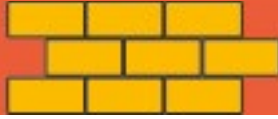


# Thirteen Customer Engagement Update

October 2021

## BRICKS



### Regulatory Consumer Standards Assurance

The Consumer Standards tested are:

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

#### Home Standard

We have recently completed over 46 checks to gather evidence that Thirteen are compliant with the Home Standard. We then produced a report which was presented to Board by our Stream Lead in August. From our findings we were able to provide board with assurance that Thirteen are compliant with the standard. There were some recommendations made to help improve services which were approved. The report and feedback to Board was very well received.

#### Neighbourhood and Community Standard

In September we started looking at our next standard, the Neighbourhood and Community Standard. We have met together via Microsoft Teams to agree how we will gather the evidence and aim to have our checks and report completed in time to be presented to Board by our Stream Lead in November.

So far, we have met with the Head of Estate Services, the Head of Housing Services, the Head of Building Support Services, and the Head of Community Resilience. During these meetings we have been presented with information on what the various teams within Thirteen do to meet this standard.

We will carry out some testing including mystery shopping and job shadowing to further test these services. We will share the outcome of our checks in the next newsletter.

If you would like to support with this testing in the future, please contact \*Jim (Customer and Stream Lead for Consumer Standards Assurance) via the Customer Engagement team.

### Service Projects

#### Community Resilience

The Community resilience team shared their experiences and the work they have done so far at our recent Open day event. This included a workshop around what has been done in the past in our communities to lessen Anti-social behaviour and to discuss whether there is lack of opportunities within our areas and what has been done in the past to overcome these.

#### Living Well Project

The Living Well project is about Thirteen understanding how they can change and improve their offer for us the customers so that they can help us to live well and more independently as we age.

The Innovation and Marketing Team held some online workshops to gather our thoughts on the design of houses, activities to prevent loneliness, any extra support that might be needed, what choices are available and the technology that could be used to help people in their homes.

#### Leaseholder feedback

We held focus group sessions for leaseholders to give us their feedback on the service they receive. The discussions focussed on how the customers felt, what services Thirteen offered, how they were dealt with when contacting Thirteen, if they had any concerns or issues. Also, what they felt currently works well and if anything could be done differently. We collated the information and made some recommendations to improve the service based on what the leaseholders had told us.

The information gathered was sent to the Head of Housing Services and Director of Operations and the service has been changed to include our recommendations and offer a better service.

We then held feedback meetings with these members of staff and the leaseholders.

#### Kitchen Contractor Survey

A survey was sent out to ask customers about their experiences of kitchen renewals after investment work has been completed to see if they were happy with the process. There was a great response to this survey. Thank you.

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





## **Building Safety and Property Compliance**

Multiple surveys have been sent out for customer feedback to gain insight into how customers feel in their current homes and to assess whether customers feel safe. This included a survey about Sprinklers, a 'feeling of safety' survey and 'Being safe in your home' survey.

High-rise customers are currently being asked if they would like to take part in looking at building safety within high-rise buildings. More information on this to follow soon.

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.

## **Community Fund**

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

In total this year 74 applications have been considered and approved totalling £117,128.72.

Some of the funded projects included

- ✓ Coulby Newham Litter Pickers were granted funding to allow 16 additional volunteers to join their group
- ✓ The Community Resilience Team were granted funding to purchase 2 defibrillators to be installed in Stockton and Hartlepool
- ✓ Actes Trust had their grant approved to clean and tidy up the alleyways in Gresham. The community will also create wall murals which will be used to decorate the alleys.

## **Thirteen Academy**

Our successful scholars have accepted their scholarships and began their degree of choice at Teesside University. It was lovely to see some scholars at our Open day and we look forward to seeing them all soon.

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

## **In-Depth Review**

We have been approached by the Director of Customer Services to carry out an In-Depth piece of work on how Thirteen deals with damp and mould. We have met with the director and will be gathering evidence to provide some recommendations on how to improve this service for customers.

## **Performance Monitoring**

### **Complaints Monitoring Meeting**

We meet with the Customer Recovery Team Leader every 8 weeks to discuss the performance of complaints and the learning that comes from them. We are monitoring the complaints that we have received regarding scaffolding, new build defects and lettings to identify any trends and carry out some further work to improve the services for customers.

### **Complaints Monitoring report for board**

Our existing stream lead is writing a report that will be taken to Board in November. This will cover the work the group has done over the past 6 months and the learning that has come from the complaints. We will bring more information on this in our next update.

If you would like any further information on this or you would like to attend meetings or take part in looking at performance information or complaints, please contact Pam via the Customer Engagement team.

## **Training, Conferences and Networking**

### **Northeast Tenants Voice**

There have been two further meetings held online via zoom. These were to agree the Terms of Reference, the Code of Conduct, and a logo for the NETV. There were also discussions on how the group will be ran and future elections to be held to recruit a board.

### **Climate jury**

The Climate Jury is coming to an end, a national report with customer recommendations will be shared with you soon.

### **HQN residents' network**

One of our involved customers attended 'The social Housing White Paper' training conference for engaged residents and staff.

Three involved customers attended the Regulator of social housing conference for the full day in the Radisson Blue in Durham.

Both conferences were said to be enjoyed by all attendees.

If there are any training and conference opportunities that you see online or otherwise that are of interest to you or you feel they may be beneficial to the customer involvement team, please contact us with the details.





### Customer Open Day

We held our six-monthly Customer Open day on the 21<sup>st</sup> of October which was held virtually on Teams.

The day was attended by 103 members of staff, customer's and Board & Committee members. The day included-

An update of some of the things we have achieved over the last 6 months. [Click here to view the Involved customer update video.](#)

As well as hearing from our Chief Executive Ian Wardle with a live Q&A.

The environmental team and community resilience team also attended as guest speakers and delivered an insight into what Thirteen are planning on doing or have already done to improve the services they offer. Both teams also enjoyed hearing from customers in smaller workshop groups.

There will be more opportunities to engage with these teams soon to add to the information they have already gathered from our customers that shared their thoughts and ideas on the Open Day. The recording of the Open Day sessions will be made available to you soon.

If you would like any further information, please contact

Customer Engagement Team –  
[customer.engagement@thirteengroup.co.uk](mailto:customer.engagement@thirteengroup.co.uk)  
 or phone 0300 111 1000.

### Digital Involvement

A link to view our new customer involvement advert video alongside the customer involvement Leaflet and website wording was sent with feedback survey's for involved customers to share their views.

### 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:

- Lettings policy
- Income & Debt management policy
- Community resilience strategy.

### Other Involvement activity

Val Scollen (our chair) has attended multiple interviews following the restructuring of the Touchpoint team. The interviews were for - Touchpoint manager, experience managers, success coordinators and just recently Touchpoint Advisors.

### Customer Annual report

We held numerous meetings to decide what information we would like to include in this year's Annual Report and the layout we would like. We decided to add extra information in this year such as the environmental work that Thirteen do and the help that Thirteen offered their customers during the pandemic. Please access the published report via this link [Annual report for customers - Thirteen \(thirteengroup.co.uk\)](#).

### Up and coming

- Consultation has begun and is ongoing on the 5-year investment following a feedback session.
- From November onwards there will be projects on scaffolding, new builds, lettings, leaseholders.
- Tenancy experience – long term project looking at the customer experience from the very start of their tenancy.
- Recruitment from high – rise tenants to look at building safety (if you know any high-rise tenants, please let us know).
- In November there are plans to view a Digital twin 3D model for our high-rise building customers.

**\*Congratulations\*** to our newly appointed stream leads

- **Michelle Lord** for service projects
- **Pam Mclvor** for performance & complaints
- **Jim Scollen** for Consumer standards
- **Pauline Brace** for Community Fund

### 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 – [Val.Scollen@thirteengroup.co.uk](mailto:Val.Scollen@thirteengroup.co.uk)

