



Customer Annual Report 2021-2022



Chair's introduction



Welcome to the Customer Annual Report for 2021/22

I hope you enjoy this report, which has been designed and developed by a group of customers involved in reviewing Thirteen's services and performance.

2021/22 has once again been challenging for us all, but I'm really proud that as involved customers we're making a real difference in our community and that our views matter.

As chair of Thirteen's involvement framework, I've had the opportunity to attend board meetings and hear about performance and upcoming work. It's fantastic to be able to collaborate with the other board members and offer a customer perspective on a range of topics and issues. Everyone's voice is heard and there's such a positive 'Team Thirteen' feel at meetings.

As well as helping shape Thirteen services, involved customers have been part of national discussions about social housing. They had the chance to share feedback with the Northern Housing Consortium about the ongoing review of the Decent Homes Standard, that sets the minimum standard that housing organisations like Thirteen must meet. It's rewarding to know that by being part of such an important conversation, our views help shape the future of customers' homes.

By being involved, we've met some great people and formed friendships along the way. There are many ways to share our views with Thirteen, such as meetings, via video calls or an online survey, meaning that no two days are the same.

One of my highlights is our customer open day; a chance for Thirteen customers and colleagues to get together and celebrate the work of involved customers. At our latest event, we discussed Thirteen's plans to deliver greener, more efficient homes, as well as tackling the stigma associated with social housing. We were joined by a representative from the Chartered Institute of Housing and heard from Thirteen's new chair, Jane Earl and chief executive, Ian Wardle.





The event attracted a fantastic turnout and we welcomed lots of new faces, including customers, who have since signed up to get involved. As an ambassador for customer involvement and chair, I meet new involved customers to welcome them and chat about the different ways they can share their views.

Providing a voice for other customers and passing on feedback, queries and concerns to Thirteen colleagues is important to us and we recently supported a building safety project, where we met customers in Thirteen's high-rise properties to find out about how safe they feel in their homes. This is another important topic for Thirteen and it was interesting to get an insight into how customers are feeling and how this feedback is used.

Some involved customers enjoyed being on the recruitment panels for jobs at Thirteen, including the touchpoint team, community resilience and asset management.

I'd recommend getting involved - it's a great way to have your say and help make improvements to the services that matter to you. We are always keen to hear from new customers interested in being involved and supporting our work. If you'd like to find out a bit more, email customer.engagement@thirteengroup.co.uk or call **0300 111 1000**.

Val Scollen

Chair of Thirteen's Customer Involvement Framework and Customer.

Here's a snapshot of what customers have been involved in throughout the year...



Getting involved

Customer Pauline French (above, left) became an involved customer in 2021 when Thirteen acquired new homes from Clarion Housing Group. She's really enjoying being involved and said:

“I would like to thank all our involved customers and staff for the very warm welcome I have received on joining the group. I feel that Thirteen really listens to what's important to customers.

“It's a pleasure being a part of this journey, and I really look forward to seeing future customer relationships being built here, which make a positive impact on communities. ”

Meeting customers from Hull

Chair of Thirteen's involvement framework, Val Scollen, went along to Hull to meet some of the customers who recently joined Thirteen from Clarion Housing Group. Val said it was a great experience and we're looking forward to having some of those customers become more involved!

Recruiting new colleagues

Customers formed part of interview panels to help Thirteen recruit to roles including Touchpoint advisors, community resilience coordinators, head of voids, housing service coordinators, executive director of assets and board and committee members. More recently they had an active role in the recruitment of the Chair of the Thirteen Board and the new chief executive.

Chair of Thirteen's involvement framework, Val Scollen, would like to thank everyone involved in this.

Community fund

Every few weeks involved customers help choose which great causes we support through our community fund.

Some recently funded projects include Christmas parties in some Thirteen sheltered schemes, equipment for a netball club in Darlington and setting up a lunch club. They've also funded projects such as Redcar & District Parkinson's Support Group, to help those coping with the condition as well as their family and carers, and Children's Safety Education Foundation to run PSHE lessons challenging myths and presenting the reality of carrying a knife to secondary school.

New tenancy experience

Customers have started a new tenancy experience project that follows ten customer journeys from beginning a new tenancy, looking at trends in the communication they receive from Thirteen.

Gresham regeneration

Customers gave us their feedback on artwork to promote the development of new homes at Gresham in Middlesbrough, known as Union Village. Their views will help the marketing team for future displays.

Community resilience

Customers recently met with the team to provide views on website content for community resilience, the team's priorities and a community map with information about community groups, projects and support services.

Building safety and property compliance

Customers helped the building safety team find out how safe residents feel in their homes. One of our customers took part in Home Safety Week by door knocking with the building safety team to promote safety and raise awareness.



Here's a snapshot of what customers have been involved in throughout the year...

Customer open day

Over 100 customers signed up to our last customer open day.

It was our first hybrid open day, where people from Hull, Hartlepool and many other Thirteen communities came together in person and online to take part in a number of workshops.

There was an update from our involved customers about recent work, a presentation and Q&A with chief executive Ian Wardle, a workshop with our environmental team on plans to deliver greener, more efficient homes, an introduction from our new chair, Jane Earl and a presentation with the CIH about stigma in social housing.

The open day gave us the opportunity to share information with customers new to involvement activities at Thirteen and ask about the projects they may be interested in. By getting involved, customers can share feedback about the things that matter most to them, helping us improve services, neighbourhoods and future opportunities.

The customer voice is very much heard and well received by the Thirteen Board, via stream leads providing video updates on activities and the impacts they've made. Consumer standards reports and performance stream reports are delivered in person. The chair of the involvement framework attends every board meeting and takes an active part in discussions.

To ensure customers know what discussions are happening at board, after each meeting a board member provides video feedback, cascaded to involved customers and uploaded to the website and social media for customer comment and query.



In 2021-22 our customers worked on:

- A rolling programme to provide assurance to the board on our compliance with the Regulatory Consumer Standards which are:
 - **Home standard**
 - **Tenancy standard**
 - **Tenant involvement and empowerment standard**
 - **Neighbourhood and community standard**
- Developing and delivering our new customer experience operating model, Touchpoints.
- Our environmental impact and how this is assessed within the Thirteen planning process.
- Reviewing how we support customers whose homes are scheduled for demolition.
- Reviewing our repairs and maintenance service, shaping priorities, responsibilities and the timings of response.
- Developing the process around how outbound customer contact technology works.

Our community fund

Thirteen's community fund invested **£135,587** to support a range of health, wellbeing and social activities for older people, children and local interest groups. Despite the pandemic limiting community activities, the fund helped **96 groups**, last year. Supported projects included fitness classes, green spaces improvements, food and care packs, home safety activities and a range of other social and community events across the Tees Valley.

Customer volunteers

In the last year, involved customers gave more than **814 hours** of their time across various activities, including helping to scrutinise our work and taking part in events and promotional opportunities.





You said, *we're doing*

You said:

Customers told us they wanted our Touchpoint service centre to be more flexible so they could speak to someone at a time suitable to them.

We're doing:

Our Touchpoint service centre is now open between 9am and 3pm every Saturday, meaning customers have more opportunities to contact us at a time that suits them.

You said:

Customers told us they wanted a single point of contact rather than having to explain why they're contacting us to many different people.

We're doing:

We created a holistic tenancy support service, so people have one point of contact and aren't passed between teams.

A look at the last 12 months

You said:

Customers told us to build more affordable homes and offer different types of affordable options.

We're doing:

Last year we built 437 new homes, 349 for affordable rent, 70 for shared ownership and 18 for outright sale.

You said:

New customers in Hull told us they wanted to be able to find out about homes available and other support services on offer closer to home.

We're doing:

In March 2022, we opened our second Touchpoint store in Hull, offering customers the chance to learn more about Thirteen by popping in for a coffee and a chat. We know people value the opportunity to speak to us face to face, so we're excited to offer this great customer experience in Hull.

What we achieved throughout 2021-22

V1

maintained our regulatory
financial viability at V1
(the highest possible rating)

G1

maintained our regulatory
governance rating at G1
(the highest possible rating)

Investment in homes

From April 2021 to March 2022, we carried out **£33.9m** of improvements to homes, including replacing kitchens, bathrooms, boilers and installing new roofs, windows and doors.

202

boilers installed

440

door installations

217

new rooflines

118

(properties)
window installations

122

new kitchens installed

52

new bathrooms
installed



Did you know?

Last year our trade operatives were unable to gain access to

21,838

properties to carry out pre-arranged repairs or safety checks resulting in a total cost of

£600,545!

Fire risk assessments

Our homes in multi-storey blocks are regularly assessed for fire risk, and our standard inspection cycle is over and above recommendations set out in Local Government Association guidance. We go above and beyond to ensure buildings are as safe as possible.

- High-rise properties are checked every six months.
- Complex or three-storey and above buildings are checked annually.
- Buildings considered low risk are checked every two years.

Inspections help us identify fire hazards and any required improvements, looking at multiple aspects of how the building is managed and what can be done to reduce fire risk.

Despite the challenges our fire risk assessment inspection program remained **100% compliant** through 2021-22.

Our regular visits quickly identify and record any defects and the actions or repairs undertaken to keep customers safe. More importantly, we have ensured **100% of post inspections** were completed on time.

As part of our approach, Thirteen's building safety team regularly carries out a range of fire safety checks. Working with a team of joinery specialists, they carried out checks to **over 800** flat fire doors.



Customer satisfaction with services

Satisfaction indicates customers' perception of the service standards we provide.

Our performance is measured against targets specific to the organisation, allowing us to measure success over time. Like most landlords, Thirteen seeks feedback via various mechanisms, including one-off perception surveys and in-depth research.

89.1%

of customers are satisfied with our services

79.6%

of customers are satisfied with service of moving into their new home

72

customer net promotion score which measures how likely customers are to recommend us to others. 50 and above is excellent!

What we achieved throughout 2021-22

Repairs in customers' homes

We carry out a range of repairs to customers' homes, ensuring they're kept in good condition. Our skilled colleagues 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 better allocate repairs jobs, ensure quality customer service and increase satisfaction.

121,705

emergency repairs completed

97.6%

of repairs completed on first visit

89.25%

satisfaction with our repairs service

Anti-social behaviour (ASB)

1,934

cases reported

1,599

cases resolved



Improving neighbourhood services

Customers told us they wanted our staff to be more visible in neighbourhoods, helping them deal day-to-day issues. We adopted an operating model with neighbourhoods at the heart of our business, and more neighbourhood co-ordinators managing a reduced number of properties.

120

housing services co-ordinators
manage Thirteen homes

2,471

fly tipping and 129 graffiti removal jobs carried out to
keep our neighbourhoods clean and tidy



Supported housing services

We provide services to meet the needs of vulnerable people and support them to improve their quality of life. These include homeless people, ex-offenders, people with mental health issues, those recovering from substance misuse, families, women and young people.

3,037

support plans in place



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 are flexible and tailored to suit customer needs. Homes provide privacy and the chance to keep an active social life and remain at the heart of the community.

286

sheltered homes with support services available

2,360

extra care homes for older and vulnerable people

1,979

major and minor adaptations to customer homes

£1.2m

spent on adaptations to help customers remain in their homes



What we achieved throughout 2021-22

Employment support

Last year, Thirteen’s employability service provided intensive support to customers across the Tees Valley and County Durham. Around **507** were supported in an education or training programme, progressing into training or education. **402** of whom were tenants.

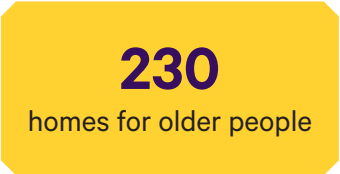
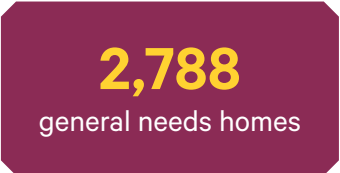


Lettings

As part of our new homes development programme, Thirteen builds homes for affordable rent. We also bring existing empty homes back to life by carrying out extensive renovations to ensure customers live in a quality, secure rental property.



This included:



Developing new homes

We place enormous importance on building new homes. In our strategic plan, we set out our intention to invest in new builds, including affordable rent, shared ownership and market sale, to ensure that we have the right mix and quality of homes to meet our customers' expectations now and in the future. Profits from new homes for market sale are reinvested back into Thirteen.

Last year, we invested over **£55.6m** in building new homes building **419** affordable new homes.

349
affordable rent

70
shared ownership

Plus
18
for private sale

Bespoke lettings

We have over **100** bespoke lettings homes designed for rent by specific customers such as students and medical staff. These homes give customers the chance to live close to their place of study or work. The team also look after several homes for older and vulnerable people.

Leaseholders

We also have:

803
leaseholders

1,006
shared owners



Tenancy support

We offer support to tackle home conditions, finance issues, welfare benefits, health issues, tenancy management neighbourhood disputes and anti-social behaviour.

1,203
customers supported by the
tenancy support team



What we achieved throughout 2021-22



Rents and income

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

16,748

customers with clear rent accounts at the end of 2021-22

14,192

customers in arrears

2,281

notices served for rent arrears



Value for money

We're committed to providing value for money, delivering our vision and maximising the social impact of our resources and investment. It's important because we want to make sure we can invest in more homes, existing homes and create quality services for residents, customers and other stakeholders.

Last year, we achieved:

£3.5m

total savings across all Thirteen's services which equates to

2.2%

of social housing turnover



Touchpoints

We believe everyone should receive the same quality of service, no matter where and how they come into contact with Thirteen. That's why we're investing in our Touchpoints programme, including a high street presence, a digital platform called My Thirteen and in our contact systems to promote the range of services we have to offer and make them more accessible, direct, quick and easy.

13,646

customers signed up to My Thirteen during 2021-22

296,254

calls answered

40

seconds average call waiting time

2,224

customers visited our Stockton store

Involving customers

Thirteen involves customers who have a lived experience of our services and to bring fresh ideas and help us to improve services, neighbourhoods and opportunities for all customers. They are involved in helping us scrutinise services and performance, consult on policies and strategies, and comply with regulations.

115

involved customer meetings held

7

policies consulted on

1

survey carried out

51

services changed or implemented as a result of customer involvement

4

regulatory consumer standards tested, and assurance given to the board we are compliant

Dealing with complaints

We're committed to achieving 100% of complaints resolved promptly and fairly within five working days. Our aim is not to receive a repeat complaint, so we work with managers on the learning from those we've had. However, we've fallen short of our annual target. We're working to rectify this by looking at where complaints come from, why they're happening and how we stop them from happening again.

87%

of complaints have been responded to and resolved within our target of five days

950

complaints received

What we achieved throughout 2021-22

Environmental

Improving our approach to environment and sustainability underpins everything we do. We are taking definitive action to reduce Thirteen's carbon footprint and have set an ambition to reach net zero carbon on direct business emissions by 2035 and on all emissions by 2050, in line with government targets.

Energy efficiency improvements

Last year we carried out energy efficiency improvements to some of our homes including:

32

properties benefited from 'fuel switch' – replacing storage heaters with full central heating systems

26

air source heat pumps were installed

125

properties had their lofts insulated

48

properties had cavity wall insulation

Solar PV systems across our properties generated approximately

957.5

megawatts of electricity

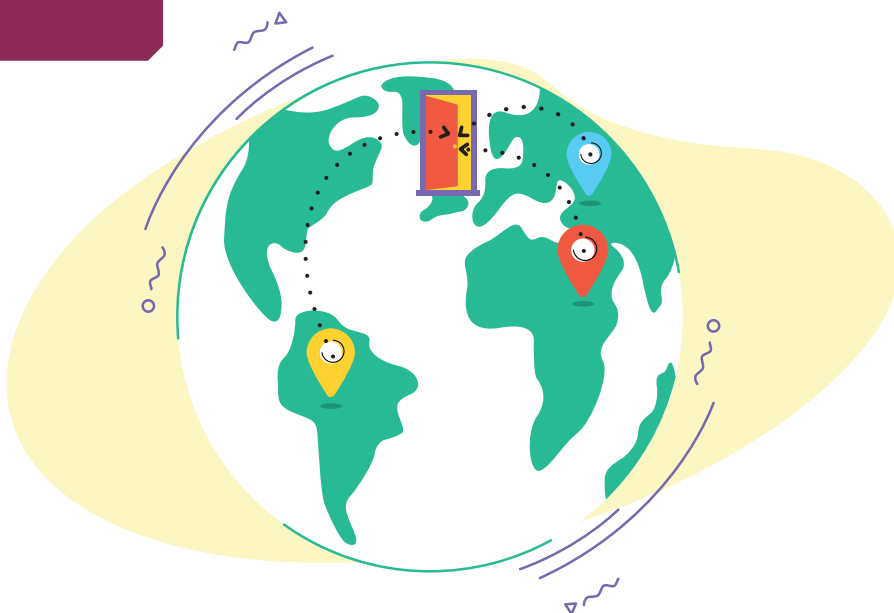


Greenhouse gas emissions

Since we started our journey to reduce our negative environmental impact at Thirteen, we have come a long way. We scoped out and measured what the baseline position would be for the organisation and set our ambition to reach net zero carbon by 2035 on our direct business emissions.

We launched our Take Control campaign in 2020 with colleagues and involved customers, which encourages everyone to play their part in helping us achieve our goals and become a much greener organisation.

Our customers are our priority, and we ensure that they are considered in all decisions we make and endeavour to deliver sustainable homes that are fit for the future and right for our customers.



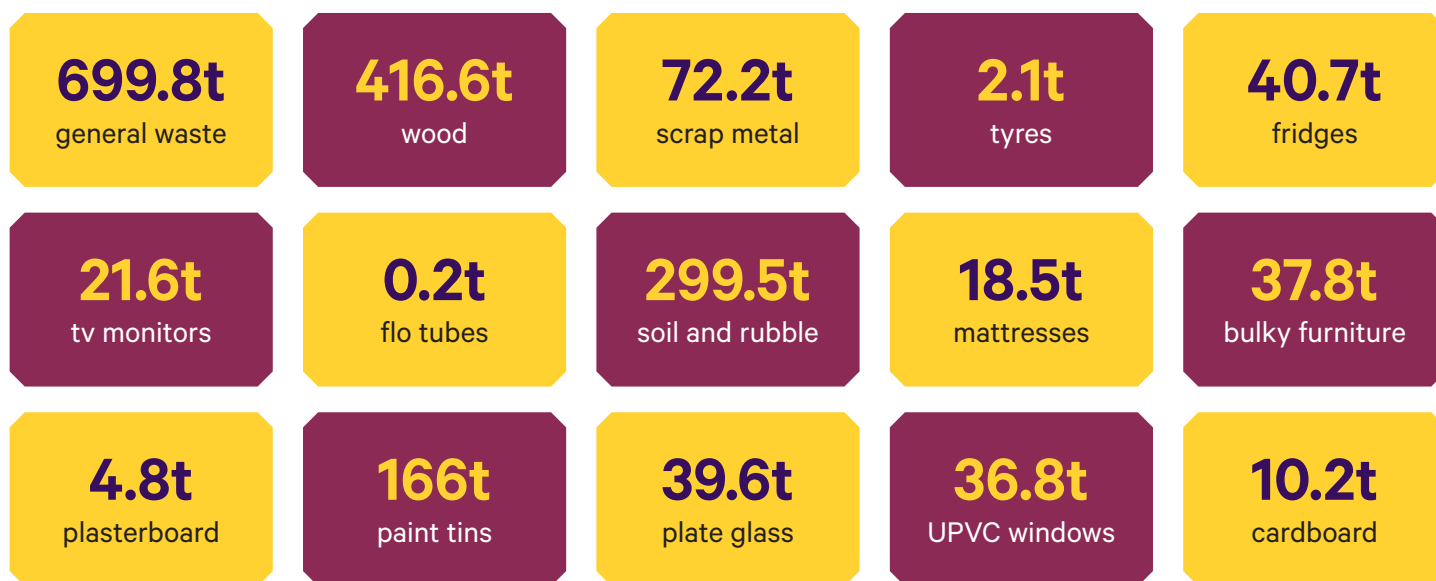
Waste management

We opened a state-of-the-art, environmental centre in Billingham in 2020, which gives us control over how we manage and processes our waste. The centre is unique in the region and the housing sector.

Since opening the centre, we have gained control over the waste generated in day-to-day housing management.

Waste generated through planned maintenance work, repairs, environmental improvements, and getting homes ready for the next customer is all now redirected through the centre. This has significantly reduced the amount waste going to landfill and 2025 in the first year of operations 99% of all waste was diverted from landfill, which exceeded our original goal. Further work is now on-going to maximise waste reduction, re-use and recycling.

The following materials (in tonnes) were reclaimed at the TRC between April 2021 and March 2022:



Thirteen upcycling and re-use project

We launched our furniture upcycling workshop and warehouse project at the recycling centre in February 2022. This scheme has two huge benefits, it helps customers currently facing severe financial challenges to furnish their homes with clean, restored and attractive

furniture and also prevents hundreds of tonnes of unwanted furniture from going to landfill

The UK currently discards around 1.6m tonnes of furniture and bulky waste, most of which goes to landfill. People often leave items behind in our empty properties when they move on and some of it is prime for recycling.

The Upcycling team are creating 'starter packs' for customers, with essential items to give some additional support for those who need it and to help get their tenancies started comfortably from day one. It is estimated that 400,000 children in the UK do not have their own bed, and beds and wardrobes are by far the most requested items.

We provide beds, cooking equipment, sofas, chairs, dressers and also things that may be classed as non-essential like mirrors, soft furnishing and pictures. Things that really make a house a home.

This project will not only provide support for our customer, but it has the added benefit of reducing our waste to landfill too.

How we compare against our peers

We're continuing to challenge ourselves to save money where we can and take the long-term view to invest in being more effective and efficient in the future. To do this, we benchmark against our peers, using the Regulator of Social Housing ("RSH") - Global Accounts and Housemark, using appropriate and representative peer groups.

Looking at our ambitions for the future, we also forecast over the next five years to understand where we're going and be clear and realistic about the scale of the task.

Operational measures		Benchmark Northern
97.64%	of repairs completed first time (from H Mark Performance return)	94.41%
11.79	average calendar days to complete a repair (from H Mark Performance return)	12.84
87%	of complaints responded to within five working days (from H Mark Performance return)	86.04%
100%	of valid gas safety certificates	100%
3.15%	current tenant arrears as a % of the annual rent debit (Arrears dashboard)	3.29%





About the Annual Report

At Thirteen, we've been working to help improve the lives of people in our neighbourhoods for years.

We provide our customers with homes, support and opportunities to grow.

As a not-for-profit housing association, we focus on delivering our charitable objectives of providing housing, care and support for those who need it.

We own over 34,000 properties and manage more than 35,000 homes across the North East, Yorkshire and Humber, providing services for over 72,000 customers.

Our strength, capacity and ambition to deliver what customers need mean we can change things for the better.

This document gives you some quick and accessible information about the performance of Thirteen. It provides 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 2021 and March 2022. We also have more information about performance and Thirteen's impact on the area on the website at www.thirteengroup.co.uk/aboutus

