



Customer Forum 8th January 2019

Background

16 customers from rented, supported and leasehold services met in Leeds on 8th January along with: Katie Gilmartin (Strategy and Innovation Manager), Colette Small, Eveline Armour and Sam Byrne (Involvement Advisors).

Customer promise review

Customers reviewed the findings from our national consultation with 209 customers on their priorities for our refreshed customer promise and discussed our proposed new customer promise standards. Customers

- renamed the title of each standard and agreed their definitions
- identified key customer priorities for each standard
- explored how we can involve customers in each standard within the promise
- identified how we should communicate with customers throughout each standard

Customer promise standards and definitions

Customers received information on a draft set of new customer promise standards and made recommendations to rename and define each standard based on customer consultation feedback.

A safe home

Change 'A safe home' to 'Safe and sound'; 'Safe and secure'; or 'A safe place to live.'
Definition to include:

- Safe, secure and well maintained accommodation
- Accessible and adaptable homes that meet customers' individual needs
- Adequately protected with appropriate checks and repairs carried out

Customers said that this standard needs to clearly incorporate 'Decent home'

Repairs commitment

Change 'Repairs commitment' to 'Reliable repairs'; 'Responsive repairs'; or 'You report, we repair.' Definition to include;

- fast, effective, quality and reliable repairs service
- first time fix
- replace and upgrade components instead of multiple repairs
- understand customers' needs and keep customers informed throughout
- hold contractors to account

People who care about me

Keep 'People who care about me.' Other suggestions include 'Home Group cares about me.' Definition to include

- well trained colleagues who ask the right questions and 'see the person'
- local, visible and accessible colleagues
- friendly, supportive and caring staff
- flexibility to resolve issues and complaints quickly
- Easy to access systems with up to date information

Value for money

Change 'Value for money' to 'What's it worth'; 'How we spend the money'; or 'Value to

me.' Definition to include

- Affordable products and services that are worth the money
- Services that customers feel are of value to them
- Clear information for customers on the services Home Group deliver

Effective partners

Change 'Effective partners' to 'Working together to improve your community'; or 'Working together.' Definition to include

- Well maintained and well managed neighbourhoods, schemes and services
- Staff are visible in our neighbourhoods and communities
- Effective and close relationships with local external agencies
- Skills sharing and learning
- Regular estate and scheme inspections

Celebrating communities

Combine with the above standard as the term community is confusing and it can mean different things to different people.

Customer Assessors suggested that an odd number of standards within the promise helps with awarding gold/silver/ bronze so recommend five or seven standards rather than the proposed six

Involving customers

Customers made recommendations to incorporate involvement throughout each standard within the promise, including

- Promise assessments
- Viewpoint teams
- Scrutiny groups and reviews
- Neighbourhood inspections, walkabouts and estate days
- Risk and fire safety assessments and checks
- Tenant and resident groups
- Independent Complaints Panel
- Procurement
- Repairs and maintenance post inspections
- Local consultations
- Value for money groups

Communicating with customers

Customers identified information and methods of communication with customers throughout each standard, including

- Digital (website, email, text) including interactive calendar of 'what's on'
- Homelife, Local newsletters and letters
- Colleagues and word of mouth
- Tenancy sign-up
- Fire risk assessments and safety information
- Performance information
- Budget and service charge breakdowns
- Customer profiling
- Accessible formats
- Clear information and transparency on everything from service charges to complaints and repairs decisions and progress

Customer feedback has been submitted to Board and will help shape our new customer promise, standards and definitions

Total cost: £1,880 including lunch, refreshments, expenses and travel