

Salix Homes 
Customer Voice

Scrutiny Report
Customer Service at Salix Homes
February 2024

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The topic of customer service for scrutiny in 2023/24 was agreed at customer committee meeting on 6th June 2023.
- 1.2 Customer service was recommended as an area for scrutiny following an assessment of strategic risk and previous scrutiny or audit. The key reasons for recommending this service area are;
- Feedback from transactional surveys about time taken to respond to referrals and the need to improve right first time
 - Issues with listening & communication
 - Link to EDI in terms of access to services
 - Need to refresh customer service strategy
- 1.3 Following the launch of Our Future Together in July 2023, and the introduction of the new values and competencies, Salix Homes restructured the organisation to place a greater focus on customers and hearing the customer voice.
- 1.4 In June 2023, the Customer Committee commissioned a piece of scrutiny on Salix Homes' approach to customer service. A group of four scrutineers were selected from Salix Homes' wider scrutiny pool.
- 1.5 The purpose of this review was to:
- Understand and scrutinise our customer service standards and how they are embedded across the organisation.
 - Understand how excellent customer service is defined, recorded and good practice implemented across the organisation.
 - To scrutinise our level of customer care - understand how we demonstrate our value, respect and fair/consistent treatment of our customers within different interactions.
 - Effectiveness of Salix Homes' approach to capturing and achieving 'Right First Time' for customers.
 - Understand how negative 'Right First Time' feedback informs change.

2. Scrutiny Scope

- 2.1 The scrutiny scope is outlined in the table below;

Subject	<p>Customer Service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer service standards • Customer care • 'Right First Time'
Commissioned by	Customer Committee
Panel	To be sourced from Salix Homes' Scrutiny Pool (between 4 and 6 members) and recent complainants about their experience of customer service.
Aims / objectives/ outcomes	<p>The purpose of this review is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and scrutinise our customer service standards and how they are embedded across the organisation. • Understand how excellent customer service is defined, recorded and good practice implemented across the organisation. • To scrutinise our level of customer care - understand how we demonstrate our value, respect and fair/consistent treatment of our customers within different interactions. • Effectiveness of Salix Homes' approach to capturing and achieving 'Right First Time' for customers. • Understand how negative 'Right First Time' feedback informs change.
Areas out of scope	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer communications • Complaints handling
Key service area involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers & Communities Directorate • Assets, Growth & Development Directorate
Links to corporate plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a strong and influential customer voice through our new customer engagement arrangements. • Optimise our service delivery model ensuring the right type of service is provided at the right time. • Deliver services that meet customers' needs and expectations and maximise data informed customer satisfaction.
Indicators of success	<p>Percentage attendance of the scrutiny panel</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target: 100% <p>Number of recommendations made</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target: 8-10 (approx. 2 per objective) <p>Number of recommendations implemented</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Target: 100%

	<p>Satisfaction of the process from Scrutiny Panel:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On a scale of 1-5 how much do you think that Salix Homes has listened to your views? 2. On a scale of 1-5 how much do you think that Salix Homes has acted on your views? 3. On a scale of 0-10 rating, would you recommend being involved with Salix Homes to your neighbours?
Timescale	See proposed key dates below.
Resource commitments	Proposed cost: £1,500, excluding staff time.
Report Author	Laura Flint, Customer Engagement Manager

3. Methodology

- 3.1 The panel approached the gathering of evidence to inform their review and final analysis in several ways.
- 3.2 Reviewed relevant documentation in relation to Salix Homes' customer services and performance including:
- Customer Charter
 - Customer Service Strategy
 - Complaints lessons learned themes from Q2 (Appendix 1)
 - Repairs Policy (Appendix 2)
 - Repairs Procedure (Appendix 3)
- 3.3 Analysed current performance data:
Performance Indicators –
- Customer Charter assessments action tracker (Appendix 4)
 - Customer Charter performance against agreed measures (Appendix 5)
- 3.4 Analysed satisfaction measures:
- Repairs Satisfaction Report (Appendix 6)
 - Tenant Satisfaction Measures report for October 2023 (relevant questions) (Appendix 7)
- 3.5 Interviews carried out with the following employees: (Appendix 8 and Appendix 9)
- Lorraine Butler, Customer Service and Engagement Manager
 - Sian Grant, Executive Director of Customers and Communities
 - Laura Derbyshire, Senior Housing Officer
 - Warren Carlon, Director of Communities
 - Claire Taylor, Community Safety Manager
 - Sarah Jones, Community Safety Officer
 - Sophie Ryan, Planning Manager
 - Jenny Callaghan, Repairs Customer Liaison Officer
 - Bethan Schelewa, Complaints Support Officer

- Clare DuPreez, Complaints Support Officer

4. Findings

4.1 The scrutiny panel identified that effective customer service is essential to enable Salix Homes to deliver their values.

4.2 Salix Homes provides opportunities for customers to make contact in the following ways: email, telephone, online customer portal, letter and in person.

4.3 All customer interactions including call back requests, service requests and complaints are all recorded on the same CRM (customer relationship management) system - Microsoft Dynamics 365. This enables all interactions with the customer to be logged and referred to, with the aim of ensuring a consistent approach to communication. The panel was interested in seeing where customers were having to make unnecessary effort to contact Salix Homes as a result of us not getting things right first time, for example not calling the customer back in a timely manner.

4.4 Some roles within Salix Homes involve significant amounts of face-to-face interactions with customers, especially repairs operatives and housing, income and community safety teams. The scrutiny panel was particularly interested in the ways in which these interactions are delivered to ensure a 'right first time' approach.

4.5 Customer Service Centre

4.5.1 The scrutiny panel interviewed the Customer Service and Engagement Manager to establish the staffing levels, training and operational aspects of the customer service centre. The information obtained is summarised below:

- Customer service officers are monitored by senior officers and supervisors through call listening and call quality monitoring.
- If an officer is struggling, they can flag this through the system so a supervisor can listen in to the call live and give guidance to the officer directly.
- Call quality monitoring takes place on an ongoing basis, where every officer has four calls assessed per month minimum and scored on their call handling against a set of criteria. The Customer Service and Engagement Manager shared the scoring criteria with the panel. All officers must achieve at least 90% score for each call to be considered satisfactory. Any that fall below this will receive training if appropriate.
- Officers are given feedback after monitoring, regardless of the score, as well as the call recording. Supervisors can also do live call listening at any time.
- There are two senior officers and two supervisors who help manage the shifts from 8.00am to 9.00pm. They also monitor each other's call quality assessments to ensure consistency.
- A senior officer is a grade above a customer service officer, with the same customer service training as supervisors. However, they don't directly manage staff which is the key difference. However, both the senior and supervisor roles shift lead and are the escalation point for the team across day and late shifts.
- The team is split between the two supervisors, so they each report to a supervisor.
- There are weekly management team catch-ups where they discuss any issues, process improvements, customer case studies and any staffing requirements.

- In addition to the corporate induction, officers undergo a comprehensive local induction which includes individual sessions on handling complex customer situations, managing queries from vulnerable customers, dealing with complaints and escalations and soft customer service skills within call handling as well as how to respond differently to an email/web chat.
- Language Line is used for interpretation services for telephone calls and is available 24/7. There is no limit placed on officers in terms of how often this is used, and the budget is monitored centrally by the Customer Service and Engagement Manager.
- Officers have recently undertaken resilience training and undergo regular refresher training which may come out of a request in 121 meetings, call quality monitoring, complaint handling or live listening.
- A new web-based telephony system has now bedded in and training on how to report on data on calls answered, calls abandoned, and average wait times is due to be delivered.
- Call-back requests are recorded in the CRM system and if any go overdue, the manager of the service area has visibility through the system to monitor this.
- Customers do contact the customer service centre to say they haven't received a call as expected and this can be difficult to manage as the customer is understandably more frustrated at this point.
- The connection between CX Feedback and CRM isn't currently working due to a broken link – this means live feedback questionnaires are not automatically being sent after a call has completed. This needs to be actioned with the IT team as a matter of priority.
- There are 17 people in the customer service centre, two of whom are part time and all hybrid working on a rota basis.

4.5.2 The scrutiny panel understood the level of training provided to all officers and the challenges faced when trying to resolve some issues for customers. The panel felt this is very important, to be able to assist with a variety of requests and enquiries whilst remaining professional.

4.5.3 The panel requested further detail about the call-back requests, which will be addressed in point 4.7 with the Executive Director of Customers and Communities.

4.5.4 **Strengths**

- High level of training for customer service centre staff, including a focus on showing empathy with customers.
- Monitoring of call quality on a regular basis provides training opportunities and timely feedback.
- Senior officers or supervisors are always available when more complex calls need to be escalated to them.

4.5.5 **Recommendations**

- Share examples of great customer service (using the customer charter data) on a regular basis across the organisation to promote best practice in real-life situations (internal communications team to share examples).
- Create a clear set of customer service standards, in conjunction with involved customers, to set out exactly what is expected of all Salix employees and contractors (Customer Committee to nominate a sub-group to devise these standards.)

- Use the new customer service standards to define and measure the expected standards more clearly across the organisation (action tracker to be set up to measure performance, similar to the customer charter tracker.)

4.6 **Complaints**

4.6.1 The scrutiny panel interviewed the Complaints Support Team, to establish what happens when things aren't 'right first time' or when they go wrong and what is done to resolve issues when they arise.

- Customer feedback is shared internally, but this differs depending on the type of feedback. If feedback is received rather than a complaint, it would be shared directly with the manager.
- If a customer raises an issue for the first time rather than a complaint, the customer would be directed to the right team e.g., if it's a service request.
- If it is a complaint, the Complaints Support Team will look at the elements and assign it to the relevant manager/s.
- The Complaints Support Team view every complaint when it arrives and ensures the investigation process is followed correctly. The team is also responsible for sending complaint responses out to the customers.
- Salix Homes' policy states that complaints will be acknowledged with the customer within two working days. The responding manager has a total of 10 working days to investigate and respond to the complaint.
- The Complaints Support Team felt that all employees across the business would benefit from basic customer service training, and refresher training.
- Customers can contact Salix Homes to raise a complaint in person, by phone, online portal, email or letter. Whoever receives the communication from the customer should take ownership of it.
- A key complaint trend is lack of communication. Often a complaint could be prevented if the customer had been contacted proactively with an update or to advise of progress and reassure them the issue is still being dealt with.
- Colleagues who are good at communication and time management should be recognised and best practice should be shared.

4.6.2 The scrutiny panel recognised the trends around lack of communication being an issue for complaints and were pleased to hear some of the other methods being considered by Salix Homes as a whole and the Complaints Support Team specifically to try to address this. One example of this is the performance monitoring of call-back requests by the Executive Director of Customers and Communities which is brought to each operational managers meeting for discussion. Customer communication more broadly falls outside the scope of this scrutiny, but it is worth noting in this context.

4.6.3 **Strengths**

- Salix Homes takes all complaints seriously – a complaint arises when something hasn't been dealt with 'right first time' or as the customer expected.
- Complaints are viewed as an important way of learning and making improvements.

4.6.4 **Recommendations**

- Use customer feedback to support process changes in specific areas, where there is a clear trend that Salix isn't getting it 'right first time' (lessons learned evidence should be recorded and acted on, which should provide supporting evidence for process changes where required.)

- Prioritise sharing 'lessons learned' information across the business after a complaint has been received and resolved. This should enable other departments to make positive changes (internal communications team will roll out a campaign highlighting the importance of lessons learned in all departments.)

4.7 **Communities**

4.7.1 The panel interviewed the Director of Communities to explore the different customer interactions involving the Housing and Community Safety Teams.

- 1st Response patrols only take place in high rise blocks, but any customer would get a response/answer to an emergency query if they called the 0800 number out-of-hours.
- There are minimum staffing levels for every team on shift, and these would always be covered, either using agency staff or overtime from other departments, to ensure safe staffing levels at all times.
- The Housing and Community Safety Teams were restructured in 2023 to provide more opportunities for face to face interactions.
- There are fortnightly manager meetings to raise lessons learned and ensure standards are met. Weekly meetings have been introduced to support new managers.
- The recent restructure meant staff morale was very low, due to people moving roles and a lot of vacancies created as a result. All the vacancies have now been filled, so staff morale is on the way up.
- The biggest challenge in this area is the amount of time officers spend dealing with complex cases. For example, a case that starts as an untidy garden case subsequently uncover other issues with the tenant, such as hoarding, mental health, self-neglect, safeguarding etc.
- The scrutiny panel agreed that there is an increasing number of people requiring more support and specialist support. Specialist support officers would relieve the pressure on the team.

4.7.2 The scrutiny panel agree with the recruitment of specialist support officers and wanted to support the proposal.

4.7.3 **Strengths**

- A need for more face-to-face interaction with customers was at the heart of the 2023 restructure, providing larger customer-facing teams. This has provided greater opportunities for teams to be more visible to customers, and therefore identifying issues or support needs more effectively.

4.7.4 **Recommendations**

- Recruit specialist support staff, specifically to support more vulnerable customers, especially those with mental health issues. (Approval for new members of staff is required at board level.)

4.8 **Housing Teams (North, South and High-rise teams)**

4.8.1 The panel wanted to find out more about the face-to face interactions with customers and some of the challenges this brings, so a Senior Housing Officer was interviewed.

- The housing teams manage all housing-related matters apart from income management. This includes but is not limited to allocating properties, tenancy

management including tenancy changes, signposting to other supporting services, anti-social behaviour, community engagement and reporting issues such as repairs.

- Within the previous structure, there were five estate management officers, three lettings officers, three tenancy sustainment officers and six ASB officers. This work felt quite fragmented across the teams, sometimes three or four officers being involved in one complex case. The reintroduction of a more traditional housing management structure has seen an increase in the number of officers. There are now 20 housing officers, meaning a one-stop approach for residents. In addition, there are four housing assistants providing an opportunity for assistants to gain experience and progress into the housing officer role, and the introduction of three senior housing officers. The three senior housing officers each manage the geographic teams of north, south and high rise.
- Housing teams work with a wide range of partners including social services, GMP etc to support any residents.
- Housing officers notice changes in circumstances, tenant behaviours etc, which they use to inform referrals where required.
- Estate walkabouts happen weekly on different streets on different patches.
- Tenants are more open about mental health issues now than ever before, which means Salix Homes have more information to be able support them more effectively.
- Housing officers don't give out mobile phone numbers. People expect instant responses if they call, or the call could be missed if the officer is absent for any reason. The 0800 Salix number should still be the primary method of contact. The same applies for emailing an individual officer, rather than reporting an issue through the official channels.
- Weekly surgeries in Gateways are effective and should be starting across Salford soon.
- When English isn't a customer's first language, a card is shown to the customer with various languages, so the customer can point to the language. The housing officer would then contact Language Line translation service.
- There are different needs in every area, including often volatile situations for housing officers. The needs of customers, in terms of behaviour, language and other factors, means service areas need to interact with customers in a variety of ways.
- Customer service training needs to be specific to each area, but with a basic level of service for all areas.
- The scrutiny panel agreed that anyone working from Diamond House, even those who aren't front line workers, could come into direct contact with a customer so would need to understand how to provide excellent customer service should the need arise. Other members of staff who don't ordinarily work in our neighbourhoods still interact with customers via email and telephone, so may need training around customer service in these areas.
- If a tenant can't be contacted, and there is no answer at the house, the Housing Officer will try various methods of making contact or establishing the customer's whereabouts – has a repair been completed recently? Have the neighbours seen them recently?
- For the dignity of that tenant and for the welfare of the neighbours in the environment, the scrutiny panel feel that it's crucial to establish any health, welfare concerns or vulnerabilities at the earliest possible stage.

4.8.2 The scrutiny panel suggested that housing officers or specialist officers should do a welfare check especially for older people or do a telephone call to their next of kin if there are any concerns (if they have one) asking about the last time they spoke to the customer.

4.8.3 **Strengths**

- The panel was impressed with the level of care and the wide-ranging knowledge and skills of the housing teams.

4.8.4 **Recommendations**

- Take a proactive approach to interactions with more vulnerable customers, making welfare calls to make early interventions where required (housing teams to prioritise interactions with customers as part of their weekly work).

4.9 **Community Safety**

4.9.1 The panel interviewed the Community Safety Manager and a Community Safety Officer to find out about more complex customer issues and how these are addressed.

- There are three Community Safety Officers, compared with two previously. The Community Safety Team works closely with housing officers, following anti-social behaviour (ASB) procedures. Sometimes tenants don't act on warnings, so the team has to collate evidence to prepare for court. In terms of legal action taken, Salix Homes applies for civil injunctions most frequently and finds them an effective way of managing behaviour. These injunctions are like the conditions of a tenancy agreement, but they are legally enforceable. They are effective in most cases. On rare occasions when they don't work, Salix considers proceeding to possession action.
- An increasing number of customers are suffering with mental health issues, so there are more capacity assessments needed. If capacity is not there for a customer to engage with the process, this is balanced with the alleged victim's needs. Sometimes a person is rehoused instead of being evicted.
- The Community Safety Team is very experienced, and the role has changed, because everything is challenged in court.
- An emergency injunction can be granted in 24-48 hours, without the alleged perpetrator knowing. They would have the chance to defend themselves later. Customers don't always want to go to court, so then cases can't proceed.
- Everybody in the team is alerted if a Category A emergency comes through, where an emergency injunction may be needed.
- Category B is a longer process, depending on how much evidence is needed, court wait times etc.
- A Category B usually takes around 6 weeks to go to court, so we must manage expectations for customers.
- Protections around GDPR means the team can't always access information about mental health until a case has already gone to court, when this would have been important evidence to have beforehand. A customer shouldn't be put through a court case if they have mental health issues. Salix needs better relationships with mental health teams and adult social care. If an order isn't granted due to someone's mental health issues, the victim can feel like the court has sided with the alleged perpetrator.
- The Community Safety Team is open and honest with people, and sometimes they are moved away from the issue if it can't be resolved. A customer can't be evicted

unless there is serious criminal action, and this means the issues haven't been resolved, enabling the customer to sustain the tenancy.

- If a vulnerable customer is out of their home for a period of time (in hospital for example), the team would try to support them in their return, ensuring they have the right support in place. If they need a different property due to their needs changing, Salix needs to be made aware of this. A property would only be treated as abandoned if the customer cannot be contacted through the usual channels, and there was no trace of them in hospitals, with friends/family, the police, and prisons. If no contact can be made, a 28-day notice is served, and we would then apply to court for possession of the property. Any belongings are repurposed through Salix Homes' furniture recycling centre.
- If a customer has issues with substance misuse, the housing officers speak to the customer, make referrals to support services, and try to engage with customers to avoid court. The community safety team try to ensure all these steps are followed, but it's impossible if the customer won't engage.

4.9.2 **Strengths**

- A highly experienced team is in place to deal with complex situations and support customers wherever possible.

4.9.3 **Recommendations**

- Take a proactive approach to interactions with more vulnerable customers, making welfare calls to make early interventions where required (housing teams to prioritise interactions with customers as part of their weekly work).

4.10 **Customers and Communities**

4.10.1 The panel interviewed the Executive Director of Customers and Communities, to find out more about Salix Homes' approach to service standards and the way in which these are measured.

- Customer interaction surveys and results are fed back to the senior management team (SMT).
- There are surveys about repairs, customer service, anti-social behaviour, and complaint handling.
- Data on lessons learned is analysed to establish whether there are individual or systemic actions to be implemented.
- The Senior Management Team and Customer Committee read, analyse, and hold managers and service directors to account.
- Training is available for teams and individual around improving communication.
- The new Salix Homes values and competencies are used to judge performance.
- Salix Homes is an accredited member of the Institute for Customer Service, and part of this involves surveying customers and staff. The survey results help identify issues.
- If a query or issue can't be resolved 'right first time', this should automatically generate a call-back request. 79% of these are done within 24 hours.
- If a member of staff deals with the call-back, they should take ownership of it until the request has been completed and the issue resolved.
- Complaints are raised and investigated, whilst still trying to resolve the issue alongside why it wasn't 'right first time'. Salix Homes wants to find out what could have been done better.
- Colleagues should always provide dates and timescales to the customer.

4.10.2 The scrutiny panel feel that it may be better to extend the call-back request time to 48 hours, if this means 100% are completed in time. This builds trust with the customer.

4.10.3 The panel also suggested the possibility of calls being triaged, so emergencies responded to within 24 hours, and non-emergencies within 48 hours.

4.10.4 **Strengths**

- Clear support from the executive team for timely and appropriate communications with customers.

4.10.5 **Recommendations**

- Change the 24-hour call-back promise to 48 hours. This is more achievable and means the customer's interaction with Salix is 'right first time' (Customer Committee and board to approve this change to the customer charter).
- Prioritise capturing accurate customer feedback through 'CX feedback' after transactions with customers, particularly the customer service centre (issues with CX Feedback need to be resolved urgently to ensure the surveys are being captured.)
- Use the new customer service standards to define and measure the expected standards more clearly across the organisation (action tracker to be set up to measure performance, similar to the customer charter tracker.)

4.11 **Repairs**

4.11.1 The scrutiny panel highlighted the need to interview members of the Repairs team, due to the number of complaints about this service area, particularly not getting things 'right first time'. The panel wanted to understand more about the challenges faced by this particular team and what might help to alleviate these.

- There are four planners in the team who book in repairs requests. Planners keep in touch with customers throughout the process.
- There are 40 operatives employed by Salix, and subcontractors are used for bigger jobs or if the jobs can't be booked in time.
- A 24-hour call-back request system is an effective way of customers keeping in touch.
- Call-back requests, emails, repairs team mobile numbers are in the directory and the repairs team can be contacted via MS Teams.
- The repairs team acknowledged that keeping in touch with customers when things aren't 'right first time' should always be done, but demand is so high, and resource doesn't match this.
- The planning team have taken responsibility for damp and mould, in addition to their existing roles, and there is a significant increase in demand during winter.
- Staff sickness also means their work must be reassigned.
- More staff needed to clear the requests in the system and action the new requests. The ongoing repairs review will identify any process changes required.
- The repairs team are trialling offering evening appointments as part of the repairs review and will look at Saturdays too.
- Wait times are longer post-covid, and customer expectations are higher.
- The repairs team have a customer liaison officer who will actively contact the customers to try to resolve any issues.

- Complaints about repairs are often around wait times. A quick resolution to this is moving the repair appointment forward to an earlier date, but this is a temporary fix to a longer-term issue. It also drives further complaints, because customers will then tell their friends and it encourages them to do the same.
- The repairs customer liaison offer will act as a contact for complex repairs, complaints, decanting customers when there are leaks etc. Customers have her direct number so they can keep in contact with her.
- The repairs customer liaison officer will also proactively contact customers if a negative repairs survey is completed to try and put it right. She will also log and report repairs on behalf of vulnerable customers or support them in accessing systems to self-report.
- The repairs team share lessons learned at team meetings. For example, what went wrong and how could it be done better?
- The repairs team proactively raise compliments with the team, so everything isn't negative, and to enable best practice to be shared.

4.11.2 The scrutiny panel acknowledged the pressures on this specific team and will be interested in the outcome of the repairs review.

4.11.3 **Strengths**

- The panel thought the model of proactive communication from the liaison officer was a very positive one, and something to consider in other customer-facing areas.

4.11.4 **Recommendations**

- There are no specific recommendations for the repairs service area, but a number of the scrutiny recommendations will impact them both directly and indirectly.

4.12 **Customer service survey data**

4.12.1 The panel asked to be able to survey a sample of customers who have had recent interactions with us. A set of five questions was selected by panel members (Appendix 11). The questions were emailed to 20 randomly selected customers who had called the customer service centre in November. As of this report being written, no customers had replied to the survey questions.

4.12.2 The customer service centre was also conducting the ICS customer survey, which may have impacted the willingness of customers to complete another survey.

4.12.3 The October 2023 TSM report findings were shared with the panel to give an overview of recent customer sentiment (Appendix 7). The most recent repairs satisfaction survey from CX Feedback was also shared with the scrutiny panel.

4.12.4 The panel found that there is general positivity from customers around their interactions with Salix, both in-person and via other methods. However, the panel also found that any negative feedback or complaints seem to follow the same trends around time taken and lack of communication.

- 4.12.5 Lack of communication falls within the scope of this scrutiny because this is a main driver of Salix Homes' missing the opportunity to get things 'right first time' for some customers.
- 4.12.6 Lessons learned data and trends from complaints in Q2 (Appendix 1) show that there are recurring themes for complaints.
- 4.12.7 The scrutiny panel was made aware of the internal communications campaign around the importance of lessons learned across the business. The panel would like to see this having a lasting impact on complaints themes.

Indicator	23-24 Target	23-24 Performance	Short Term Trend	Status	Salix Q2	GMHP Average	GMHP Position	Housemark Overall	Housemark Northern RPs*
Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them	87%	80%	↓	●	81%	67.2%	2nd	Q1	Q1
Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them	87%	87%	↓	●	89%	74.9%	2nd	Q1	Q1
Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect	87%	88%	↓	●	89%	81.4%	2nd	Q1	Q1

5. Recommendations

- 5.1 The scrutiny panel made ten recommendations as a result of their findings. These recommendations are detailed below.

Recommendation number	Recommendation
1	Share examples of great customer service (using the customer charter data) on a regular basis across the organisation to promote best practice in real-life situations (internal communications team to share examples).
2	Create a clear set of customer service standards, in conjunction with involved customers, to set out exactly what is expected of all Salix employees and contractors (Customer Committee to nominate a sub-group to devise these standards.)
3	Use the new customer service standards to define and measure the expected standards more clearly across the organisation (action tracker to be set up to measure performance, similar to the customer charter tracker.)
4	Use customer feedback to support process changes in specific areas, where there is a clear trend that Salix isn't getting it 'right first time' (lessons learned evidence should be recorded and acted on, which should provide supporting evidence for process changes where required.)
5	Prioritise sharing 'lessons learned' information across the business after a complaint has been received and resolved. This should enable other departments to make positive changes (internal communications team will roll out a campaign highlighting the importance of lessons learned in all departments.)
6	Recruit specialist support staff, specifically to support more vulnerable customers, especially those with mental health issues. (Approval for new members of staff is required at board level.)
7	Take a proactive approach to interactions with more vulnerable customers, making welfare calls to make early interventions where required (housing teams to prioritise interactions with customers as part of their weekly work).

8	Change the 24-hour call-back promise to 48 hours. This is more achievable and means the customer's interaction with Salix is 'right first time' (Customer Committee and board to approve this change to the customer charter).
9	Prioritise capturing accurate customer feedback through 'CX feedback' after transactions with customers, particularly the customer service centre (issues with CX Feedback need to be resolved urgently to ensure the surveys are being captured.)