



Cumbria and Lancashire Viewpoint Meeting 24th January 2019

Background

Customers Pam Halton (Chair), Dee Turner, Mike Rorke, Sheila Flower, Indra Mudie, Michael Wear, Lee Charlton, Andy Curtis and Paul Carney from the Cumbria and Lancashire Viewpoint Team met at Anthonne House, Maryport on 24th January with Lisa Russell (Head of Service Delivery), Elsa Brailey (Head of Development and Delivery), Brian Patterson (Development Manager), Nicola Dunn and Kevin Lambert (Housing Manager's) and Colette Small (Involvement Advisor).

Customer Promise Assessments

Customers reviewed the outcomes for Bransty, Whitehaven and Top Seaton, Workington, and made the following comments and recommendations:

- Very pleased with the staff and quick turnaround to complete actions
- Themes of flooding and pathways coming through
- Use the term estate walkabout instead of inspection as it is less formal

Customers selected several neighbourhoods to assess in 2019 and recommended:

- Assess smaller rural neighbourhoods via telephone and email
- Assess 2 neighbourhoods in Maryport and Whitehaven portfolios and 3 in Egremont / Rural and Wigton, Kendal and Rural
- Present list of neighbourhoods to Operation Managers and agree final list in March

Customers influence neighbourhoods to assess and service improvements

Regeneration and Development Plans for 2019

Customers reviewed Cumbria and Lancashire's regeneration and development plans for 2019. Customers made the following comments and recommendations:

- Housing designs are impressive
- Customers would like to visit new schemes
- Pleased to hear grounds maintenance service charges will affect both customers who rent their homes and outright sales
- Provide customers with a copy of the newsletter following the design workshops
- Work with colleagues to assess new developments
- Seek customer views via post let visits and aftercare surveys

Customers influence regeneration and development scrutiny priorities

Handling Complaints Consultation

Customers answered eight questions and made the following recommendations on handling complaints and compensation:

- Goodwill payments are a nice to have but certainly not essential
- Payments will open up flood gates for compensation to be paid automatically
- Don't offer cash as a goodwill gesture
- Keep offers consistent across the board
- Priorities resolving complaints and responding and explaining what Home Group is going to do to prevent the same problem reoccurring
- Publish expressions of dissatisfaction like stage one and two complaints

Customer views will contribute to the national handling complaints consultation

Review Void Task Group Plans and Outcomes

Customers reviewed the Void Task Group presentation and thanked Nicola and Kevin for the informative update on how the groups' interventions have reduced the number of voids in Cumbria. Customers made the following comments and recommendations:

- Consider dropping kerbs for areas with parking issues
- Use empty office windows and Council notice boards to promote voids
- Use vinyl's on cars and vans to signpost people to Cumbria Choice – properties to let
- Involve customers in producing newsletters / posters / advertising

Mike provided an update on his experience of tracking the void at Thursby. Mike was impressed with void processes and happy the property was left in an excellent condition.

Customer views will help to promote and reduce the number of voids

Viewpoint Achievements and Scrutiny Priorities for 2019/20

Customers reviewed their achievements in 2018 and agreed their scrutiny priorities for 2019/20:

- Regeneration and Development – improve customer experience when they move in
- Voids – work with colleagues to reduce the number of ready to lets properties (54)
- Estate Walkabouts – increase customer involvement and improve neighbourhoods
- Planned Maintenance – monitor investment in stock / a decent home for customers
- Grounds Maintenance – work with contractor to improve customer experience

Customers influence their scrutiny priorities for 2019/20

Agenda and Priorities for the next meeting

Michael agreed to chair the next meeting and customers agreed their agenda for March:

- Performance Monitoring – review planned programme 2018/19 and new programme
- Customer Promise Assessments – planning agreed neighbourhood assessments
- Grounds Maintenance Scrutiny Group – update on plans for 2019
- Estate Walkabouts – review programme for 2019 and customer involvement plans

This feedback will shape the agenda for the next meeting in March

Customer said *“Attending a Viewpoint meeting has provided me with a better idea of how customers can be involved in scrutinising Home Group services”*.

Total cost: £116.80 including lunch, refreshments, expenses and travel

Date of next meeting: Thursday 21st March 2019