



Repairs Meeting
Held on Tuesday 10th December 2013
Allan Water House
10.30am

1. Present: Alex Lamb, Moira Robertson, Alex Wallace, Philomena McClung,
Alexa Scrivener [SC] John MacMillan [SC] Elaine Lyons [SC]

Apologies: Anna Johnston, Dolly Gemmell, Michael Griffiths, Emma Meldrum [STP],
Brian Telford

2. Comments from Satisfaction Report

Reasons for not being satisfied with the service provided by Stirling Council

Seventeen per cent of all respondents reported they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the service provided by SC. These respondents were asked to comment on why they were not satisfied comments were then grouped into themes.

- The largest proportion (15%) of these respondents made a comment about the standard or quality of a repair
- And slightly smaller proportion did so about waiting times (including time waiting for a property to be allocated to them.
- A further 17% of respondents were unable to say why they were not satisfied with the service provided by SC.

Reasons for not being satisfied with the quality of your home

One fifth (20%) of all respondents, reported they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the quality of the home. These respondents were asked to comment on why they were not satisfied. The comments were then grouped into themes.

- The largest proportion of respondents highlighted an unspecified issue or problem (11%) and the same proportion mentioned damp (11%).
- Smaller proportions of respondents highlighted the following; poor maintenance / repairs (8%),
- Door replacements / repairs (7%),
- The general state of the property (7%),
- Poor heating system property is cold (6%)
- And window repairs replacement (6%).
- A further 13% of respondents were unable to make a comment.

Reason for not being satisfied with aspects of major works

At least four fifths of respondents expressed satisfaction with each aspect, with 90% of respondents with being told when workers would call. Satisfaction was lowest for

- Keeping dirt and mess to a minimum (81%). This aspect received the highest level of dissatisfaction, with 15% of respondents expressing dissatisfaction.

- Overall quality of work (11 %) was the next highest level of dissatisfaction

Reasons for not considering the rent for the property represents good value for money

One quarter (24%) of all respondents, reported the rent for the property represents neither good nor poor value for money or poor value for money. These respondents were asked to comment on why this view was held.

- For over one quarter (27%) of respondents it is because of the poor state of the property
- And for 24% it is because the rent is too high.
- The same proportion (24%) were unable to make a comment

Reasons for not being satisfied with the repairs service provided by SC for the last repair

Sixteen per cent of all respondents reported they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied or dissatisfied with the repairs service provided by SC for the last repair. These respondents were asked to comment on why they were not satisfied. The comments were then grouped into themes

- The largest proportion of respondents, (29%) was unable to provide a satisfied rating as they did not have recent experience of the repairs service.
- For a smaller proportion (25%) it was due to poor quality of the repair/substandard workmanship.
- And a further 11% mentioned the contractor leaving the work unfinished.

Respondents who have had a repair carried out in the past 12 months (59% of all respondents) were asked to rate the last repair carried out on a number of aspects. The aspects of the last repair carried out in the past 12 months viewed most positively is the attitude of the workers (94%).

- Respondents are most likely to **express dissatisfaction** regarding the time taken before work started (11%) and
- The repair being done ‘right first time’.

*Note – repairs and maintenance is the key priority for Stirling Council tenants

Findings from Survey	Action
15% of those surveyed were dissatisfied with the quality of their Homes: of the 15% most said (11%) this was due to damp problems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Damp and condensation feature article in Open Door • Damp and condensation feature article on website • Use stock condition surveys to identify risk properties • Target surveys where building failures identified from stock condition surveys • Advertise fuel poverty strategy • Ensure all stock is fully insulated • Educate tenants how to use their heating efficiency to reduce bills and ensure condensation is minimised.
33% said they were dissatisfied with the standard of their home when they moved in, 93% satisfied at sign-up stage. We spend the least average expenditure on voids (SHBVN), approx. 5 times less than the average.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lettable standards review (part of the repairs review 2014) • Review the performance targets (speed v quality v quantity) • Educate new tenants on our lettable standards – Housing Officers training. • Manage expectations through literature and communications

	<p>(Lettable standards leaflet, questions and answers, better use of web and housing officers, at application stage, offer stage etc)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review tenancy pack • Review timing of communicating lettable standard
11% are dissatisfied with the way their enquiries are dealt with, mostly with the time taken to get an answer to their query.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor calls through contact centre ensuring compliance with SLA • Monitor Technical Services calls and responses through phone system and complaints • Develop Technical Service, Service Standards.
Under 35s have had much more contact with the service than others and they are the group that have reported the most repairs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop repairs on-line • Publish Cyclical Maintenance and Capital Programme • Resurrect text reminders • Clear out and update all web information
45% of our customers report to have used the internet but only for information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See above
11% dissatisfaction of those surveyed that had a repair in the last 12 months, mainly because the repair did not get done right first time. Average repair per house is 4 (9SHBVN), we average 7. The next most reported reason was time taken before work started, however we have above average repairs that are classed as emergencies repairs work.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor repair re-calls • Educate tradespersons on procedure for "right first time " • Develop Technical Service, Service Standards • Develop follow-up repair reports for tradesperson on handhelds • Schedule meetings to present satisfaction findings to all tradespersons over three sessions. • Review repairs priorities • Manage expectations through literature and communications (contact centre impart timescales at time of reporting, publicise priorities via all types of media)

3 Comments from the meeting.

1. In all cases the results for Stirling Council were just under those for Clackmannanshire Council
2. Technical Services have prepared an Action Plan [See above]
3. Damp can be the result of blocking off chimneys, double glazing windows, insulating the properties and **then the tenant does not air it**. A person breathes out approximately 2 pints of water a night, and if the house is not ventilated, then it will settle on walls etc. There is a need to educate people to the necessity of ventilating the house daily. This can be done through articles in the Open Door and on the website.
4. What if there is still mould despite ventilating the house? There are several things that SC can do such as put a vent in the wall or insulating behind/at the back of the wardrobe.
5. The difference between sign-up and moving-in satisfaction levels is a concern, and SC need to find the reason for this. It could be that the tenant is frightened to complain at the sign-up stage because they wrongly think they may lose the tenancy. SC does do a visit 6 weeks later and this is when many tenants have become dissatisfied due to the things they have found since moving in. One thing that SC has started to see is that until recently people accepted that plaster would come off the wall

when redecorating, but this is no longer acceptable to tenants. It may be that the lettable standard needs to be improved. When the TLI looked at voids they were satisfied with the standard of the properties that were ready to be let. It could be that previously all repairs were done prior to letting the property, but now more minor repairs are done afterwards to enable the new tenant to move in earlier.

- 6.** The way enquiries are dealt with – for some reason it seems to be that if a tenant gets one bad experience, then they often get more bad experiences. With the new phone system, TS is able to monitor all phone calls and maybe able to find the cause.
- 7.** Under 35's are more likely to complain of damp but they also do not see any reason to air the house. Because they are also more likely to use modern technology an article on the website is more likely to be accessed than the Open Door. Text messaging is not compatible with the new IT system, but SC is working to implement it.
- 8.** 45% of tenants have accessed the website but only for information. It could be developed so that repairs could be reported via the website.
- 9.** 42% of all repairs are classed as either 4hour or 24hour emergencies. Some tenants refuse to accept that the repair requested is not an emergency and will not book an appointment. SC averages 7 repairs per house against the national average of 4 repairs; this is nearly twice as many. Heating repairs far outweigh all others and are done **within** 24 hours; tradesmen work until 9pm and most repairs are done the same day but some tenants are still demanding a 4 hour repair even though the service provided is superior to most other landlords and most other repair services such as Scottish Gas.

4. Repair Service Review

SC is considering setting rents based on cost. TS would like to do a repair service review and as a baseline would like to review the framework by which all policies are set; most repair service policies will be rewritten.

TS need to look at what we can deliver, what are the aspirations of tenants and the policies must be understood by everyone.

Tenants say in every review that repairs are the most important thing for them.

Policy/Procedure Objectives for Repairs Service

1. Jargon Free
2. Customer specific [recognise if the tenant is older/infirm] Information could be put on the tenant's profile e.g. over 80, unsteady on feet, hard of hearing.
3. Repairs which may impact on specific tenants. How would any work done for elderly/infirm but not for the ablebodied impact on the equality impact assessment standard? Could it be counted as a reasonable adjustment to the service especially in view of health and safety issues e.g. an elderly person who is partially sighted replacing the strip light in the kitchen could easily fall and be seriously injured? TS will list repairs and if and how they could impact on the elderly/infirm tenant.
4. Clarity on tenant responsibility. SC could do the repair but make a reduced charge for elderly/infirm. Not everyone has a family member or carer and as you get older, small things become very difficult.
5. TS need to gather the information and act on it; e.g. a tenant requests documents in large print so all document must be sent in this format.
6. Reduce costs- SC averages 7 repairs per house against the national average of 4.
7. TS must produce a clear list of emergency repairs, not just an abstract definition, such as 'when a danger to life and limb' for 4 hour emergencies and 12 hour emergencies.
8. TS need to produce a clear list of what the workman will do e.g. make safe, turn water off and explain why they can't do certain things e.g. touch electric when water still there, replace a leaky immersion tank the same day.
9. TS need to respond to tenants.
10. TS need to produce a concise response for tradesman to give when asked by the tenant to carry out/replace an item that they are not in a position to make a decision about.
11. Produce a Repairs handbook which incorporates advice on self-help such as what to do if trip-switch trips.
12. Send letter stating special services, put list of things

13. Tradesmen need to be advised if the tenant has particular problems such as poorly sighted or hard of hearing.
14. TS will produce a list of the top 50 repairs from the beginning of Northgate and what impact this could have on a vulnerable person if done under normal timescales.
15. TS need to know more about its customers so it can deliver a good service

Alexa suggested that TLI could reconsider doing responsive repairs until after the new policies have been implemented. Phil will mention that TS is doing a review of the repair service at the next TLI meeting for them to make a decision on the next topic. **Action Phil**

The next meeting is

Tuesday at 14th January at 10.30am in Allan Water House to discuss top 50 repairs list and move forward with repairs service review.

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