

Thirteen Customer Engagement Update

December 2020

BRICKS



Regulatory Consumer Standards Assurance

The Consumer Standards tested are:

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

We have recently completed our customer checks on the Neighbourhood and Community Standard. From our findings we have rated Thirteen as compliant against this standard.

We produced our project plan and started to map out our checks for the Tenancy Standard. Checks will include mystery shopping, website checks, document and policy checks and job shadowing. We'll share our findings once the testing is completed.

If you would like to support with this testing, please contact Pauline Brace (Customer and Stream Lead for Consumer Standards Assurance) via the Customer Engagement team.

Community Fund

The customers who are involved in allocating the funds for the Community Fund meet every six to eight weeks to scrutinise applications.

To date we have funded 56 applications totalling £84,576.50. Some of the recently funded projects include:

- The White Feather Project to provide emergency food and care packages to children and families in need across Teesside
- Green Sky Fitness CIC for their Movers and Shakers: Body and Mind unwind project to help those who suffer from Parkinson's and their partners/carers
- Bright Minds Big Futures for their refill and reuse environmental campaign

If you would like to become involved in scrutinising the grant applications, please contact Jim Scollen (Customer and Stream Lead for Community Fund) via the Customer Engagement team.

Service Projects

Grounds Maintenance Specification

We have looked at the proposed new Grounds Maintenance Specification. Customers found that the new specification is clearer and will enable customers to monitor the service more easily.

Environmental Impact Project

We've had our initial meeting of the Environmental Impact Project. We were given a presentation explaining what work Thirteen have done so far on this project and what the plans and hopes for the future are. We were shown the 10-point plan and asked if there was anything missing. We will be meeting again to discuss the next steps. We are also in need of customer environmental champions, so if you're interested please let us know.

Touchpoint Stores

We have held our final customer meeting of the Touchpoint programme where it was agreed that the Touchpoint Model, designed with input from the involved customer group, be taken forward and used as the model for future Touchpoint Stores.

Repairs and Maintenance Project

We were given a presentation on the customer services 9-point action plan, which links to Thirteen's strategic objectives and priorities. We were asked to work with Thirteen to consult with customers on days and hours of repairs, and customers responsibilities in their home. We are developing a project plan and will meet again soon.

Community Resilience

We have had our initial meeting to look at the launch of a brand-new service and to help shape and agree on the strategy for community resilience. We are also looking to recruit a customer community resilience champion who will attend meetings and support with delivering presentations internally and externally with the Head of Community Resilience.





Tackling Stigma Project

This is a project group consisting of other housing and customers. The project aims are:

- Challenging the portrayal and stereotyping of Social Housing
- Using a collective voice to promote the positives of Social Housing
- Listening to the voices of residents and sharing their narrative
- Education and challenging the sectors culture and terminology
- Linking the project to the Together with Tenants Framework
- And using a collective Voice

We will be sending a survey around in the new year to consult with involved customers on this subject.

Voicescape Consultation

An external company called Voicescape have been commissioned to carry out research on our arrears process and procedure. They asked the Customer Engagement Team to engage with some customers who have been in arrears to give their thoughts and views on the process. The Customer Engagement Team spoke to lots of customers and recruited 12 who agreed to take part in the telephone research with Voicescape. The customer experience has added great value and insight into this project, ensuring we are improving services.

If you would like to be involved in future service projects, please contact Jim Martin (Customer and Stream Lead for Service Projects) via the Customer Engagement team.

Training, Conferences and Networking

Tpas Scrutiny of Performance Webinar

In November, a group of customers attended the Tpas Scrutiny of Performance Webinar. Customers found this very useful and informative and will help them when scrutinise performance information going forward.

If you would like any further information on Training, Conferences and Networking, please contact Val Scollen (Chair of the Framework) via the Customer Engagement team.

Building Safety and Property Compliance

We held our initial meeting of the Building Safety and Property Compliance stream. These meetings will be held quarterly and will have a theme. At this meeting we were given detail on the work done around fire safety, particularly in our high-rise buildings. We were then given the opportunity to share thoughts on how we can improve no access for compliance work, feedback on the development of a compliance calendar and producing compliance videos.

If you would like any further information on Building Safety and Property Compliance stream please contact Val Scollen (Chair of the Framework) via the Customer Engagement team.

Performance Monitoring

Following our quarterly meeting in August we requested some further meetings with staff from the Rents and Voids teams to discuss their performance and what measures are in place to increase this. All questions were answered, and customers were happy with the steps and processes being taken. We will continue to monitor this.

In October we held our quarterly Complaints monitoring meeting where we were shown the complaints figures for Quarter 2, and we looked at the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code. We will be meeting again in November to go through this in more detail.

We met to go through the Recommendations Tracker, which looks at the recommendations made from all the customer involvement groups. We checked on their progress and ensured they are moving forward towards achieving the work agreed by the groups and Thirteen.

If you would like any further information on this, please contact Pam McIvor (Customer and Stream Lead for Performance Monitoring) via the Customer Engagement team.





Virtual Customer Open Day

In October we hosted our very first virtual Customer Open Day using Zoom. The day consisted of updates from myself and the Stream Leads, a presentation on Universal Credit and Money Advice support, a presentation and demo of My Thirteen, and a Thirteen update from Ian Wardle, our Chief Executive. We also held a breakout session on Together with Tenants.

Following expressions of interest and voting we confirmed the appointments of the Chairs and Stream Leads positions as follows:

- Chair – Val Scollen (*3 years in line with Board*)
- Consumer Standards Assurance – Pauline Brace
- Service Projects – Jim Martin
- Performance Monitoring – Pam McIvor
- Community Fund – Jim Scollen

The day was a great success with lots of positive feedback and ideas on how we make these events bigger and better in the future. We are getting together in the New Year to start planning for our next open day.

If you would like any further information, please contact the Customer Engagement team.

Policy and Strategy Development

These consultations are all completed in the comfort of your own home, they are sent out online with a copy of the policy and a link to the survey questions.

We have been consulted on changes to the following policies and strategies:

- People Framework

If you would like to be involved in future Policy and Strategy Development, please contact the Customer Engagement team. (see details at the end of the newsletter)

Tpas Awards 2020



In September it was finally time for the Tpas Awards, which were held virtually. Although we were not successful in our category, it was fantastic to be shortlisted for the work our involved customers and the involvement team have done to make the framework a success.

Other Involvement Activities

Customer Annual Report 2019/20

Following our work on pulling together all the information and agreeing on the design and layout, we published the final version Customer Annual Report for 2019/20 on the website.

Contact us

For any further information, or if you would like to get involved to help us shape and improve services and give assurance on compliance please contact Val Scollen (Customer and Chair of the Framework) or the Customer Engagement team using the details below:

Val Scollen – valeriethirteen@gmail.com



Customer Engagement Team – customer.engagement@thirteengroup.co.uk
or 0300 111 1000

