

YOUR

VOICE

Customer feedback

1 April 2020 - 31 March 2021

The Wrekin
Housing Group

The Wrekin Housing Group

OVERVIEW

The pandemic has posed many challenges for housing organisations across the country. Despite these challenges, Wrekin has continued to deliver high levels of customer satisfaction.

88% of customers were satisfied that Wrekin provides a home that is safe and secure.

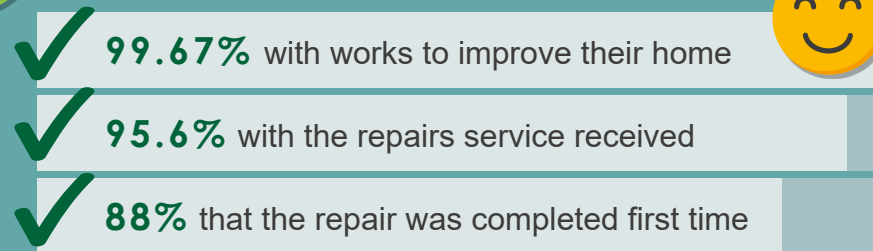
And overall 87% of customers were satisfied with us as a landlord.

During 2020/21 we made real strides in gaining valuable feedback from customers. We launched a new online survey which has significantly increased the amount of customer feedback we receive via both our STAR (Satisfaction of Tenants And Residents) and repairs survey. We are now in the process of rolling out online surveys to more areas of the business.



Spotlight on:

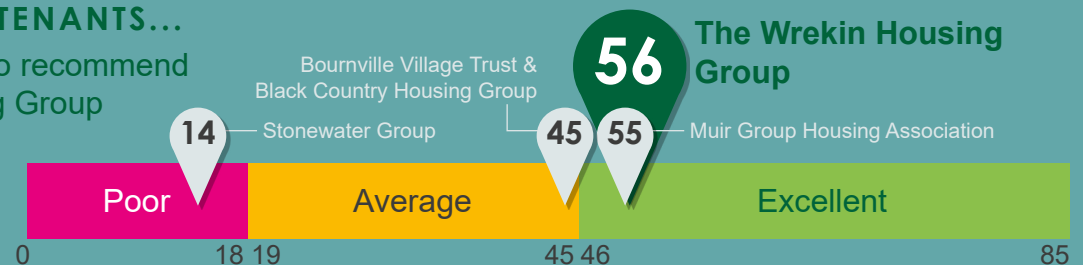
CUSTOMER SATISFACTION



NET PROMOTER SCORE

WE ASKED OUR TENANTS...

How likely are you to recommend The Wrekin Housing Group to family or friends?



HOW WE COLLECT CUSTOMER RESPONSES

1233

responses via our Covid-19 customer survey



1127

responses via our STAR survey (Satisfaction of Tenants And Residents)



211

comments received through social media



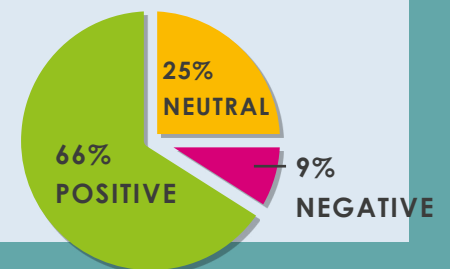
4200

responses via our repairs survey



360

formal complaints and 176 informal complaints were received



KEY AREAS OF FEEDBACK

COMMUNICATION



We have made a number of improvements in how we communicate with customers:

- The introduction of Senior Customer Executives within the Customer Contact Centre to improve communication throughout the repairs process.
- Introduction of a text message service ahead of appointments.
- Our CX customer survey now includes a question about being kept informed.
- Offering more digital platforms for customers to provide feedback.

QUALITY



We continue to make improvements to the services we deliver:

- Improvements to our management systems mean our staff can access more detailed information before visiting properties.
- We have improved our contract management processes.
- Ensuring our trade staff are fully aware of the Covid-secure measures before visiting customers' homes.

APPOINTMENTS



We took the decision to temporarily stop our same-day repairs service at the start of the pandemic. This allowed us to put measures in place to keep both our tenants and staff safe:

- The service was reintroduced in June 2020. We have caught up with any outstanding work, carrying out all work in a Covid-secure manner.
- By the year end our performance on completing repairs on the same day was over 86%.
- If our trade staff cannot make an appointment for any reason, we ensure all customers are contacted and kept informed.

Learning from feedback

COVID-19 CUSTOMER SURVEY



Covid-19 customer survey

During the first quarter of 2020/21, no customer surveys were undertaken as our services adapted to the new government restrictions. In July 2020, we undertook a customer wide survey to see how the pandemic had impacted on them.

- **82% of general needs customers said they were satisfied.**
- **93% of customers in our extra care/ supported housing schemes were satisfied.**



YOU SAID...

Some of you also highlighted difficulties around being able to speak directly to staff.

WE DID...

As a result of this feedback we did a number of things:

- Improved the message that is played when customers call the customer contact centre (CCC).
- Set up a text system just before we attend for repairs to advise customers of our Covid - safe working practices.
- Improved our telephone system so that less calls went un-answered.
- Added more information to the Tenant Handbook area of the website to advise customers which services were subject to Covid restrictions.

YOU SAID...

Some of you had not received any contact from us during the initial lockdown.

WE DID...

As a result of this feedback, we contacted some 4,000 customers, 100% who were over 60, those living in general needs specialist accommodation or those who had told us they were vulnerable in some way, to highlight our support offer. We received positive feedback from customers about this approach.

Learning from feedback

STAR SURVEY



STAR survey

(Satisfaction of Tenants And Residents)

As restrictions were eased following the first lockdown, the STAR survey was sent out to customers. This is the new Housemark STAR survey containing a set of Core question which will allow us to compare our performance through Housemark benchmarking nationally. We will tell you how we compare later this year. The first survey was sent out by email, but since December we have used the CX Feedback digital system to carry out the STAR survey. This allows us to survey even more people quickly and easily using SMS text and email, but also allows telephone surveys if needed.

The survey also provides the opportunity for tenants to leave a comment to explain their scoring, and we will use these comments to pass on praise, or improve the service. Around 30% of responders also leave a comment, most of which are positive, but if there is a problem we can sort it out with the customer and learn from that feedback and any trends that become apparent.

Satisfaction is high, between 87% - 88% during the year, with the majority of comments being positive

Below is a snapshot of the areas that customers said required improvement.

Although it is early days in using the system and analysing the feedback, some trends have already been highlighted.



Learning from feedback

STAR SURVEY



MAJOR IMPROVEMENTS TO YOUR HOME



The two main areas customers were concerned with were:

- A request for service and nothing happens
- Being told something will be done but nothing happens

Tenants' perception of poor quality can vary to Wrekin's. i.e. the condition of the kitchen/bathroom is poor and they require a new kitchen. However on our inspection the kitchen does not require a full replacement just a partial refurb i.e. handles, plinth and worktop.

There have been cases where prospective tenants were told that a new kitchen/bathroom will be fitted shortly after sign-up, however this never materialised. A review of the re-let process is to be carried out in 2021 to identify any improvements that can be made, and these responses will be fed into that process.

REPAIRS



Customer feedback indicated that there are areas for improvement around communication, quality of work, delays in work being carried out and repairs not being dealt with.

There were concerns around addressing cases of damp. As a result, customers received a damp survey and cases are now being actioned.

Comments were made regarding delays in getting work done, however, most tenants understood that the Covid-19 restrictions had an impact on this.

ESTATE/ NEIGHBOURHOOD



The key areas of concerns were fly tipping, parking, grounds maintenance, communal cleaning and ASB.

- A working group has been set up to address issues around parking.
- Wrekin's Ground Maintenance service is being reviewed.
- Our cleaning services contract will be up for tender in April 2022.
- We continue to work with our partners to address issues of drugs and ASB on our estates. Any issues are now escalated to relevant management areas.

Learning from feedback

FORMAL COMPLAINTS



Development

YOU SAID...

You were dissatisfied with the speed and process of dealing with new development defects within the first 12 months of the tenancy.

WE DID...

- Appointed a defects coordinator to improve how we deal with the process.
- A business solution review is also nearing completion to ensure that all necessary information is transferred to the right people at the right time. The review should be completed by the end of July 2021 and the recommendations implemented within the current financial year.

Home ownership

YOU SAID...

You were dissatisfied with a number of processes within the purchase and ongoing management of home ownership products.

WE DID...

- The management of home ownership now sits within our Specialist Housing Management service. A business solution review of this service is nearing completion. The review should be completed by the end of July 2021 and the recommendations implemented within the current financial year.

Home visits

YOU SAID...

You had some concerns with carrying out home visits 'on spec'.

WE DID...

- All employees have been advised that this practice is no longer necessary and that wherever possible, customers should be contacted in advance of any visit.

Learning from feedback

FORMAL COMPLAINTS



Repairs and maintenance

YOU SAID...

There were some issues regarding the maintenance of driveways.

WE DID...

- Reviewed the Group policy on the management of driveways.
- Provision for ongoing maintenance where it is our responsibility will be included in our Business Plan and Asset Management Strategy. This may give customers more clarity on responsibility. Where it is the Group's responsibility it will make necessary maintenance or replacement happen more smoothly

PPE

YOU SAID...

There was confusion about expectations of what PPE should be worn by staff throughout the Covid pandemic.

WE DID...

- We produced a customer video outlining what to expect when our staff visit a property. This information is now sent out by SMS just prior to the trade attending the property along with other Covid-safe information.

Communication

YOU SAID...

There was some lack of communication with customers regarding timings of repairs.

WE DID...

- Introduced Senior Customer Executives within the Customer Contact Centre to improve communication throughout the repairs process.
- Introduced a text messaging service to alert tenants ahead of appointments.
- The customer survey on CX now includes a question about being kept informed so that we can monitor performance more closely.

Learning from feedback

FORMAL COMPLAINTS



Transfer of refund to the wrong accounts when people move

WE DID...

- A new form has been developed that alerts both our housing team and the customer of any snags that are outstanding during the sign-up stage.
- The electronic process for claiming a refund has also been reviewed to make it easier for customers to submit a claim.

Gas repairs

WE DID...

- Improvements have been made to the Cadre system to give Gas engineers more information when on site about previous repairs - leading to less call outs.
- This has also improved the visibility within the responsive repairs service providing better diagnostic information.

Quality of the Group's gas contractor

WE DID...

- Through our Contract Management Meeting, it was identified that more supervision of service delivery was needed by Phoenix.
- Phoenix have put in place a new works manager to improve the quality of the service. Quality is a key performance indicator as part of the current contract management process.

Learning from feedback

FORMAL COMPLAINTS



Right to Acquire & Right to Buy Policy

YOU SAID...

You thought you could purchase your home, and you did not know there were some exemptions.

WE DID...

- Revised the tenancy agreement to make it clear which homes can be purchased.
- Updated the Housing Management system to alert officers where sale exemptions on a property exist.
- Tenants are now advised prior to sign up that this is the case and they have to sign to confirm that they have been informed.
- At the five-year tenancy review stage, any exemptions to the sale of the home will be re-confirmed.

Mutual Exchanges

YOU SAID...

There were delays in carrying out repairs following a mutual exchange.

WE DID...

- Provided staff with further training surrounding the revised mutual exchange process. The previous six months wait for non-emergency repairs has been removed.

Learning from feedback

COMMENTS ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Comments on social media

Of the 211 comments received through social media channels during the year 66% were positive, 25% were neutral and 9% were negative.

In the main the negative comments related to two items:

- **News about new developments that contained homes for families with disabled younger family members.**
- **The annual rent increase.**



Developments with homes for families with disabled younger family members

The negative comments were from other families who were struggling to find suitably adapted properties in their area that met the needs of their families. This demonstrates the need for more family accommodation of this type and we continue to work with partners to address the issue.

Annual rent increase

There were some comments around the timing of the increase, particularly while people remain on furlough. Some people also questioned the timing of the rise as some of our repairs service had to be paused during the first lockdown.

Throughout the pandemic, we have worked with many tenants to provide them with advice and assistance in relation to rent payments, access to benefits and debt advice, and will continue to do this. Wherever we can we will help our tenants through this crisis.

Learning from feedback

RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT



Resident involvement

Covid-19 has had a huge impact on the work of the involved residents. All activities are now undertaken via Microsoft Teams. The initial set up and training took place during April to June 2020 and credit must be given to all the volunteer residents who have adapted to this new way of working. Our turnover of involved residents has increased as we attracted more involvement during lockdown, but unfortunately also lost a few members for various reasons in this period.

The Customer Voice Panel is an independent body, made up of the Chair and Vice Chair of the three Co-Regulation groups (the Tenants' Panel, The Tenant Audit Group and the Customer Assurance Panel). It also has Group Board membership. The Customer Voice Panel meet on a quarterly basis and the Chair and Vice Chair report directly to Board at least twice a year. A portion of each Board meeting is reserved for their report.

TENANTS' PANEL

Since June 2020, the Tenants' Panel have reviewed, signed off and approved the following policies:

- Water Hygiene policy
- Lift Management policy
- Tenancy policy
- Right to Buy and Right to Acquire policy
- Subject Access Request policy
- Complaints policy
- Repair and Maintenance policy

The Tenants' Panel have also reviewed and rewritten their Terms of Reference. This was in line with the Customer Voice Panel's Terms of Reference and will be the basis for the other Co-Regulation groups.

SUB GROUPS

Sub groups of the Tenants' Panel have continued to be heavily involved, for example **The Editorial Group** has been involved with judging the calendar competition and also editing a customer retention leaflet to be rolled out during summer 2021.

The Tenant Repairs Group and the **Community Fund Group** also continue to meet regularly.

Learning from feedback

RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT



TENANT AUDITORS

The Tenant Auditors have conducted assurance audits in the compliance areas of water hygiene, lift safety and catering.

This completes the full suite of compliance areas along with gas safety, fire safety, electric safety and asbestos safety, which have been reviewed since Christmas 2019.

All audits came back with reasonable or substantial assurance.

CUSTOMER ASSURANCE PANEL

The Customer Assurance Panel (CAP) have scrutinised all the areas of the National Housing Federation's Together with Tenants 'Tenants Charter' and their associated local standards within them. The charter areas are:

- Communication
- Relationship
- Quality
- Voice and Influence
- Accountability
- When things go wrong

The CAP are pleased to provide assurance that Wrekin is meeting the Tenants Charter and the Local standards, with no areas of concern.

CUSTOMER VOICE PANEL

All the work of the Co-Regulation groups feed into the Customer Voice Panel to report to Board. This group has had involvement in:

- The design and requirements of building safety information, to be placed in communal areas of high rise buildings, ShireLiving/Retirement Living accommodation and on the Wrekin App.
- Communal cleaning inspections and monitoring of Wetton's. (This did involve Covid-19 secure sites visits in-between lockdowns).

If you'd like to get involved we'd love to hear from you
getinvolved@wrekin.com | 01952 217181



The Wrekin Housing Group