

Report to the Thirteen Customer Committee
3 November 2022
Agenda item XX

Title: Home Consumer Standard
Report of: Involved Customers (Jim Scollen – Stream Lead)
Status: For decision

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 meets these standards.
- 1.2 We are required to present this assessment to Thirteen Customer Committee and publish it on the Thirteen 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 Within Thirteen's Customer Involvement Framework, a group of customers are dedicated to testing Thirteen's compliance with the Consumer Standards
- 1.5 This report gives details of our customer reality checks against the Home Standard.

2 SUMMARY OF THE DECISION

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

3 ASSESSMENTS OF THE HOME STANDARD

- 3.1 The customer group consisted of myself as stream lead and 7 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 Home Standard.

Process

- 3.3 We held our first meeting to review the standard, agree the scope and plan the project. In this meeting we agreed the methods to be used to establish compliance.

Project Plan

- 3.5 The project plan was made up of 32 checks/tasks to be carried out.

4 CONSULTATION & COMMUNICATION

Group Meetings

- 4.1 Meetings were held either using Microsoft Teams or in a hybrid format with a choice of joining online or in person.
- 4.2 Following the initial meeting there were 3 further meetings held for the full group to attend. We met with the Head of Repairs, Touchpoint Manager and the Touchpoint Academy Coach as well as a group meeting for evidence gathering. Where appropriate, we sent questions to the relevant members of staff prior to the meeting to be answered in group meetings and we were happy that all questions were answered sufficiently.
- 4.3 We met with the Head of Repairs to discuss the repairs policy and procedure, health and safety repairs and the type of information that is shared with trades. We also discussed the type of appointments offered to customers, the figures for customers using school run appointments and how repairs are scheduled. The status of repairs performance was discussed with the group and the steps taken to improve this. **The group agreed no recommendations were needed to improve performance of repairs as service improvements are currently being made.**
- 4.4 We met with the Touchpoint Manager and Touchpoint Academy Coach to discuss how touchpoint staff (new and current) are trained on repairs, the advice they give to customers, how they recognise an emergency repair and shown how these are booked in.
- 4.5 As part of the Customer Involvement Framework a Complaints Monitoring and Performance Monitoring meeting is held each quarter. Members from the Consumer Standards group were present at these meetings. The information provided at these meetings is used as supporting evidence to the Home Standard.

Job Shadowing

- 4.8 As part of another project in the framework an involved customer spent two hours with an advisor within Touchpoint and listened to the incoming calls taken by the advisor.
- The customer found that the advisors take personal situations into account when scheduling a repair on whether it needs to be an emergency or standard repair. For standard repairs different appointment times are offered to the customer.
 - In previous years when checking this standard, we have job shadowed the Work Planners to observe how they allocate repairs, and as this process has not changed we didn't think this was necessary to carry out again.

Mystery Shopping

- 4.9 Mystery shopping was carried out through website checks and a home visit:
- Investment – we checked the website to ensure there is an up-to-date investment plan.
 - Repairs - We checked the website to ensure that the different ways in which customers can report a repair and the type of appointments available are shown.
 - Smoke Detectors – a customer from the group had an annual gas service booked in, during this she noted what was checked which included all smoke detectors in her property.
 - Policies – we checked that all relevant policies relating to the standard were published on the website and in date.

The main findings from mystery shopping were as follows.

- The investment plan is up to date.
- The process customers should expect when receiving investment work is published.
- Thirteen provide numerous methods for customers to report a repair.
- Thirteen shows timescales in which repairs should be completed.
- The information provided on the website is relevant and informative.
- Policies are available on the website for customers to view.
- Smoke detectors are checked when the customer receives their annual gas service.

Document Checks

- 4.10 The group members agreed that they needed to check a range of documents to support their work. We looked at:
- Decent Homes Standard (DHS) spreadsheet – showing all of Thirteen's properties and if there are any fails for DHS
 - Gas servicing letters – Stages 1 to 5
 - Gas access process flowchart

- Gas access procedure
- Adaptations process
- Stairlift process
- List of approved major and minor adaptations
- Compliance areas for Thirteen properties – different areas to be checked and those responsible
- Budget report plan, showing areas for investment works
- Customer satisfaction feedback on investment
- Repairs procedure
- Health and safety repairs completed since April 2022
- Thirteen void standard

The main findings from the document checks were as follows.

- The DHS spreadsheet showed all properties managed by Thirteen, when investment works are due and if any components fail the DHS. We were made aware that three or more components failing meant the property didn't meet the DHS.
- Gas servicing letters cover each step in the gas process for when there is no access to a property and clearly state the actions Thirteen need to take.
- The documents for adaptations clearly state the wide variety of work Thirteen have completed.
- The customer satisfaction document showed us that Thirteen get feedback from customers who have received investment work and will follow up any negative comments.
- Health and safety repairs showed us that each customer is treated as an individual when booking a repair and it recognises the personal needs of customers if a repair needs to be completed quicker than normal timescales.

Other Information

4.11 To support assurance other information was used as evidence, such as:

- Gas Servicing – the group members were shown the daily email that is sent to the leadership team confirming if Thirteen are compliant, if any checks are out of date and any properties Thirteen may struggle with access.
- Smoke alarms – it was confirmed in an email that smoke alarm checks are carried out when the customer receives their gas service.
- Adaptations – the group members were shown how many adaptations have been completed to date, split into major and minor. We were also informed of the other agencies Thirteen work with for adaptations.
- Compliance – the group members were shown a screenshot of the Power BI dashboard showing percentages of completion in the different areas of compliance i.e. legionella testing, fire safety, lift repairs etc.

- Repairs – A presentation was delivered to the group about repair follow up work, this is the same presentation that was delivered to all trades during toolbox talks along with a follow up email.
- Emails – We were shown some emails confirming legionella testing was up to date (this was backed up with the dashboard screenshot). Building safety questionnaires are not all completed however these are still within target and the next steps for follow up work was shared.
- Decent Homes Standard review – the consultation event held for customers to give their feedback on the review provides evidence that customers are given the opportunity to influence decision making.
- In-Depth Review on Damp and Mould – the report and recommendations were used as evidence to show that customers are able to influence repairs and maintenance services.

5 CONCLUSION(S)

- 5.1 The group members were happy that the information and supporting evidence received demonstrated compliance with the standard. We are therefore happy to give assurance that all elements of the Home Standard are being met.

6 RECOMMENDATION(S)

- 6.1 There were no recommendations to be made following this review.

Contact Details: Jim Scollen (Customer Stream Lead)