

Customer Voice

Welcome to the Customer Involvement team bulletin exclusively for customers of Thirteen.



Spring Greens

The Customer Involvement team is working on a number of projects to improve the local environment in our communities. See page 3 for details.

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Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of the Customer Voice newsletter. In this bulletin we will update you on Customer Involvement activities and share information about what we have planned going forward.

If you have any comments or feedback, please contact the Customer Involvement team using the contact information on the back page.

Scrutiny Panel

The Scrutiny Panel has presented its latest report to the Thirteen Board. The latest project aimed to reduce the amount of demand on emergency and urgent repairs, improve getting the repair defined correctly 'right first time', and helping customers to help themselves when dealing with tenant repair responsibilities.

The recommendations have been approved by the Board, and the Scrutiny Panel will agree a monitoring plan to measure progress. You can view a copy of the scrutiny report here at:

<http://bit.ly/ScrutinyRepairs2017>. Alternatively, scan the QR code with your smartphone.

The panel welcomed four new members, taking total membership to 11. The panel is also starting

some work with an external consultant to make sure scrutiny continues to be delivered effectively.



Message from the chair of the Thirteen Customer Council



In June, the members of the Thirteen Customer Council (TCC) elected me as chair for the year ahead. Each year since the TCC was formed, we have had a different chair and it's good to see the role being shared.

Since the last edition of the Customer Voice, the organisation has become one with the formation of one landlord called Thirteen, which we hope makes everything run more smoothly. The TCC has a seat on the Thirteen Board and

Service and Satisfaction Panel

The Complaints Panel formed part of the complaints process at Thirteen. However, demand for the work of the volunteers has been low since the panel was established.

To make the best use of the time our hard-working involved customers invest, the Complaints Panel has now been de-registered, and will focus on customer service and customer satisfaction across Thirteen instead. This panel will monitor Thirteen's performance in delivering and maintaining excellent

our role is that of critical friend to the Board. As chair, I attended the first meeting in July and felt very welcomed; the Board was very interested in what I had to say.

As a review is ongoing to establish a new involvement framework, the TCC is working with the Customer Involvement team to feed our views into the process which will then seek the views of other customers.

The TCC was also pleased with the rapid response of Thirteen to concerns at Kennedy Gardens in Billingham over the cladding on the building in the wake of Grenfell, and the measures put in place to ensure residents' safety. One of our council members who lives on the seventh floor and uses a wheelchair said she has never felt as safe as she does now. The TCC is also pleased to welcome a new member, bringing total membership to 11.

Val Scollen, Chair of the TCC

customer service, and improving services where satisfaction is lower than expected. It will undertake inspections and investigations, and make recommendations for service improvement.

The new panel is called the Service and Satisfaction Panel (SAS) and held its first meeting in July, where discussions began to finalise its core documents. The panel is also pleased to welcome five new members taking total membership to 10.

Spring Green projects



The Customer Involvement team has been working on the Spring Green project to invest in communities and brighten up neighbourhoods. Ten of the twelve planned projects have now been completed.

Work is currently ongoing at Jupiter Court with help from Tees Valley Community Rehabilitation. The work at Newley Court in Middlesbrough requires bushes to be planted, which means that this project needs to be completed around October.

The success of all the projects so far is due to the excellent joint work between officers from the Customer Involvement and the Grounds Maintenance teams, together with input from our customers and Neighbourhood Officers.

Community Fund



Thanks to funding received from the Thirteen Community Fund, Thornaby Indoor Bowling Club has been able to purchase several 'bowling arms' which are designed to enable people with back, hip or knee problems and people who use a wheelchair, to participate in indoor bowls.

The bowling arms look like a litter picker but this ingenious piece of equipment is set to offer opportunities to people who have conditions that previously would have made bowling impossible.

Brian Hannaford, a coach at Thornaby Indoor Bowls Club, said: "Thirteen's assistance has enabled the club to be able to purchase several different sized arms that are suitable for wheelchair users to the tallest individual. We have also

been able to buy some bowling shoes which will be available to new bowlers to loan.

Brian added: "As a club, we want to make the sport as accessible and attractive as possible. We believe that the excellent facilities we have at Thornaby Pavilion make bowls a great way to stay active with a smile on your face while meeting a whole new circle of friends."

Sarah Bage, Customer Involvement Officer at Thirteen, said: "The Community Fund panel members were impressed with the grant application from the bowls club and were more than happy to approve funding to a group who are positively encouraging all people to be able to take part. Physical activity has a huge impact on people's health and wellbeing and it's great to see that this sport can now be opened up to more people in our communities."

For more information on the indoor bowls at Thornaby Pavilion, contact Paul Bambrough on 01642 760971. For further details on how to apply for a grant from the Thirteen Community Fund, please contact the Customer Involvement team using the details on the back page.

Neighbourhood Panels

Neighbourhood Panels are open to tenants and residents. They are held quarterly in local community venues and the meetings last approximately two hours.

By attending your local Neighbourhood Panel, you can:

- meet with staff from Thirteen
- learn about and discuss your landlord's performance
- make suggestions on how to make your area a better place to live
- find out about grants available for projects
- give us your views on the services you receive
- discuss local issues
- share your information with your landlord and other resident groups
- meet new people/make new friends
- learn new skills.

The next Neighbourhood Panel meetings have been arranged for:

- Middlesbrough West – Tuesday 10 October, 1pm – 3pm
- Middlesbrough East – Thursday 19 October, 10am – 12noon
- Hartlepool – Thursday 12 October, 1pm – 3pm
- Joint meeting of Stockton North and Billingham & Stockton South and Thornaby – Monday 16 October, 1pm – 3pm

If you'd like to find out more details or confirm your attendance for your local Neighbourhood Panel, please contact Customer Involvement using the details on the back page.

Pallister Park clean-up



We know that the appearance of our neighbourhoods is very important to residents, but rubbish – particularly larger items of household rubbish – left on our streets can cause a range of issues.

To help tackle the problem in one area of Middlesbrough, Thirteen brought together people from the area to remove bulky items of waste and remove incidents of fly tipping.

Staff from Thirteen's Neighbourhood Services Caretakers, Grounds Maintenance, Neighbourhoods and Customer Involvement teams helped out, along with local councillors and residents to clean-up an area of Pallister Park that has faced problems with fly tipping.

We encouraged residents to bring out any unwanted items of rubbish

to prevent any future fly tipping or untidy gardens. On the day, we disposed of 8.5 tons of waste, cleared five alleyways and removed:

- general mixed waste
- five paint tins
- four mattresses
- two PCs/TVs
- six fridges.

It is illegal to leave rubbish on streets, waste ground or alleys. If you have any bulky items of waste, you should take it to your local household waste recycling centre or contact your council to come to your home to remove it.



Reviewing involvement

To make sure we are as effective as we can be and ensure that we involve the broadest range of our customers, we are reviewing our Involvement Framework.

We are currently consulting with staff from across Thirteen using focus group meetings.

Look out for further information in the early autumn as we are planning to hold a range of customer consultation activities including online consultations. We will be asking you about different ways that we can engage with you, so please get involved.

Customer Annual Report



Keep your eyes peeled during September as we will be posting some infographics on our Facebook pages as part of the Customer Annual Report for 2016/17.

There will also be a plain text version of the Annual Report uploaded onto the Thirteen website on 1 October.

Contact the team

If you are interested in anything in this newsletter, or if you have any questions or comments, please get in touch with the Customer Involvement team on:

☎ 01642 947550

✉ customer.involvement@thirteengroup.co.uk

