

CSP Review of the Programme Delivery Service

1. Why we chose the Programme Delivery Service

The Programme Delivery Service is integral to the maintenance and investment in homes and communal areas, delivering improvements to meet the aspirations of current and future residents.

The last CSP review of the Programme Delivery Service took place over six years ago. In the last six months CSP members have experienced some issues relating to communication with the service and we felt it was appropriate to revisit the service with a focus on communications.

2. Scope of the review

Following a briefing from staff on the Programme Delivery service we chose the following areas for review:

- The effectiveness of communications with tenants before, during and after works have been undertaken
- How vulnerable customers or customers who require extra support are identified and supported during improvement works
- How the service obtains, measures and uses customer satisfaction information to monitor and improve the service.

3. Our approach to the review

We used a variety of methods to gather a range of information and evidence in relation to the service.

The following activities were undertaken:

- Briefing from staff on the service
- Review of written communications to customers on the programme delivery
- Review of satisfactions survey and the results

Each member of the CSP assigned themselves to specific scrutiny tasks and reported their evidence to the panel. This evidence underpins the CSP's judgements and recommendations.

4. Overview of CSP findings

We found that the service regularly communicates with customers who will be receiving improvement works. In addition, on the website customers can find out if they are due improvements in the next 12 months.

We did find that there is room for improvement in the letters that customers receive to ensure that they convey information clearly and simply. In addition, the web page

CSP Review of the Programme Delivery Service

for the service requires improvement to enable customers to access information more easily.

Vulnerable customers receive support from SHG to enable improvement works to take place in their homes. These customers are identified from the data that SHG hold. We note that some customers may not be known to SHG as requiring support; it is not always communicated to customers in the letters they receive that support is available.

The programme delivery customer survey shows there is a high level of customer satisfaction with the service. However, we feel that there is room for improvement in the design and delivery of the survey to ensure its effectiveness and to increase the rate of return.

5.1 How effective communications are with customers before, during and after works have been undertaken

We reviewed letters that had been sent out to customers on a recent canopy replacement programme and a sprinkler installation.

5.1.1 Strengths

All the relevant information is provided in the letters. In addition to the letters, the service makes use of text messaging, emails and visits to communicate with customers. This ensures that customers receive information in a variety of ways that is suited to their needs.

The website enables customers to see if any planned maintenance work is due to take place at their property in the next 12 months.

5.1.2 Areas for improvement

Some of the customer letters we reviewed contained typing and grammatical errors. This looks unprofessional and that care has not been taken with customer communications.

The letters use a lot of text and do not make use of graphics or bullet points to illustrate key pieces of information for customers. For example, it is not always easy to pick out the relevant contact details if the customer has a query. Some letters do not set out clearly what the customer needs to do to prepare for the work and what they can expect from SHG.

The service does not routinely provide details of current improvement works or key contact details to the One Number. For example, if a customer has lost their letter

CSP Review of the Programme Delivery Service

and require the contact details relating to their improvement works, One Number are not able to provide this.

It is not easy for customers to find out from the planned maintenance web page if their property will be receiving any planned maintenance within the next 12 months. To find out if a property is due a new canopy, bathroom etc each section needs to be reviewed individually. Not all improvement works are detailed on the page such as fencing or paving. In addition, the web pages do not state what month the 12-month timeframe has started from and provides no information on when this information will be updated.

5.1.3 Recommendations

1. Develop a new set of template letters making use of bullet points and / or graphics to highlight key pieces of information. Ensure that they set out clearly and simply what the customer can expect from SHG and what they are required to do.
2. Ensure One Number have key contact details for improvement works that are taking place.
3. On the planned maintenance web page provide the month and year which the plan of investment works begins and ends for the 12 month period eg April 2021 – March 2022. Explore if it is possible to introduce a property search function or provide information on the customer portal regarding all improvement works.

5.2 How vulnerable customers or customers who require extra support are identified and supported during improvement work

We reviewed what staff told us at their briefing and the letters that are sent to customers.

5.2.1 Strengths

SHG use their customer data to identify customers that may require support to enable improvement works to take place in their home.

5.2.2 Areas for improvement

We note that some customers may not be known to SHG as requiring support. It is not made clear on customer letters that support is available if needed and how they can access this.

CSP Review of the Programme Delivery Service

There is no policy or procedure in place that details how vulnerable customers are identified and supported when improvement works are undertaken. This may result in inconsistencies with the approach taken to supporting vulnerable customers.

5.2.3 Recommendations

4. Ensure that letters inform customers that support is available if they require it and detail how customers access this support.
5. Develop a clear written framework on how vulnerable customers are identified and supported when improvement works are undertaken.

5.3 How the service obtains, measures and uses tenant satisfaction information to monitor and improve the service

We reviewed the paper and web survey and analysed the survey results.

5.3.1 Strengths

The survey is short, to the point and easy for customers to complete.

The survey is distributed to customers by a variety of methods including via post, online and also handed to the customer on the final completion visit.

When there is any data gathered from the satisfaction surveys which includes any negative feedback, it is followed up on and attempts to rectify are made.

5.3.2 Areas for improvement

Customers on paper surveys are asked to rate their satisfaction on a scale of very poor to excellent rather than very satisfied to very dissatisfied. Customers who use the online survey are asked to rate their answers on a satisfaction scale. This means that there are inconsistencies in the way that customers are asked for their views.

One of the survey questions is ambiguous. Question D *'Overall, how satisfied are you with the quality of service you received from Stockport Homes before, during and after the works?'* could be perceived to be a question about all Stockport Homes Services and therefore may not provide an accurate answer in relation to the programme delivery service. In addition, customers are not asked to rate the quality of service from the contractor.

Observation

The format of the survey looks outdated and would benefit from a refresh to make it look more professional. For example, we like the format of the current grounds maintenance survey.

CSP Review of the Programme Delivery Service

5.3.3 Recommendations

6. Ensure a satisfaction scale is used on the survey.
7. Consider rewording question D on the survey to ensure that it clearly relates to the programme delivery service. Consider including a question relating to the quality of service from the contractor.

6. Support provided for the scrutiny

The CSP wishes to express its appreciation to all those staff who have supported and assisted with this scrutiny review.

The CSP have been assisted by Jayne Boote from Engage Associates who has acted as the independent mentor for the group. Jayne has provided advice and guidance on scrutiny activities and facilitated the production of this report. This has been to ensure that the CSP has retained its independence during the scrutiny process.