

Thirteen Customer Engagement Update

March 2021

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 Tenancy Standard. Our report was presented to the Thirteen Board in February and was well received. From our findings we have rated Thirteen as compliant against this standard.

We have produced our project plan and started our checks for the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard. Checks will include mystery shopping, website checks, document checks and policy checks. We will share our findings once the testing is completed.

If you would like to support with this testing, please contact Pauline (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.

We have now reached the end of the 2020/21 financial year and to date we have funded 68 applications totalling £131,763.12. Some of the recently funded projects include:

- Thornaby Community Litter Project for the purchase of additional litter picking equipment to enable more residents to take part.
- St Gerards RC Primary School in Middlesbrough for the purchase of IT equipment to help children with digital learning.
- The Auxiliary Project Space CIC for the purchase of additional bikes and equipment to increase participation in the Sonic Bikes project.

We are currently reviewing the application and feedback process for the 2021/22 financial year, with the new application form being available from April 2021.

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

Service Projects

Reviewing the Neighbourhood Operating Model

The customer engagement team are currently speaking to customers about their experience with the new tenancy process, succession process, alterations process and anti-social behaviour process. The feedback is being put into some customer journey maps and a report will be written to identify trends. We will share the findings once this piece of work is complete.

Environmental Impact Project

Two of our involved customers have attended a 2-day Carbon Literacy course to understand the changes we can make to reduce our carbon footprint. These customers will now be involved in the roll out of further training programmes to both Thirteen staff and customers to raise awareness. We are also in need of customer environmental champions, so if you're interested please let us know.

CityFibre Broadband consultation

In 2019 the Government pledged to roll out full fibre broadband nationwide by 2025. This project is to enable such an improved digital opportunity for our customers. Middlesbrough is one of 67 Gigabit cities already named with works commencing from April 2021. This will then be rolled out to other areas in the North East.

Thirteen consulted with customers to gather their views and on what Thirteen / CityFibre should be advising customers about when working within the boundary of their home and what information we should include on customer flyers issued prior to work commencing. Customers were happy with proposals and two involved customers are now part of the working group.

Leaseholder/Shared Ownership Gas Servicing

A survey is being sent out to all leaseholder and shared ownership customers to gather some insight on whether they would be interested in having their annual gas servicing done by Thirteen.





Strategic Plan consultation

Customers were recently consulted on Thirteen's Strategic Plan for 2021-2026. This was done via a video recording by Ian Wardle, Chief Executive being sent out to involved customers to ask them for their thoughts and feedback. All the responses were positive about the priorities in the strategic plan. Where customers have raised issues, these have been passed on to the relevant teams to be actioned.

Building Support Service

The Building Support team carried out a satisfaction survey with customers living in high rise flats. They contacted Customer Involvement for help to gather more thoughts from customers and for insight on what they can do to improve satisfaction.

Repairs and Maintenance Project

We were asked to work with Thirteen to consult with customers on days and hours of repairs, and customers responsibilities in their home. We sent out a survey we received 138 responses. This was sent to the involvement database, put on the website and social media and the contact team carried out a short survey. Recommendations on the customer responsibilities have been sent to the manager for comments. We are developing a project plan and will meet again soon.

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

Building Safety and Property Compliance

We held our second quarterly meeting of the Building Safety and Property Compliance stream. This meeting focussed on the safety campaigns carried out by the team and the posters they had designed. And the actions required from the Social Housing White Paper.

Building Safety Calling cards consultation

Customer were asked to look at the wording and design of some new calling cards to be issued to customers in high-rise and complex buildings. At present, when personal goods are found in a communal area, this is flagged as a Fire Risk Action and we notify neighbourhoods to make contact, which means there is a delay in the customer becoming aware of the issue. The hope is that these cards, which look and feel different to other cards within Thirteen can be issued straight away by the operative and will prompt the customer to take immediate action, reducing the risk of fire. A copy of the designs along with a survey were sent out to customers. All customers thought the wording was easy to understand and follow, and a preferred design was chosen.

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

Performance Monitoring

The Performance Monitoring stream looks at Performance figures quarterly, complaints quarterly and the Recommendations Tracker 6 monthly.

In January, we had our next complaints meeting and looked at the performance side of complaints. We also looked at two cases that had come back from the Housing Ombudsman and went through these. Thirteen paid compensation to a customer as the Housing Ombudsman stated service failure. Thirteen are appealing this as timescales were met. In the second case the Housing Ombudsman found no maladministration and no compensation had to be paid.

At our recent Performance meeting in March, we were happy with the majority of the figures. We have asked to look at the rent debt due to universal credit in more detail as these figures have started to rise.

We agreed that the performance information needs to be a bit more customer friendly and the team have taken this on board by holding some training sessions for customers.

The Housing Ombudsman invited residents to apply to join a new National Residents Panel. Pam (Stream Lead) and Jim (member of stream) applied and have both been successful in becoming members of this panel.

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

Training, Conferences and Networking

Four customers recently attend the Housing Quality Network (HQN) providing better services to residents' event. The event was aimed at asking how we could improve the digital offer to customers.

Four customers attended the Housing Quality Network (HQN) taking stock event. The theme of this was around consumer standards and board transparency. Everyone was put into break out rooms to discuss in more detail. People were impressed with Thirteen's framework and how our streams link together.

Val (Chair of the Framework) recently took part in some Customer Service training with frontline staff.

Customers from Thirteen have been involved in the North East Tenant Voice. They have recently met, and topics discussed included Anti-Social Behaviour, stigma in social housing and landlords being honest to customers.





Virtual Customer Open Day

We are underway with the planning for our next Virtual Customer Open Day, which will take place on Tuesday 20th April 2021 via Microsoft Teams. The day will consist of updates from the Chair and the Customer Stream Leads, a presentation on New Build Homes, a presentation on Investment in our existing homes and a Thirteen update from Ian Wardle, our Chief Executive.

We hope to see as many of you there as possible so please respond to the invitation which will be sent out very soon.

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:

- Unacceptable Behaviour Policy
- Claims and Compensation Policy
- Complaints, Comments and Feedback Policy
- Anti-Social Behaviour and Hate Crime Policy
- Tenancy Policy
- Repairs and Maintenance Policy

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)

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 – valerithirteen@gmail.com



Customer Engagement Team –
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