life by carrying out extensive renovations to ensure customers live in a quality, secure rental property.



## Value for money

**£2.4m** total savings across all Thirteen's services



## Rents and income

We work with customers who are having problems with rent payments.

Over the years, we have helped customers to claim millions of pounds in benefits to help them with their rent payments. To help with the implementation of Universal Credit in Hartlepool, Middlesbrough and Stockton, we have employed specialist staff to give customers support and advice with their Universal Credit Claims.



**20,709** customers with clear rent accounts at end of 2018-19

**10,860** customers in arrears

**2,620** notices served for rent arrears

## Money advice

Thirteen's money advice team helps customers with their benefit problems, manage their finances and make the most of their money. The team also helps customers claim the benefits they're entitled to.

This year, we have also worked with partners to create plans to tackle issues created by Universal Credit.



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**2,838** Universal Credit cases managed

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**£1,058,599**  
Universal Credit gained for claimants

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**1,709** money advice cases

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**£2.7m** benefits gained for claimants

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## Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

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**1,076** ASB cases reported to Thirteen

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**7.7 out of 10** overall satisfaction with the service

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## Preventing homelessness

Our services help people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

We're also responsible for helping people to move on from supported accommodation and into more general accommodation with a social landlord.

Thirteen's teams work to identify people at risk of homelessness and to improve their lives by offering help, advice and practical support. This can include help with finding a home or a job, building resilience or working towards personal independence.



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**17** referrals to Thirteen's Key Step homelessness project

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**1,010** advice cases handled

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**1,830** formal homelessness cases dealt with

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**416** people/families prevented from becoming homeless

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## Supported living

Our extra care and sheltered housing schemes offer specialist support to help older and vulnerable people to live independently for longer.

Accommodation and support is flexible and tailored to suit customer needs. Homes offer privacy as well as the chance to keep an active social life and remain at the heart of the community.

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**1,790** sheltered housing units with support provision available

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**75** homes for people with learning disabilities

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**51** homes for Chinese elders

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**579** Extra Care homes for older and vulnerable people across the region

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**458** major adaptations in people's homes

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**2,243** minor adaptations in people's homes

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**£1.6m** spent on aids and adaptations

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## Customer services

Our Customer Contact Team is the first point of contact for many customers when they get in touch. They manage a wide range of communication channels including phone, emails and website.



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**336,792** calls answered

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**18** seconds average call waiting time

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# About the Annual Report

We want to give some quick and accessible information about the performance of Thirteen.

This document gives details about our performance in several important areas across the organisation and some of the things we've done to improve our services between April 2018 and March 2019.

If you'd like more details about Thirteen's performance, you can read the full annual report and financial statement at [www.thirteengroup.co.uk/aboutus](http://www.thirteengroup.co.uk/aboutus)

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 0300 111 1000

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