

# **Customer Inspectors' Report**

## Communication – Asset Management

### October 2012

**Communication!**



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# Introduction

In 2008 Stafford and Rural Homes (SARH) recruited a group of customers to be trained as Customer Inspectors (CIs). The Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) were recruited to deliver the initial training and offer advice on the pilot inspection of the Lettable Standard.

Having successfully completed inspections of Estate Walkabouts, Aids and Adaptations, the Lettable Standard and Responsive Repairs, it was agreed that it would be beneficial to recruit some new Customer Inspectors.

In the summer of 2012 a recruitment drive took place using the respondents of the customer survey as a starting point. Customers who responded were invited to participate in a taster session and a day's training delivered by TPAS. The experienced CIs also attended this training as a refresher. Members of the Customer Board also went along to meet and share their experiences with the new recruits.

Together with the more experienced CIs, the new recruits hope to make a real and positive difference to the service that SARH provides to its customers.



TPAS training

## Customer Board Brief – Guidance for Inspection

The following table contains the exact instructions received from the Customer Board and the methods the CIs used to inspect them.

Ref	What the CB want the CIs to look at	Method(s) used by CI
1	Correspondence sent to customers in respect of stock investment surveys	Correspondence Review Customer Survey
2	Correspondence sent to customers in respect of planned improvement work (i.e kitchens, bathrooms, central heating, etc...)	Correspondence Review Customer Survey
3	Correspondence sent to customers from contractors employed by SARH to complete particular work	Correspondence Review Customer Survey
4	How messages are monitored in respect of responding to customers when they have contacted us with an enquiry	Staff Shadowing Desk Top Review
5	Timescales in place for responding to all types of correspondence and how it can be demonstrated that this is achieved	Staff Shadowing Desk Top Review Customer Survey
6	Are current leaflets and literature up to date and correct?	Website and Leaflet Review
7	Website – info relevant and up – to date?	Website and Leaflet Review
8	Satisfaction surveys – who does them and what are the outcomes?	Satisfaction Review
9	Complaints receive over last 12 months re: lack of comms and what learning actions are in place to ensure there are no repeat complaints	Case Study Tracking
10	What methods of comms are in place to update the business with ongoing work (e.g. briefing the Customer Services Team should they begin work on a particular project)	Staff Shadowing Desk Top Review Staff Interview

# Methodology

## Staff Shadowing





### Purpose:

To provide the Customer Inspectors (CIs) with a better understanding of how the service works and the staff roles within that service.

### How we did it:

Each of the CIs spent time with members of the Asset Management Team (AMT) whilst they carried out their day to day duties. This included time with Contract Managers and Administration Assistants.

### What we found:

	One group of CIs visited a customer (whilst shadowing a Contract Manager) where the contractor had rearranged when the work would start without informing SARH.
	The Contract Manager who was with the CIs at the above incident dealt with the situation extremely well and professionally.
	The AMT have recently introduced a missed call email system. If the title of an email starts 'Missed Call' it will go into a specific folder within that individual's inbox.
	The missed call email system has not been communicated across the business so it is not as effective as it could be. The CIs asked the Customer Service Centre staff if they were aware of the system but they had not been informed of how it worked and how they were to use it.

### Recommendations:

**R1** To improve communication with contractors the CIs suggest having set times for telephone catch ups at the beginning and end of each week, specifically for raising any issues or changes of plan that might impact on the customer.

# Satisfaction Review

**Purpose:** *Customer Board Guidance point 8*

To look at the customer feedback process that the AMT has in place and how the responses are used. The AMT send out surveys to every customer who has received some form of improvement work. The survey asks a series of questions covering 5 different aspects of the work which are:

- communication prior to work being carried out
- politeness of workers
- tidiness of workers
- overall performance
- the customers' satisfaction with the final result

Each question asks the customer to score that part of the service out of 10, 10 being very good and 1 being very poor.

The Investment Programme Manager reviews the responses with the Customer Liaison Officer following up any concerns.

## **How we did it:**

The CIs were given all the feedback responses that the AMT received during May-July 2012, covering 126 customers.

The AMT usually add up the totals from each response to assess whether or not an individual customer is classed as satisfied (a mark of 25 or above out of 50 is classed as satisfied).

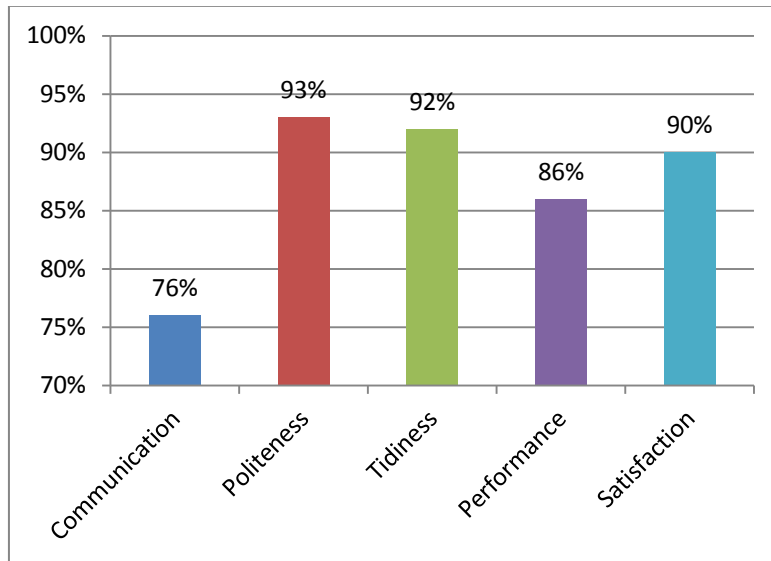
The CIs decided to add up the responses per question to see how communication scored against the other aspects of the service and to see whether successes in other areas might be disguising any issues with communication.

## **What we found:**

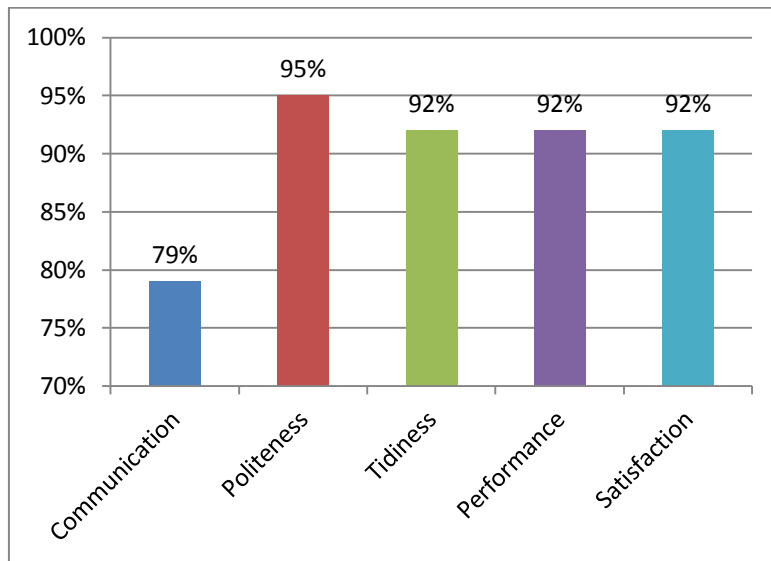
Below are 3 bar charts representing the results for the largest areas of the AMT's work (in so far as survey responses go), that is bathrooms, kitchens and heating.

Each column has the potential to be 100% i.e. if all respondents scored tidiness at 10/10 the bar will be at 100%.

## Bathrooms

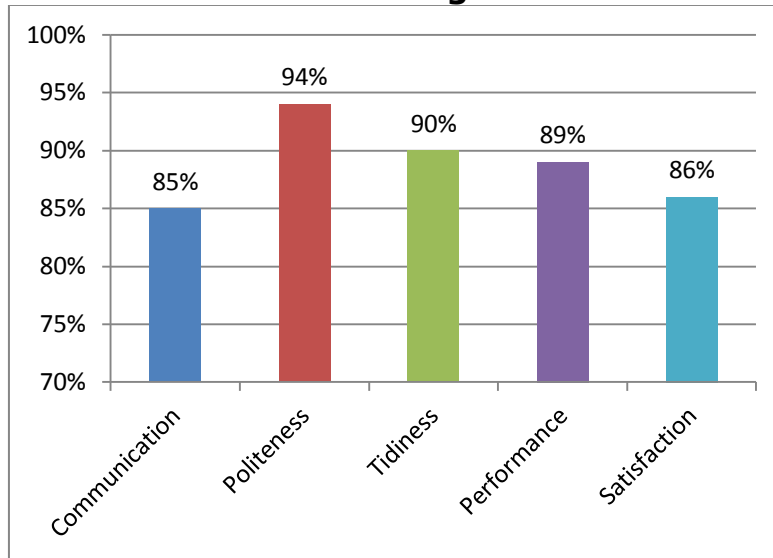


## Kitchens







There were several scores as low as 1 and 2 for the Kitchen and Bathroom communication question. Whilst satisfaction of the final result does not appear to be impacted upon by this, the poor communication to start the process leads to frustration for the customer (also see Customer Survey Section).

## Heating



The responses for heating are quite different to those for kitchens and bathrooms with a significant improvement in communication but a lower final satisfaction rate.

	In all 3 areas of the service, communication scored the lowest of the 5 questions.
	There is less of a gap between the levels of satisfaction for heating than any other improvement.
	The AMT only identify customers who score 25 (i.e. 50%) or less as unsatisfied.
	Politeness and courtesy of the workforce scores highly across the 3 areas of the service.

### Recommendations:

**R2** In order to monitor improvements in communication, the CIs suggest that each month the AMT work out the satisfaction level for each question as well as for each property.

**R3** The CIs feel that 50% is not a high enough score to represent satisfaction and therefore suggest that the satisfaction target level is raised.

**R4** The CIs feel that the score sheets (see Appendix A) give too wide a range of options by marking out of 10. It can confuse customers and can disguise issues. They advise making the score out of 4, 1 being very unsatisfied, 2 being unsatisfied, 3 being satisfied and 4 being very satisfied.



# Desk Top Review





**Purpose:** *Customer Board Guidance points 4,5 and 10*

To find out how communication within the AMT works in practice and how the AMT communicate with the rest of the business.

**How we did it:**

Whilst 2 of the CIs were shadowing one of the Administration Assistants they also went through a series of questions (see Appendix B) relating to how messages are passed between the team and recorded.

**What we found:**

	The team use other staff as their proof readers rather than utilising the Readers' Panel.
	Response times for returning calls to customers is quite variable and depends upon the individuals involved.
	The newly introduced 'missed calls' email inbox has been taken on by the whole team who check it when they get back to the office and respond accordingly.
	The team have a new communications group set up whereby the team get to discuss issues of communication and ways in which to improve. This includes members of other SARH teams.

**Recommendations:**

**R5** The AMT should utilise the Readers' Panel for their standard letters and any leaflets that are being sent out.

**R6** To devise a process for keeping the Customer Service Centre informed of what work is happening and what correspondence is being sent out. This process should be embedded across the team.

**R7** To ensure that the whole business is aware of the missed called system within the AMT so that it is used to its full potential.

# Case Study Tracking

**Purpose:** *Customer Board Guidance point 9*

To see whether there are common issues raised in complaints regarding communication and to see how well the complaints are managed and recorded.

## **How we did it:**

The CIs requested a list of all complaints received by the AMT that mentioned communication. The Head of Customer Services provided these and then the CIs approached the AMT to find the files on each complaint.

7 specific areas were looked at by the CIs:

1. Whether or not SARH responded in timescale
2. Whether or not the response dealt with each question raised
3. Whether or not the response used jargon
4. Whether or not there was evidence of any follow up
5. Whether or not the response explained the customer's options
6. Whether or not the correspondence contained contact details
7. Whether or not there is anything missing from the response

## **What we found:**



Of the 5 complaints the CIs chose at random only 1 had a complete paper trail. The CIs are concerned should any of these complaints reach Ombudsman level that SARH would not be able to provide all the necessary information.



In 3 of the 5 cases the CIs were only aware of the outcome of the complaint because members of staff remembered the complaint and could give an update verbally.



In the cases where the CIs could see a full paper trail there was evidence that the complaint had been consistently dealt with within timescale.

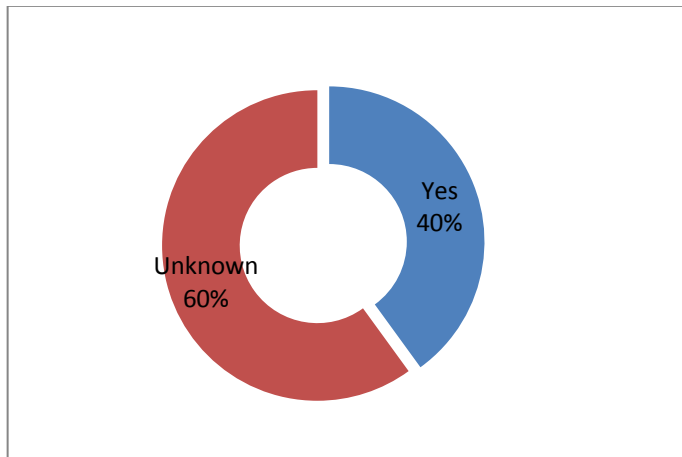


The CIs felt that 100% of the complaints could have been avoided had someone been proactive in keeping customers informed or by explaining things better.



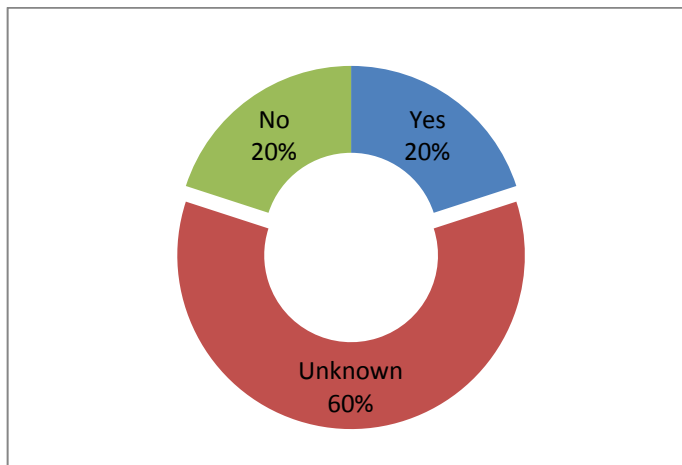
In one case a complainant believed he was told he would be receiving an improvement then was told he was not. The original correspondence he received was very misleading. (See Correspondence Review).

1. Did SARH respond within the set timescale?



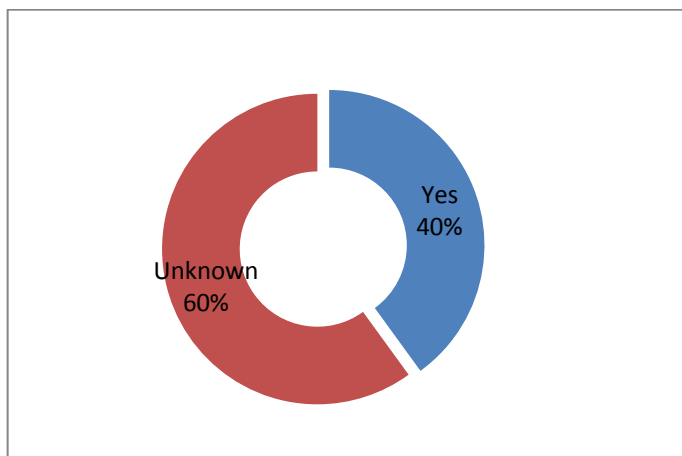
The CIs found that 60% of the complaints they looked at did not have enough information to enable a judgement to be made on the timescale.

2. Does the response deal with each question raised?



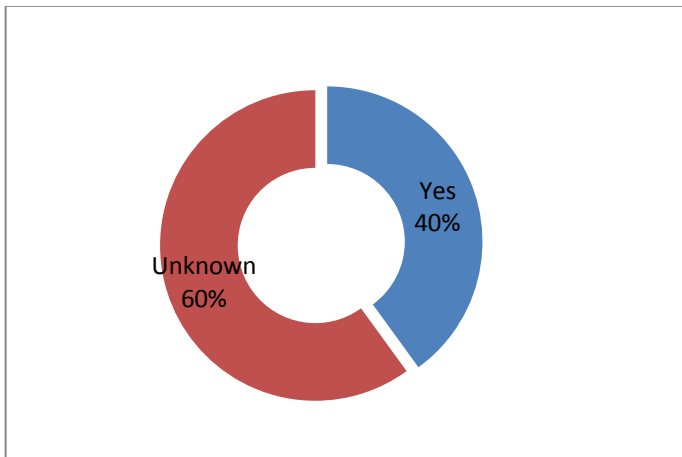
Only 20% of the responses answered every aspect of the complaint.

3. Does the response use jargon?



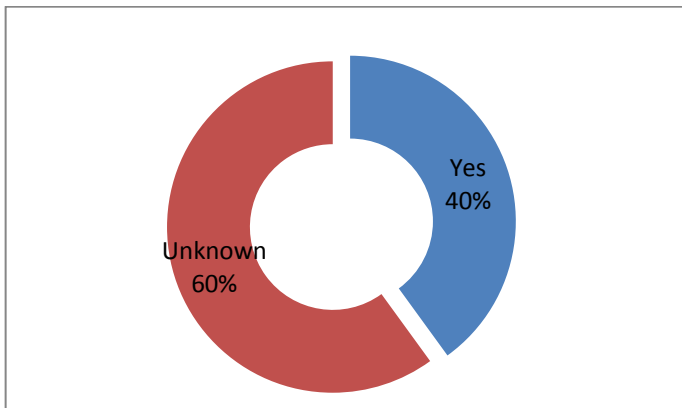
100% of the responses that the CIs found contained some form of jargon.

4. Is there evidence of any follow up from SARH?



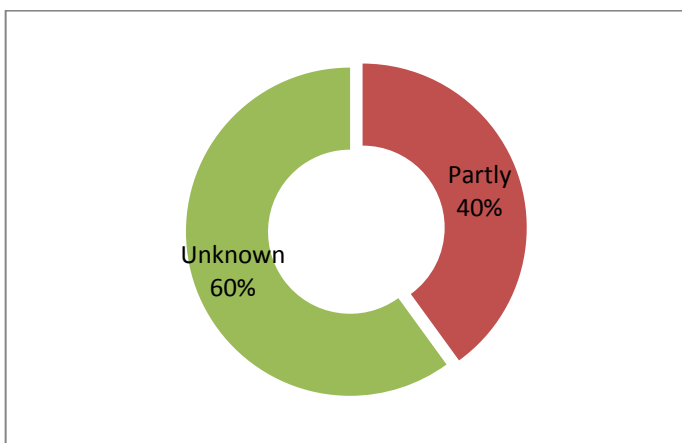
In 60% of the cases the CIs were unable to find evidence that SARH had responded to the requests in the complaint.

5. Does the response explain the customer's options?



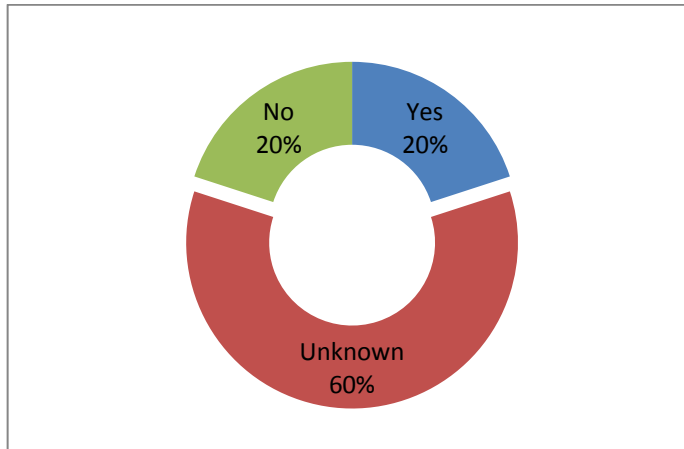
All the pieces of correspondence the CIs saw outlined the customer's options.

6. Does correspondence from SARH contain contact details?



The CIs felt that the contact details were not specific enough as they were usually for the Customer Service Centre or General Enquiries emails.

7. Is there is anything missing from the response?



The most common thing the CIs found to be missing was a named person and their contact details which the CIs feel is very important for formal complaints.

The CIs felt strongly that, had there been full audit trails for each of these complaints, the findings overall would have been much more positive.

**Recommendations:**

- R8** To provide refresher training to all staff who handle complaints at any stage.
- R9** To set up a recording system for AMT complaints which is accessible to all the team and utilised consistently so that a full audit trail is in place. A suggested draft is in Appendix F.
- R10** To proactively contact customers if plans change for their properties and a full and open explanation given as to why.

# Correspondence Review

**Purpose:** *Customer Board Guidance points 1, 2 and 3*

To review the appropriateness of standard letters sent out to customers.

## **How we did it:**

The CIs requested to see all the standard letters sent out to customers who were due for planned improvements. They devised 5 specific elements to look at in each piece of correspondence:

1. Does the correspondence use plain English?
2. Does the correspondence use jargon?
3. Does the correspondence contain contact information?
4. Is there anything missing from the correspondence?
5. Is there anything that should be removed from the correspondence?

## **What we found:**



The CIs are aware that the AMT is planning to review their standard letters as part of their Communications Group.



There is a real lack of consistency between letters in style and job title, even within the same area of the service.



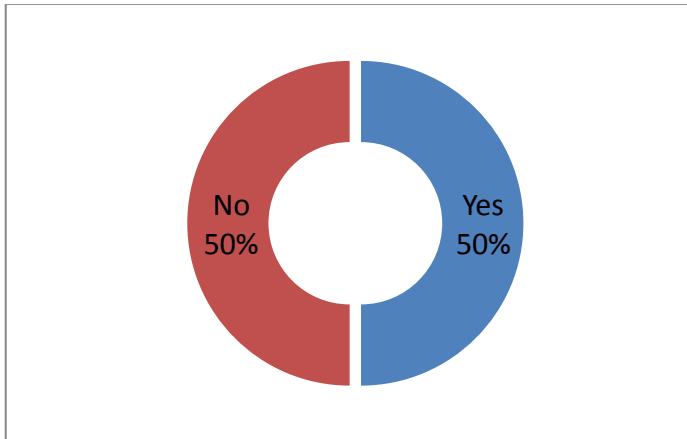
The CIs considered only 50% of the correspondence the CIs looked at to be in plain English and jargon free.



The initial letter regarding PV (Solar) Panels is very misleading with too much information.

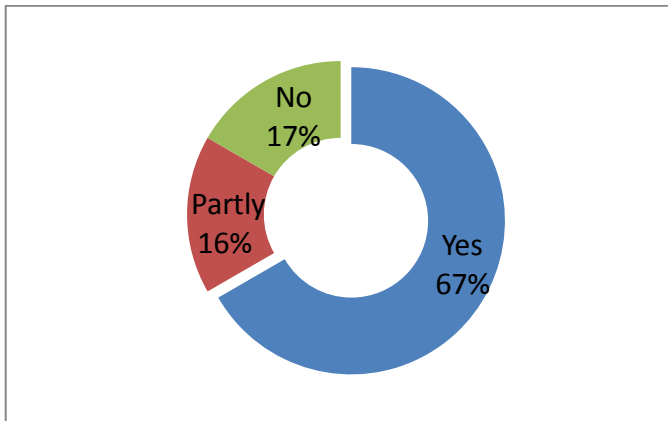
NB. The CIs questioned why the Customer Liaison Officer would attend to 'sell' a product to a customer before a survey was done to ensure that the property was suitable for the improvement. They received feedback that this added to the disappointment of those who were in properties unsuitable for it to be installed.

Is the correspondence in plain English and Jargon free?



The CIs found that half of the correspondence contained Jargon.

Is there appropriate contact information provided to the customer?



The CIs found that on occasions names were given as a contact without providing a means to contact them.

### Recommendations:

**R11** To provide the CIs with an opportunity to give more thorough feedback on the specific letters they looked at and be able to feed into the process of rewriting them.

**R12** To create a simple, standard introductory letter suitable across all types of improvements as the information in initial letters is all very similar. See Appendix C.

**R13** To remove jargon such as 'rainwater goods' 'engaged the services of' 'condition survey' or add an explanation.

# Website and Leaflet Review





**Purpose:** *Customer Board Guidance points 6 and 7*

To see whether relevant and up to date information is provided on the website and in literature available to all.

## How we did it:

The CIs who have access to the internet searched the SARH website for information about the Asset Management Team and the projects they deal with. The other CIs visited our offices and looked for leaflets relating to major improvements.

## What we found:

-  The Aids and Adaptations part of the website appears to be comprehensive and informative.
-  There were no leaflets available in SARH's leaflet range relating to the improvement work that the AMT do.
-  When the CIs searched for 'Asset Management' on the SARH website it brought up the Community Involvement Team and Customer Inspectors pages.
-  The CIs could only find 1 page relating to the improvements AMT do and it contains very little information, does not name the team or give guidance on what to do if the customer has any queries.

## Recommendations:

- R14** To expand the current area on the website for Asset Management's improvements work to include:
- a. Information on how decisions are made about what work gets done and where. This should include 'myth busting' of things such as 'if I mistreat my kitchen I will get a new one' and 'Highfields gets everything'.
  - b. Information on the team and staff as in the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the internal publication Team Talk.
  - c. Detailed information on the type of work being done, when and where, similar to;  
<http://www.spectrumhousing.co.uk/medina/CustomersItem.aspx?elementId=378>
  - d. Information on choices and what to expect when major works are taking place as Spectrum Housing link above.



**R15** To refine the key search criteria of the SARH website search engine so as find appropriate pages. This should include layperson terms, not just jargon.

**R16** To develop a leaflet including:  
**a.** An introduction to the AMT and the work they do  
**b.** A 'Frequently Asked Questions' section.



Customer Inspectors shadowing Lee Walters, Contract Manager

# Customer Survey

## incorporating Local Offers

**Purpose:** *Customer Board Guidance points 1, 2, 3 and 5*

To gauge customer opinion on the way in which SARH and contractors communicate with them before work in their home begins.

### How we did it:

The CIs sent out surveys to 200 customers who, within the previous 12 months, had received some form of improvement work to their homes including heating, doors, kitchens and bathrooms. The CIs had a return rate of 30%.

### What we found:



That the majority of respondents were happy with the way they were informed about their improvements (71% were informed by letter, others by telephone calls, through meetings or a home visit).



Those who weren't happy stated there was a 'frustrating lack of information given', 'letters were addressed to previous tenants' (in one case to a tenant who had moved out 12 months earlier).



75% felt that the waiting time for the improvement, once they had been made aware they were having one, was 'about right'.



Only 3% of customers agreed that they had been given more than 4 weeks notice to prepare for the improvement (as per SARH local offer). 62% said they were given less than 2 weeks, with one person stating they were given 'a few days' to prepare.



78% of respondents, on the whole are satisfied with the communication from SARH.



60% were dissatisfied with communication from contractors stating: "They did not listen to me" "They did not turn up when they said they would" "They did not explain the delay".



In the 'other comments' section several people stated that there appeared not to be very good communication between contractors and SARH as different start dates were given by each.

Learning Point

*The CIs realise that, by only asking those customers who had gone through the process of having improvement work carried out to completion, they may not get the full picture of customer opinion. The CIs feel that often they hear complaints from customers who have not had work carried out and are not sure when it is going to happen.*

The CIs learnt from a previous inspection that it was important to ensure there was an option to waive confidentiality if the customer wants issues in the survey to be raised with the relevant team. This has worked very well in this inspection, with the Customer Liaison Officer responding promptly to the customers concerned.

**Recommendations:**

The CIs feel that 3 recommendations made earlier in this report will help with regard to the concerns raised by the customer surveys responses. R 1, R3 and R11

**R17** To Look at how information for reporting on local offers is gathered and investigate why customer perception is so different to what SARH report. i.e. for the whole of 2011-12 and Quarters 1 and 2 of 2012-13, it is reported that 100% of customers were given at least 4 weeks notice before the work commenced.



Customer Inspectors Case Study Tracking

# Staff Interview

**Purpose:** *Customer Board Guidance points 10*

The CIs introduced this aspect to the inspection to clarify the situation with regard to internal communication and to find answers to some questions that arose during the inspection. They also wanted to try and ensure that the recommendations would be relevant and appropriate.

**How we did it:**

Two representatives from the CI Team spent some time with the Head of Asset Management to ask him a series of structured questions.

**What we found:**

- 😊 The CIs were impressed by the commitment that the Head of Service showed towards wanting to improve things for the customer.
- 😊 Some concerns that the CIs had about subcontracting and the percentage of customers offered the opportunity to give feedback were allayed.

**Recommendations:**

**R18** To clarify who is eligible for what kind of help when elderly or disabled customers are having major improvement work in their home.



The Staff Interview taking place

## Additional Findings

During the process of the inspection one of the CIs had cause to contact the AMT and left several messages with the Customer Service Centre for the AMT. These messages were not responded to. The CI in question resorted to asking the Community Involvement Team to try and find out what was happening. Other CIs stated that they too have personal experience of this and heard of others experiencing the same issue across SARH.

**R19** To investigate the option of rolling out the missed called system used by the AMT across SARH.

**R20** To provide customer service refresher training to all staff to remind them of the importance of the customer and communicating with them well.

# Recommendations

## **R1**

To improve communication with contractors the CIs suggest having set times for telephone catch ups at the beginning and end of each week, specifically for raising any issues or changes of plan that might impact on the customer.

## **R2**

In order to monitor improvements in communication, the CIs suggest that each month the AMT work out the satisfaction level for each question as well as for each property.

## **R3**

The CIs feel that 50% is not a high enough score to represent satisfaction and therefore suggest that the satisfaction target level is raised.

## **R4**

The CIs feel that the score sheets (see Appendix A) give too wide a range of options by marking out of 10. It can confuse customers and can disguise issues. They advise making the score out of 4, 1 being very unsatisfied, 2 being unsatisfied, 3 being satisfied and 4 being very satisfied.

## **R5**

The AMT should utilise the Readers' Panel for their standard letters and any leaflets that are being sent out.

## **R6**

To devise a process for keeping the Customer Service Centre informed of what work is happening and what correspondence is being sent out. This process should be embedded across the team.

## **R7**

To ensure that the whole business is aware of the missed called system within the AMT so that it is used to its full potential.

## **R8**

To provide refresher training to all staff who handle complaints at any stage.

## **R9**

To set up a recording system for AMT complaints which is accessible to all the team and utilised consistently so that a full audit trail is in place. A suggested draft is in Appendix F.

## **R10**

To proactively contact customers if plans change for their properties and a full and open explanation given as to why.

## **R11**

To provide the CIs with an opportunity to give more thorough feedback on the specific letters they looked at and be able to feed into the process of rewriting them.

**R12**

To create a simple, standard introductory letter suitable across all types of improvements as the information in initial letters is all very similar. See Appendix C.

**R13**

To remove jargon such as 'rainwater goods' 'engaged the services of' 'condition survey' or add an explanation.

**R14**

To expand the current area on the website for Asset Management's improvements work to include:

- a. Information on how decisions are made about what work gets done and where. This should include 'myth busting' of things such as 'if I mistreat my kitchen I will get a new one' and 'Highfields gets everything'.
- b. Information on the team and staff as in the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the internal publication Team Talk.
- c. Detailed information on the type of work being done, when and where, similar to;  
<http://www.spectrumhousing.co.uk/medina/CustomersItem.aspx?elementId=378>
- d. Information on choices and what to expect when major works are taking place as Spectrum Housing link above.

**R15**

To refine the key search criteria of the SARH website search engine so as find appropriate pages. This should include layperson terms, not just jargon.

**R16**

To develop a leaflet including:

- a. An introduction to the AMT and the work they do
- b. A 'Frequently Asked Questions' section.

**R17**

To Look at how information for reporting on local offers is gathered and investigate why customer perception is so different to what SARH report. i.e. for the whole of 2011-12 and Quarters 1 and 2 of 2012-13, it is reported that 100% of customers were given at least 4 weeks notice before the work commenced.

**R18**

To clarify who is eligible for what kind of help when elderly or disabled customers are having major improvement work in their home.

**R19**

To investigate the option of rolling out the missed called system used by the AMT across SARH.

**R20**

To provide customer service refresher training to all staff to remind them of the importance of the customer and communicating with them well.

## **The Next Step**

The Customer Inspectors would like the Leadership Team (LT) of SARH to have sight of this report and create a response and action plan using Appendix F or similar. A representative group of CIs would like to meet with a member of the LT to discuss their responses within 4 weeks of them receiving the report.

The response from the LT should cover:

- what recommendations can be taken on and how this will be done
- who will be responsible for any actions
- timescales for actions
- why the remaining recommendations cannot be implemented

it would be beneficial to have follow up meetings with the LT, or relevant Head of Service, to assess progress every 3 months.

The findings and responses will be reported to the Customer Board at their February meeting.



# Appendix A

## Current AMT Customer Satisfaction Survey

How Satisfied are you?										
QUESTION	Very Poor		Poor			Satisfied			Very Satisfied	
<b>PERFORMANCE: SERVICE</b>										
1. How satisfied were you with the information provided prior to works commencing?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
2. Were you happy with the politeness and courtesy of the workforce?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
3. Was the work undertaken in a tidy manner?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
4. How satisfied were you with our overall performance?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>PERFORMANCE: PRODUCT</b>										
5. How happy are you with the final result?	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

### YES/NO QUESTIONS

Did our entire workforce wear Uniforms / Identity Badges?

YES / NO

If you have any further comments or suggestions to add regarding the works carried out, please use the space below:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ SIGNED:

\_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE:

Please tick box to state which format this Satisfaction Survey was received/carried out:

- Face to face  
 left with customer
  E-mail
  Completed over phone

## **Appendix B**

### **Desk Top Review Questions**

1. Are there any formal processes in place for taking messages from customers?
2. What is the process? (be it a formal one or otherwise)
3. What timescales do you use for responding to customers?

Phone call:

Email:

Letter:

Message from Customer Service Centre:

4. Are these formally agreed timescales or just ones that you use in this team?
5. What do you do for customers when the member of the team they want to talk to is on leave?
6. Is there a formal email 'Out of Office' response that the team uses?  
If so what does it say?
7. Is there a consistent approach to putting direct dial numbers on correspondence?
8. Have you ever used the Readers' Panel to proof read any mass mail outs or leaflets?
9. Are there any ways in which you think communication with customers could be improved within your team?
10. Are there any ways you can think of to improve how messages are passed between team members relating to customer queries?

## **Appendix C**

### Standard Initial Letter - example.

#### **Use SARH branding and corporate style.**

I am pleased to inform you that your home is scheduled to have [type of improvement] in [month/year]. Your main contact for this work will be [Contract Manager/Customer Liaison Officer name] from Stafford and Rural Homes (SARH).

[Name of contractor] will be carrying out the work and will be in touch with you shortly so that they can inspect what specific work is required for your [area of home].

The work is due to start in [month] but [name of contractor] will confirm this with you once they have completed the inspections for all the homes involved in this contract.

In the meantime if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact SARH on the number above.

## **Appendix D**

### **Acknowledgments**

The Customer Inspectors involved in this inspection were:

Annie Wilkes  
David Hughes  
Doug Faulkner  
Jackie Key  
Jessie Thomas  
Lesley Brayford  
Mandie Howard  
Tina Bevan  
Tony Young

The CIs would like to thank all of the Asset Management Team especially the following for their time and commitment to the project:

Paul Hare  
Debbie Bartlett  
Sandra Shipperley  
Tony Wearing  
Lee Walters  
Lesley Hanlon

Thanks also go to all the other customers who took the time to contribute to this inspection.

Also, as usual, thanks go to the Community Involvement Team for their continued support.

## Appendix E

### CI's Customer Survey

1. How did you first find out that you were going to receive a home improvement (i.e. new windows, kitchens, central heating, doors etc)?
  - Letter
  - Meeting
  - Telephone Call
  - Other (please state) \_\_\_\_\_
2. Were you satisfied with this method of communication?
  - Yes  No
  - Please explain why \_\_\_\_\_
3. When were you given the date for when work would start at **your** home? (e.g. a week later, 2 months later etc)
4. Did you feel you were waiting for the date for:
  - Too long
  - About the right amount of time
  - Too short a time
5. How much time were you given to prepare for the work?
  - Less than 1 week (please state) \_\_\_\_\_
  - 1-2 weeks
  - 2-4 weeks
  - Other(please state) \_\_\_\_\_
6. Do you feel this was:
  - Too much notice
  - The right amount of notice
  - Too little notice
7. How satisfied were you with the communication you received from Stafford and Rural Homes about this improvement?
  - Very satisfied
  - Satisfied
  - Unsatisfied
  - Very unsatisfied
  - Please explain why \_\_\_\_\_
8. How satisfied were you with the communication you received from any contractors working on the improvement?
  - Very satisfied
  - Satisfied
  - Unsatisfied
  - Very unsatisfied
  - Please explain why \_\_\_\_\_
9. Do you have any other comments about the way SARH communicated with you about this improvement?

## Appendix F

### Complaints Recording Template.

Date received	Customer Name and Address	Method of Communication i.e. Telephone, Email, Letter	Staff Owner	Details	Action and date	Complete
				[Hyper link to copy of email, scanned letter or case notes is over the 'phone]	[Hyperlink to response]	

## Appendix G

### Staff Interview Questions.

#### Contractors

1. Do Contractors agree an approach to communication with SARH and customers when they sign the contract?
2. We think that it would be useful for there to be twice weekly catch ups (quick phone calls) with contractors carrying out work that week. Is there anything already in place like this or does it depend upon the Contractor/Contract Manager?
3. Are Contractors currently allowed to subcontract out work? If so, what safeguards do SARH have that the work will be done to standard?

#### Customers

4. Is there a service available for those who might require assistance moving belongings around, for example an elderly or disabled customer having a new kitchen?
5. We want to suggest an increase in the number of customers who feed into the satisfaction survey process – how is this currently done, e.g. in person, by post, over the phone?
6. Do you know what percentage response rate you have to the surveys?

7. We would like to recommend that the satisfaction survey is altered from giving a score out of 10 to a score out of 5 as there is too much room for issues to be disguised with such a large scale. Are there any reasons that we need to be aware of why a score out of 10 was chosen?

#### Communication

8. Do you think it would be feasible to produce annual plans of work for the website as per Spectrum Housing? (Handout)
9. Is there a standard method of communicating information to the Customer Service Centre and Neighbourhood Services Officers when new improvements are being planned and customers are receiving information?

## Appendix H

### LT Response Template

Recommendation from CIs	LT Response	Timescale	Person Responsible	Implemented Y/N
<p><b>R1</b> To improve communication with contractors the CIs suggest having set times for telephone catch ups at the beginning and end of each week, specifically for raising any issues or changes of plan that might impact on the customer.</p>	<p>Throughout the week contact is made with contractors and a weekly update is received each Friday. Contract Managers speak daily with contractors and any changes are notified to SARH. It was agreed that set times are not necessary based on the number of interactions between contractors and asset management.</p>			N
<p><b>R2</b> In order to monitor improvements in communication, the CIs suggest that each month the AMT work out the satisfaction level for each question as well as for each property.</p>	<p>To be implemented. To form part of monthly performance report.</p>	From Jan 2013	D. Bartlett S. Shipperley	Y

<p><b>R3</b> The CIs feel that 50% is not a high enough score to represent satisfaction and therefore suggest that the satisfaction target level is raised.</p>	SEE R4			Y
<p><b>R4</b> The CIs feel that the score sheets (see Appendix A) give too wide a range of options by marking out of 10. It can confuse customers and can disguise issues. They advise making the score out of 4, 1 being very unsatisfied, 2 being unsatisfied, 3 being satisfied and 4 being very satisfied.</p>	To be implemented	April 2013	D. Bartlett S. Shipperley	Y
<p><b>R5</b> The AMT should utilise the Readers' Panel for their standard letters and any leaflets that are being sent out.</p>	To be implemented	From Jan 2013	D. Bartlett S. Shipperley	Ongoing



<p><b>R6</b> To devise a process for keeping the Customer Service Centre informed of what work is happening and what correspondence is being sent out. This process should be embedded across the team.</p>	<p>Team Meeting with CSC every two months. More than 10 letters sent to CSC with question and answer sheet. Folder set up for CSC to access on up-to-date programme information. Who Does What information to be issued to CSC.</p>	<p>From Jan 2013</p>	<p>D. Bartlett C. Barber Barber</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p><b>R7</b> To ensure that the whole business is aware of the missed called system within the AMT so that it is used to its full potential.</p>	<p>Discussions underway to meet all teams with a view to rolling out the procedure across the organisation starting with Customer Services</p>	<p>June 2013</p>	<p>S Shipperley</p>	<p>N</p>
<p><b>R8</b> To provide refresher training to all staff who handle complaints at any stage.</p>	<p>Training session to be undertaken and process implemented</p>	<p>Feb 2013</p>	<p>S. Shipperley</p>	<p>Y ongoing with OD team</p>
<p><b>R9</b> To set up a recording system for AMT complaints which is accessible to all the team and utilised consistently so that a full audit trail is in place. A suggested draft is in Appendix F.</p>	<p>To be implemented</p>	<p>April 2013</p>	<p>S. Shipperley D. Bartlett S. Shipperley</p>	

<p><b>R10</b> To proactively contact customers if plans change for their properties and a full and open explanation given as to why.</p>	<p>To be implemented – part of a detailed process to issued to AMT and contractors.</p>	<p>Feb 2013</p>	<p>D. Bartlett S. Shipperley</p>	
<p><b>R11</b> To provide the CIs with an opportunity to give more thorough feedback on the specific letters they looked at and be able to feed into the process of rewriting them.</p>	<p>New letters to be created for all contracts and issued to CI  <b>UPDATE:</b> Community Involvement Manager asked for a rewrite prior to being sent to CIs deadline met by AMT but will go beyond January now as result of rewrite.</p>	<p>Jan 2013</p>	<p>S Shipperley</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p><b>R12</b> To create a simple, standard introductory letter suitable across all types of improvements as the information in initial letters is all very similar. See Appendix C.</p>	<p>See R11</p>			<p>Y</p>
<p><b>R13</b> To remove jargon such as ‘rainwater goods’ ‘engaged the services of’</p>	<p>See R11</p>			<p>Y</p>

<p>'condition survey' or add an explanation.</p>				
<p><b>R14</b>  To expand the current area on the website for Asset Management's improvements work to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a.Information on how decisions are made about what work gets done and where. This should include 'myth busting' of things such as 'if I mistreat my kitchen I will get a new one' and 'Highfields gets everything'.</li> <li>b.Information on the team and staff as in the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of the internal publication Team Talk.</li> <li>c.Detailed information on the type of work being done, when and where, similar to;  <a href="http://www.spectrumhousing.co.uk/medina/CustomersItem.aspx?elementId=378">http://www.spectrumhousing.co.uk/medina/CustomersItem.aspx?elementId=378</a></li> <li>d.Information on choices and what to expect when major works are</li> </ul>	<p>To be implemented with the Marketing Manager. This will form part of a wider review for the internet and be subject to a delayed implementation</p>	<p>May 2013</p>	<p>C. Barber  Alison Gallagher- Hughes</p>	<p>N</p>

<p>taking place as Spectrum Housing link above.</p>				
<p><b>R15</b> To refine the key search criteria of the SARH website search engine so as find appropriate pages. This should include layperson terms, not just jargon.</p>	<p>Marketing Manager to undertake as part of web site review</p>	<p>May 2013</p>	<p>A. Gallagher-Hughes</p>	<p>N</p>
<p><b>R16</b> To develop a leaflet including: a.An introduction to the AMT and the work they do b.A 'Frequently Asked Questions' section.</p>	<p>It was agreed that information will be provided to customers of those staff involved in the works in their home as appose to providing full information on asset management. In respect of a customer leaflet for asset management this would be subject to a corporate wide approach through the marketing manager.</p>	<p>April 2013</p>	<p>S. Shipplerley</p>	<p>N</p>

<p><b>R17</b></p> <p>To Look at how information for reporting on local offers is gathered and investigate why customer perception is so different to what SARH report. i.e. for the whole of 2011-12 and Quarters 1 and 2 of 2012-13, it is reported that 100% of customers were given at least 4 weeks notice before the work commenced.</p>	<p>Process to change so we ensure that 4 weeks notice is given.</p>	<p>April 13</p>	<p>S.Shippperly D.Bartlett</p>	<p>Y</p>
<p><b>R18</b></p> <p>To clarify who is eligible for what kind of help when elderly or disabled customers are having major improvement work in their home.</p>	<p>Develop a process to determine the qualification mechanises and information passed to contractors and customers.</p>	<p>June 13</p>	<p>S.Shippperly D.Bartlett</p>	<p>N</p>

<p><b>R19</b></p> <p>To investigate the option of rolling out the missed called system used by the AMT across SARH.</p>	<p>Discussions underway with Leadership Team to test with the customer service centre to see if it can work throughout the business.</p>	<p>Item on the 6<sup>th</sup>Feb Leadership Team meeting Grant Shipley to raise the issue.</p>	<p>G. Shipley</p>	
<p><b>R20</b></p> <p>To provide customer service refresher training to all staff to remind them of the importance of the customer and communicating with them well.</p>	<p>AMT to undertake their own training session on  Customer service and communication.</p> <p>The organisation delivers a range of mandatory courses focussing on Customer Services aimed at developing and increasing the quality of customer service skills throughout</p>	<p>March 13</p>	<p>S.Shippperly D.Bartlett</p>	

	the organisation			
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