

**Thames Valley Housing Resident Auditors Customer Care
Report Recommendations**

Thames Valley Housing

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Report Title Thames Valley Housing Resident Auditors Customer Care Report Recommendations

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Scope of the Audit: Scope of the Audit: Customer Care

The Thames Valley Housing Resident Auditors have undertaken an audit of TVH Customer Care and linked processes; and produced this report of findings and recommendations.

The audit will entail:

- Reviewing policy, procedures, data and guidance documents relating to customer care and its impact on the residents
- Examining Link-up and TVH website, and other Housing Associations websites
- Interviewing staff working in the customer care area
- Surveying 600 residents in their communities regarding customer care issues
- The outcome will be a report (this document) with recommendations aiming to ensure the service is efficient and effective, delivering a quality Value for Money service to residents.
- TVH management will then respond to, and address the report's recommendations in an agreed timescale.

Audit team: The audit team was made up of the following residents: Steve McAllister, Lorraine Brown, Rachel Herrity, David Russell, David Guinchard, and Sheron Wood. Facilitated by Stephen Beckett-Doyle.

General Comment from the Chair of Auditors

It is definitely true that Thames Valley Housing and their staff have a very positive attitude towards dealing with customer care issues; however there is room for improvement.

We would like TVHA to treat customer care as a positive expression of its desire to get things right.

Traffic Lights

Green traffic light This is at or above the levels expected by residents

Amber traffic light This is acceptable to residents but minor alterations could improve the service, customer satisfaction and possibly provide a cost saving in some instances

Red traffic light This is below the level expected by residents, actions on these points should improve the service and increase customer satisfaction

Recommendation Traffic Light Coding

	10	37%
	12	44%
	5	19%

Audit Team

The audit team was made up of the following residents: Lorraine Brown, Sheron Wood, John Gregan, Rachel Herrity, David Russell and David Guinchard.

Introduction

This reports looks at various areas of customer care from a resident's perspective. It aims to investigate and make suggestions to improve customer care within the organisation to increase customer satisfaction and improve resident's perception of Thames Valley Housing.

Customer care cannot be measured in isolation and impacts across all areas of operation within the organisation. This made our job very difficult when deciding what aspects of customer care we were going to audit. As a team we discussed our experiences of customer care from the very moment we were made an offer of accommodation through to the present day as residents. Our experiences varied so we produced a questionnaire to find out the experiences of other residents. We combined door knocking and postal surveying and this was sent out to a sample of tenants, leaseholders and shared owners. We were disappointed that we were not allowed to survey the NHS residents – we were told that this was because it was felt that they were over surveyed. We used the information received to look at particular areas of customer care and used the KLOES Access and Customer Care in housing services as a guide.

Most of the information that we requested was via email because the majority of the team was either working during the day or in full time training so it was not possible to meet with staff during the day and we felt that this was the most efficient way to capture the information that we needed. This method of communication worked well in accessing information from some departments.

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However we didn't receive full responses for some of the information that we asked for and do not know whether this is because the information wasn't available. Therefore this report is based on information that we were able to obtain.

	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
	Communication and information				
1	In what ways do TVHA communicate information to residents?	Residents Information Pack Link up Website Letters Talked to staff members Info sheets on notice boards Onsite resident meetings	The general feel is that TVHA have a range of tools available to communicate information to residents. When a resident moves into a TVHA property they are given a residents information pack which contains a range of information relating to services. General information is communicated via the quarterly magazine Link up and the website. Site specific information is sent out in the form of a letter. Where residents groups and associations		Agreed. Text messaging is currently being used for repairs, but we would like to expand this to other areas – this will be investigated/implemented as part of a later phase of Project Cornerstone. Action: Ana Orbe – March 2012.

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
			<p>exist on estates staff attend meetings to update residents and answer questions. During the audit we have noticed that where notice boards are available in blocks of flats they are now being utilised and TVHA are starting to display information sheets.</p> <p>We are aware that TVHA are exploring the use of Face book as means of communicating with residents and we'd like to suggest that TVHA also consider text messaging. We feel that It is a really effective way of communicating information efficiently and feel that it would be welcomed by residents.</p>		
2	Is information available in other languages, large print, Braille and audio?	Emailed questions	<p>We were told that TVHA receive very limited requests for this information. TVHA have suggested that the low requests may be because residents often use friends and family to translate the document for them when necessary. We were shown an example of a tenancy agreement translated in mandarin. We are satisfied with the evidence that we have been provided with and that TVHA are able to provide these</p>		<p>Agreed.</p> <p>TVHA to establish top 5 preferred written languages by utilising the profiling information. Action: Anil Sharma – July 2011</p> <p>Following collection of this data, TVHA have agreed to review and establish whether some standard documents could be translated in advance versus costs of completing this. Action: HMG - September 2011.</p>

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
			<p>documents upon request.</p> <p>Now that TVH has access to some of these documents (translated) they could be easily adapted to suit. However we recommend where possible that TVHA identify these needs when an offer of a property is made. This will ensure that the prospective tenant can read and understand the tenancy agreement that they are signing and ensure that future information is sent in the right format and/ or language.</p>		<p>TVHA to establish what translated documents they currently hold to see if they can be utilised for other residents and to build up portfolio of tenancy agreements going forward. Action: HMG – August 2011.</p> <p>TVHA to establish applicants preferred written language at interview stage rather than sign up to ensure tenancy documents can be understood. Action: Tina Rea – July 2011.</p>
3	How useful is the resident information pack?	<p>Resident Information Pack</p> <p>TVHRA Customer Care and Complaints Questionnaire</p> <p>Talked to residents</p>	<p>We like the design of the new resident information pack. Information is clear and is easy to read if English is your first language. It includes inserts which is a great way of ensuring that residents can receive up to date information as a section is changed that can be sent out.</p> <p>More than half of the residents that we surveyed agree that the handbook is useful. Over 2/3 of residents surveyed have lived in the property over 2 years so</p>		<p>Agreed to investigate further.</p> <p>TVHA to examine cost of providing new style handbooks to all residents. Action: Alex Noonoo – July 2011.</p> <p>This needs to be considered in line with those residents who have advised that they don't like receiving these documents (particularly leaseholders).</p> <p>May look at article in Link Up & website to give residents the option of requesting updated handbook.</p>

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
			<p>would have received the old style handbook.</p> <p>Some of the information in the old handbook is out of date which is why the new one was produced.</p> <p>We recommend that all residents who moved into properties before the resident information pack was issued be sent a new resident information pack.</p>		<p>TVHA also to take latest handbooks to resident events and out on site so residents can collect this way. Action: Margaret Buchan – June 2011.</p>
4	How satisfied are residents with the information that they receive via Link up?	<p>Link up</p> <p>TVHRA Customer Care and Complaints Questionnaire</p> <p>Link up consultation</p> <p>Talked to residents</p>	<p>Link up is TVHA's primary source of communicating information to residents. Over 90% of residents that we surveyed read it sometimes or all the time. In general our research showed that residents tend to skim the magazine and read the articles that they think are relevant.</p> <p>This suggests that they may be potentially missing out on important information that TVHA is including that is relevant to them.</p> <p>Only half of the residents that we surveyed are satisfied with the content.</p>		<p>Agreed. TVHA is committed to having an editorial panel and agree that the content needs to be reviewed. Action: Alex Noonoo/Margaret Buchan – December 2011.</p> <p>This has been delayed due to a review of communication with leaseholders which is currently underway. The results of this will be available shortly and will then feed back into the magazine and editorial panel.</p>

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			<p>It is the general feeling that it has a very corporate image and residents would like to see more relevant information in a resident friendly manner.</p> <p>A consultation exercise was undertaken before Christmas 2010 in which selected residents and staff members were invited to comment on design changes. It was agreed by residents and staff that as a result of this consultation an editorial panel would be formed to include residents. This panel will be involved in the design and content of future editions.</p> <p>So far nothing has been done, we recommend that TVHA commit to forming this panel as agreed as soon as possible so that it can begin working in partnership on future editions.</p>		
5	Is the website easy to use? Is the information up to date?	TVHRA Customer Care questionnaire Website testing Talked to residents	The website has the potential to not only provide online services but it could also be an information hub for residents. Particularly for residents who cannot easily access the office to collect the information that they need. Over half of the residents that we surveyed have		Agreed. TVHA carried out user testing and feedback from residents when the website was developed in 2009. We recognise however that further improvements are needed and welcome the decision of the Resident Auditors to look at this area.

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			<p>internet access. Our research shows that very few residents visit the website regularly. However, the general feel is that the website is not customer friendly and is difficult to use.</p> <p>We've identified many issues with the website, for example a lot of information is out of date, many links are not in sequence and presently you are not able to search for the needed information using the search icon. As a result of these issues the auditors have selected this as a key area to audit next year.</p>		<p>A Facebook trial has just got underway in Resident Involvement and will run for 1 year. If successful, it may mean that this becomes another form of internet communication with residents which enables us to post information to people's Facebook page and deal with queries. Action: Margaret Buchan – April 2012.</p>
6	Do TVHA have a communications policy?	Emailed questions	<p>The communications policy is fairly comprehensive and covers all areas we would expect.</p> <p>The communications policy was not readily available to residents however and we had difficulty in obtaining this information.</p>		<p>Communication Policy to be made available to all staff under policies on the intranet. There are no plans to make this available to all residents, but for involved residents like the auditors it is available. Action: Alex Noonoo – June 2011.</p>

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
	Accessing the Service				
7	In what ways are residents able to contact TVHA?	<p>TVHA Customer Care and Complaints Questionnaire</p> <p>Emailed questions</p> <p>Link up</p> <p>Resident Handbooks</p> <p>Talked to residents</p>	<p>Residents are able to contact TVHA via telephone and have the option of calling either the free phone or landline number. The CSC operates between 8am and 6pm. They are also able to make contact via letter, email info@tvha.co.uk, the website and in person.</p> <p>The majority of residents that we surveyed contact TVHA via the telephone and only 1% of residents visit the office in person. We are aware that because of the geographical spread of the stock the location of the office is not easily accessible to all residents. TVHA operates in over 42 local authority areas and we are aware that it is not possible to provide local offices. TVHA have addressed this issue by providing a 'Phone or in you home service' which was a result of a consultation 13 years ago. This led to the formation of CSC to take calls into the office and operations officers go out and</p>		No action required.

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
			visit residents and estates. In general residents are satisfied that they are being offered a range of contact options.		
8	What is the Service Pledge?	Service pledge Emailed questions	<p>The Service Pledge sets out the level of performance that residents can expect from TVHA.</p> <p>Leaseholders and Tenants have separate performance standards with some overlapping.</p> <p>During the audit TVHA'S service standard formerly known as the Service Promise was revised and is now called the Service Pledge. We have been told that 8 residents were involved in this review and agreed the standards.</p> <p>Over half of the residents that we surveyed had not heard of the service standards.</p> <p>The Service Pledge was included in the autumn 2010 edition of Link up which was sent out to all residents.</p> <p>We looked specifically at the Customer Care performance levels and these are the same for both tenants and</p>		<p>Agreed. A meeting to review the Service Pledge and performance took place with residents on 10/05/11.</p> <p>Residents were asked if they wanted any of the targets changed and given information on what we were doing to try and achieve in the areas where we are behind.</p> <p>Following this 6 month review, the plan is to update all residents on the progress made in October with the resident annual report. Action: Margaret Buchan – October 2011.</p> <p>It was agreed that the website could be used to publish performance. Currently quarterly is not possible due to issues with extracting the performance data, but the policy and performance team will work towards this. Action: Tim Grannell/Roz Grozier – August 2011.</p>

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
			<p>leaseholders.</p> <p>We are pleased that TVHA have made a commitment to tracking performance for 7 of the 10 areas of service. However performance levels for this information have not been published in Link up or on the website.</p> <p>We'd recommend that this information is published to residents.</p> <p>We'd also like TVHA to ensure that as many residents as possible are involved in a future review and agreeing the performance levels and would like TVHA to agree a date when this next review will take place.</p>		
9	Can you provide us with evidence that 80% of the calls to CSC are answered in 5 rings?	BIS reports Mystery Shopping Emailed questions	<p>TVHA clarified that calls answered in 5 rings equates to calls answered in 20 seconds and this begins when a resident selects the queue that they wish to join. If they don't select they will automatically be put through to the reception and the count begins.</p> <p>TVHA are currently averaging 80.8% this financial year which actually meets the target of 80%.</p> <p>There were however dips in performance</p>		<p>Agreed – Calls answered in 5 rings have suffered in recent months due to staff resources required to implementation of the new IT system. This module is now implemented and performance will return to normal once technical difficulties have been resolved – we will continue to monitor this.</p> <p>In 2010/11, 80% of calls were answered in 5 rings (20 seconds) which is a good level of performance across the industry.</p>

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			<p>during January, February and March and we have been told that is due to staff training for the new housing management system.</p> <p>We are satisfied that TVHA have performed to their agreed standard, however it is slightly concerning that it seems to be on the downward spiral. We also feel that the figures are slightly misleading.</p> <p>We feel that this figure should take into account dropped calls as these are also calls not answered within 20 seconds. If these figures were taken in</p> <p>We felt that the information we were given was not clear as it could be.</p> <p>However the auditors recognise that the TVH CSC are currently achieving a response level at the top end of the standard for the sector.</p>		<p>We note the observation that we do not take into account abandoned calls in this calculation, however this would make it more difficult to benchmark.</p>
10	Bearing in mind that the CSC is the Hub of all communication	BIS report	<p>This is currently above the target of 2%.</p> <p>We feel that even a single dropped call is potentially a missed opportunity.</p> <p>We would like TVH to work to ensure that</p>		<p>Agreed. TVHA will continue to monitor performance and accept that abandonment rate in 2010/11 was higher than we would like at 2.2% due to the impact of bringing in a new IT</p>

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
	with residents what is the current dropped call rate?		the target they have set themselves is achieved if not surpassed.		system. Most service centres have a target of 5% for abandoned calls, and ours is seen as well above the norm. The CSC is committed to answering as many calls as they can and will continue to monitor the abandonment rate to ensure dropped calls are minimal and that we achieve our target of 2% as a minimum.
11	Can you provide us with evidence that you respond to letters within 10 working days?	BIS report Emailed questions	We have been provided with BIS reports that TVHA are currently performing at 97.5% and we are satisfied with the information that we have been provided that TVHA are performing to agreed levels. However so far as we understand it this is only the first letter sent by a resident on a particular matter not any subsequent correspondence		All letters received from residents are entered into EMCS as mail items and are monitored for 10 day response.
12	Can you provide us with evidence that when customers visit	BIS report Emailed questions	We are satisfied with the evidence provided that TVHA are meeting this agreed performance level. The overall performance		No action required.

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	reception they will be seen within 5 minutes of the appointment time or within 15 minutes if they have no appointment booked?		is 94.8%.		
13	Can you provide evidence that you respond to e-mails sent to info@tvha.co.uk within 2 working days?	BIS report Emailed questions	<p>The evidence provided by the BIS reports suggests that TVHA are performing at 93% in responding to emails within 2 days. However many residents have told us that they have sent emails via the website and have never received a response.</p> <p>We are aware that this issue was raised in the complaints audit and further investigation revealed that some departments are deleting emails. This is being addressed by the Complaints audit team.</p> <p>At the present we are not satisfied that TVHA are meeting the performance level agreed.</p>		<p>Agreed - A problem with the website was identified and has now been resolved.</p> <p>Agreed to check with Facilities/ Reception that all Info emails are being saved to the system and forwarded to correct contact to allocate to the teams. Action: Lisa Gilbert – June 2011.</p> <p>Agreed to audit/track some emails through the system to highlight issues. Action: Claudia Nash – July 2011.</p> <p>Info emails will also be a key focus for the mystery shoppers this year. Action: Fran Moynihan – August 2011.</p>

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14	Can you provide us with evidence that 90% of calls are returned within published timescales?	BIS report Emailed questions Customer Care questionnaire	<p>The evidence provided by the BIS reports suggests that TVHA are currently performing at 96%. During 2010/11 TVHA logged 3705 call back requests. We have been informed that TVHA are aware that not all requests for call backs are being logged. This is concerning because many residents that we have spoken to have commented that they have requested a call back and haven't received one and this is causing much dissatisfaction. For many residents that cannot access the office a telephone response is their only form of communication. We are aware that TVHA are hoping to utilise the new housing management system to be able to accurately record and track requests for call backs. In general residents feel that TVHA should prioritise call back requests logging and monitoring. We recommend that TVHA review the current system and provide an action plan of how future call back request monitoring will be achieved using the</p>		<p>Agreed. Currently call backs are tracked via ECMS (electronic filing system) and we have a good track record of ensuring these calls are returned. It is hoped that the new Housing Management System can be further developed to carry out this function making it less admin heavy which in turn should increase numbers. Project Board will need to confirm timescale for this change/improvement. Action: Ana Orbe – March 2012.</p> <p>Agreed that checks should be carried out by the Mystery Shoppers to ensure calls are being returned and to highlight any issues. Action: Fran Moynihan – August 2011.</p> <p>It is also agreed that there are some gaps with calling customers back and not all issues are logged and tracked. We will investigate the reasons which get in the way of staff doing this and try to remedy this before the mystery shopping which will be able to test our progress. Action: Sarah Revett – July 2011.</p>

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
			new housing management system and provide a timescale for this.		
15	Can you provide evidence that 70% of residents are satisfied that their issue has been dealt with by the CSC?	Monthly surveys Mystery Shopping TVHRA Customer Care questionnaire	<p>This service standard only applies to tenants and leaseholders. There have been dips in performance throughout the year and TVHA are not currently performing to the agreed performance level.</p> <p>Only 60% of tenants are satisfied that their issue has been dealt with by the CSC and this is on a downward spiral. Only 43% of leaseholder's are satisfied however this is on the up as leaseholders were only 30% satisfied at the beginning of the year.</p> <p>With the evidence that we have been provided we are satisfied that CSC staff receive sufficient induction and on going training to be able to deal with enquires. They also performed well during the mystery shopping.</p> <p>We recommend that TVHA investigate the dips in performance throughout the year to identify what is causing the low satisfaction levels amongst tenants and leaseholders to ensure that they are</p>		<p>Agreed.</p> <p>The monthly survey question has been reviewed for 2011/12 to establish why residents felt their issue wasn't dealt with and what it was about. Comments will then be reviewed by the CSC to allow gaps in knowledge, communication and access to information to be highlighted and 12 month action plan developed. Action: Sarah Revett – July 2011.</p> <p>We would expect the satisfaction to be lower for leaseholders and they are more likely to have to speak to another department (usually in relation to service charges).</p> <p>Final figures for 2010/11 finished on 65% for tenants & 44% for homeowners and April 2011 figures show further improvement. Overall satisfaction with the CSC remains higher at 85% and 70%.</p>

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
			performing to agreed levels.		
16	Can you provide us with evidence that 80% of customers are satisfied with the service that they receive from the CSC?	Monthly surveys Mystery Shopping TVHRA Customer Care questionnaire	<p>This service standard only applies to tenants and leaseholders. There have been dips in performance throughout the year. 83% tenants are currently satisfied and this has is now moving back up. However Leaseholders are only 70% satisfied with the quality of service that they received However again this is moving back up. We are satisfied that sufficient quality control monitoring is in place to ensure that CSC is able to provide a good level of service. CSC also performed well during Mystery Shopping. We recommend that TVHA investigate the dips in performance to ensure consistency in the service that is being provided and to raise Leaseholders satisfaction rates. In the long term perhaps some investigation needs to be carried out as to why the CSC is not able to provide a one stop shop for Leaseholders and this needs be addressed in order to raise satisfaction.</p>		<p>Agreed. There were a number of big projects which affected service during 2010/11. The monthly survey relates to service over a 6 month period to that individual so doesn't necessarily reflect provision for that particular month.</p> <p>Going forward, literal comments on the monthly survey will be examined as detailed in Q15 which should provide additional information to help improve satisfaction. Action: Sarah Revett – July 2011.</p> <p>TVHA have commissioned a report on Leasehold Satisfaction overall at TVHA which is much lower. Recommendations from this will be incorporated. Action: Sarah Revett – March 2012.</p> <p>Final figures for 2010/11 finished on 85% for tenants & 70% for homeowners and April 2011 figures show further improvement.</p>

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17	We are aware that BME groups are less likely to query or complain. Can TVHA provide us with a BME breakdown of callers using the CSC?	Emailed questions	<p>We have been told that these figures are not available at present because there was no link between incoming calls and the previous housing management system so CSC weren't able to identify callers. We have been told that the new system should be able integrate the two and testing will be undertaken in the near future.</p> <p>This will allow TVHA to monitor who is and isn't making contact and identify and address barriers to access.</p> <p>We are confident now however that TVH actively capture ethnicity information.</p>		<p>Agreed. TVHA will be implementing CTI over the next 6 months and in conjunction with developing more call scripts, reports would be available to identify who is calling us. It will take some time to build up this data though and does assume that TVHA have the most up-to-date telephone numbers.</p> <p>Action: Ana Orbe/Derek Hornsby – March 2012.</p>
18	Many residents are unaware that they no longer have a 'housing officer'. Can you explain how this structural change was communicated	Emailed questions Examples in Link up Info sheets TVHRA Customer Care questionnaire	<p>Many residents have expressed frustration that they cannot get past the CSC to speak to their Neighbourhoods Officer. Yet more than of 80 % of the residents we spoke to stated they did not know about the changes and did not know the name of their neighbourhood's officer. We have been provided with evidence that an advertising campaign happened during</p>		<p>Agreed – The CSC is currently the main point of contact for residents as they can deal with the call or direct it to the correct department (which is not always the Neighbourhood Officer). We agree however that many residents see their neighbourhood officer as a key point of contact. The CSC are running a session with residents in May to look at the perceived impressions of the CSC and</p>

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
	to residents?		<p>a 2006 edition of Link up outlining the changes.</p> <p>Recently we have noticed that TVHA have started to produce information sheets outlining the role of the CSC and naming neighbourhoods and revenues officers and this have been displayed on notice boards with communal areas of flats. It is the general feel that this is a very positive step and is welcomed by residents. However this information is not being communicated to those living in houses and we are not sure if this is happening within all units.</p> <p>It is the general feeling that this information is really important element of communication. Residents need to be clear when calling in that the CSC are trained and in place to deal with their initial enquiries as far as they can. We feel that residents will be less frustrated if this information is clearly communicated.</p> <p>We recommend that TVHA produce an insert to be included in the new resident's handbook and sent out to residents when the new handbooks are sent out.</p>		<p>the range of services alongside the neighbourhood officer role. Action: Sarah Revett / Tonia Downie – September 2011.</p> <p>TVHA to consider how scheme specific information can be included on the website to cover areas without notice boards as part of the review of the website. Action: Alex Noonoo – September 2011.</p>

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	Consultation and feedback				
19	How easy is it for residents to get involved?	Taking Part Leaflet Resident Involvement Statement Annual Residents Report Resident Impact Assessment Monthly satisfaction surveys	We are really pleased that over the past two years TVHA have been innovative and increased accessibility for residents to get involved. TVHA currently have 15 involvement areas which are advertised in the Taking part leaflet and monthly surveys, numerous meetings and events organised outside of these areas to increase involvement. It is the general feeling that TVHA provide good incentives to get people involved and have addressed barriers to involvement by refunding travel and other expenses and paying for childcare. The team members are very customer friendly and provide good support to residents ensuring that they feel empowered and are able to make a real difference.		No action required.
20	How do TVH	Resident	We have asked questions around		

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	capture resident's views?	Involvement Impact Assessment Emailed questions	consultation and we were directed to the Resident Impact Assessment. This document outlines all the activities and groups that have taken place throughout the financial year. We are satisfied that TVHA provide a range of ways to involve residents and a range of opportunities for resident's to express their views.		
21	Monthly surveys indicate that only half of the residents surveyed for the 2009/10 are satisfied that their views are being taken into account. How can satisfaction be increased?	Monthly surveys Discussions with staff members	Monthly surveys have been designed to allow residents to comment on services and a section is provided for residents to make literal comments. We welcome this approach as this gives residents the opportunity to make suggestions and provide feedback on services. Two years ago a procedure was agreed with the exec team for surveys and follow up actions to ensure that resident views were being taken into account and actions monitored. We have been informed that this is not currently happening for all survey data and in particular the literal comments.		Agreed – Most literal comments relate to individual issues, and there is a danger that we do not get back to that person to resolve things as it's picked up as part of a general survey. Currently PPT produce the overall results of the monthly surveys. Literal comments are analysed by the Resident Involvement Team and action points are allocated and taken forward by the relevant departments. Common themes are being referred to the new Resident Satisfaction Group which was set up in January 2011. This group reviews the common trends from resident feedback and identifies actions for improvement.

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			<p>It is the general feeling that the literal comments are being logged by most departments but little evidence could be found that they had been acted upon.</p> <p>Leaseholders in particular are dissatisfied with the overall services that TVHA provide and it is our feeling that part of this is because the feedback that they provide through monthly surveys (literal comments) is not being responded to. We recommend that TVHA review the current procedure of analysing monthly survey results to ensure that resident's views are being taken into account, acted upon and services reviewed so as to increase satisfaction.</p> <p>The best example we found was the action tracker for literal comments utilised for the monthly surveys, although this was produced after our initial audit.</p> <p>Perhaps a standard form for recording literal comments should be introduced that tracks the progress and records any outcomes (similar to the one SMC</p>		<p>Action – Resident Involvement to ensure action has been taken within 2 weeks of the issue being raised with the relevant department. Action: Margaret Buchan – August 2011.</p>

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
			<p>produced for the monthly surveys).</p> <p>From our door knock survey we found that Many Residents believe that by making literal comments they are letting TVH know of their problems that need dealing with, and are let down when they are not responded to. It gives the impression that TVH are not listening.</p>		
22	How do TVHA ensure that residents' views are into account?	Resident Involvement Impact Assessment Monthly Surveys Emailed surveys	<p>We asked questions relating to how and why consultation exercises are carried out to try and determine whether resident's views are being taken into account. TVHA directed us to the Resident Involvement Impact Assessment. It is the general feeling that this document does not provide this information and it is difficult for a resident to understand and interpret.</p> <p>We are aware that auditor views are taken into account and action plans are monitored by the board but we have not been provided with evidence that this is happening with the other types of involvement.</p>		<p>Agreed. Some consultation and reviews have been done as a result of resident survey or consultation feedback and others have been identified by staff. The estate services review, the defects review and the cyclical review for example were all done as a result of low resident satisfaction scores, whereas the complaints and leasehold communication reviews were identified by staff. All of the projects completed in 2010/11 were however in the corporate plan which residents did review and feed back on.</p> <p>Going forward we have agreed that fewer staff reviews will take place as a</p>

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
			We recommend that further information be added to the impact assessment so that it is clear how residents views are taken into account during the consultation process and what changes have been made as a result of their involvement.		result of the resident auditors who agree themselves which areas to audit. TVH will continue with the resident input into the corporate plan and use this to ensure residents views are being taken into account alongside the auditor's reviews. Action: Margaret Buchan – August 2011.
23	Is the ethnicity of residents involved in consultation monitored?	Emailed questions Resident Impact Assessment	We were provided evidence that the ethnicity of residents involved in consultation exercises is presently monitored in some most instances. Continued monitoring of ethnicity will also help to identify barriers to involvement to ensure that the service is accessible to all. The monthly surveys are an area of consultation in which residents are able to remain anonymous if they wish yet still provide feedback on services.		No action required.
24	Are residents informed about what happens as	Resident Impact Assessment Emailed questions	When we began the audit we asked TVHA for evidence of how service reviews and changes are fed back to residents		Agreed. TVH are committed to this. In the past feedback has been via Link-up, individual responses for scheme based

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	a result of providing their views?		<p>involved and to the wider audience. We were directed to the resident's impact assessment. This has not provided us with evidence of this.</p> <p>We believe that keeping residents informed of the progress and changes that have been made as a result of providing their view is really important. It is important that residents feel that their views are valued and feedback encourages other residents to become involved because they are able to see changes that have been made so feel that their voices will be heard also.</p> <p>It is the general feeling that residents are not provided with feedback on consultation exercises and the resident impact assessment does not indicate how this information is fed back to residents.</p> <p>We are aware that some individual group activities are given feedback and the audit report outcomes is reported in Link up and reports are available on the website.</p> <p>A workshop took place in April 2010 which highlighted that feedback was an</p>		<p>issues and meetings with residents. The new Resident Feedback Group is in place. Two meetings have taken place in April and May and the next meeting is in June. 5 resident involvement areas are being examined initially to see the best way of ensuring feedback happens following a resident involvement activity.</p> <p>Action: Stephen Beckett-Doyle – December 2011.</p>

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
			<p>area of concern for residents which TVHA needed to address.</p> <p>The majority of residents felt that they weren't receiving feedback on the views that they were providing during consultation exercises and has a result felt that they weren't being listened to because they hadn't been informed of changes.</p> <p>We are pleased that TVHA has begun to address this issue and are in the process of forming a feedback group in which residents decide how feedback is provided to groups and to the wider audience. The group has met once this year.</p> <p>We recommend that TVHA commit to ensuring that this group continues and works in partnership with TVHA to ensure that residents are informed of action plans and changes that are occurring as a result of their involvement.</p>		

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
	General				
25	Our survey highlighted that only half of the residents that took part are satisfied with the condition of their properties when they accept an offer	Void visit Meeting with new homes department Void Policy TVHRA Customer Care and Complaints questionnaire	<p>Many residents receive only one offer of accommodation from the Local Authority and cannot refuse the property on the ground that it is in a poor condition unless they have a qualifying medical condition. So the majority of residents have to accept the offer of accommodation or risk being taken off the housing register which means that they have no choice but to accept the offer.</p> <p>A customer care visit happens three weeks after a resident moves in that asks the member of staff to make a judgement and identify whether the property is in excellent/good/fair/poor condition. We are concerned that the condition of the property is being decided after a resident has moved in. We feel that the void policy and procedures should ensure that a property is re - let in a suitable condition and in line with the void procedure.</p> <p>After investigation we found out that the voids procedure is two years out of date,</p>		<p>Agreed. A lettable standard is in place and TVHA have now provided the auditors with a copy of this. Residents get a copy of this when they move into a property.</p> <p>Currently, the voids are post inspected by the Voids Supervisor prior to sign up and by the New Homes Officer during sign up.</p> <p>Major voids are also inspected by the New Homes Manager.</p> <p>We assume that the auditor's findings relate to orders raised within the first six weeks of the tenancy (and often picked up by the Neighbourhood Officer at the setting in visit) which are still the responsibility of the voids contractor (Mears) to complete as part of the original works order.</p> <p>The voids procedure is made up of two parts, repairs and redecoration allowances. The system generates review dates, and the one for repairs is</p>

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
			<p>residents started reviewing the policy over 12 months ago and this has now been put on hold.</p> <p>TVHA have had an agreement with Mears for the last two years to undertake the voids works. We asked for a copy of the service level agreement and Lettable standard and were given a document containing authorisation levels for void repairs.</p> <p>We felt that these bandings gave very little flexibility and question whether this system provides best value for money.</p> <p>After the audit was completed the auditors were given a copy of the re-let table standards policy, which we felt was very basic but a policy none the less. For these reasons we have decided that we would like to carry out an audit of voids and the lettable standard this financial year</p>		<p>currently overdue. We will review this following the upcoming resident audit of re-lets so that we can take these recommendations into account.</p> <p>Action: Tina Rea – October 2011.</p>
26	Our survey highlighted that many residents	TVHRA Customer Care and Complaints	Half of the residents that we surveyed feel that they would have benefited from a longer period to move into their home		Agreed. TVHA are happy to look into providing details of removal companies across the different areas to assist residents when moving in. They also feel

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	Questions	Evidence	Auditor Comments and Recommendations	Traffic Light	TVHA Response
	find moving from their current residency into a TVHA property difficult with only a week's notice to move in	questionnaire	when they accept an offer of accommodation. We are aware that this is not possible because of the rental system and housing benefit entitlement. To help alleviate the difficulty in having to move within a week particularly for residents that do not have a support network that can assist with their move we recommend that TVHA undertake a mapping exercise across the areas of operation. To identify low cost removal companies. This information could then be provided to residents when they sign their tenancy.		it would be good to investigate if group rates could be sought. Action: Tina Rea – December 2011.
27	Customer Care Visits procedure	Emailed questions Customer Care Visits procedure	Customer Care visits procedure is in place for all probationary tenants during the first 12 months of their tenancy. Officers carry out 4 visits/contacts in total and at 11 months the Neighbourhood officer will then decide whether the tenancy will convert into an assured tenancy or the probationary period is to be extended. We welcome this procedure and feel that this is a good way to help residents		No action required.

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			<p>sustain their tenancies. The form also identify issues that can be addressed such as support needs and ensures that TVHA are able to identify needs and contact and work in partnership with external agencies to support residents and their families.</p> <p>We are interested to find out the impact of this procedure in helping residents sustain their tenancies.</p>		