



Senate Scrutiny Exercise Into Customers Repairs Journey

2017/18



1.0 Introduction

1.1 This report has been written by the Senate to provide feedback from their investigation into the Customers experience when requesting a repair.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Senate initially had a discussion about potential areas for investigation and they took on board feedback from customers who had taken part in a recent focus group who raised concerns about the repairs journey.

2.2 They agreed that repairs are such an important and wide reaching service provided by RCH that recommendations following this would be beneficial to the organisation.

2.3 The overall purpose was to ensure that the customer experience of repairs is a positive one.

3.0 The Senate

3.1 The Senators carrying out this investigation were Marion Wilson, Andrew Hurrell, Ian McArthur, Jennifer Scott, Elizabeth Berry, Alice McQuillan and Alex Bowers.

The Senate were supported in their investigation by Siobhan O’Kane, Governance & Executive Team Support Manager, RCH and Anne Ross, Governance Officer.

4.0 Report Structure

4.1 The report outlines the investigative methods used and the Senate’s findings. It makes recommendations based on these findings.

5.0 Methods used

5.1 The exercise was conducted as follows:

- A meeting was held by the Senate to discuss the potential areas for investigation to be carried out.
- The group discussed some of their own recent experiences and also the feedback received from other customers during a recent focus group and

agreed that requesting a repair and having it carried out to their satisfaction, had on occasion been an issue.

- The Customer Experience Team (CET) manager and a CET Officer presented the process to the Senate.
- Senate members shadowed some CET Officers in the call centre.
- A Work Planner (WP) met with the Senate to advise of the planners role in the repairs process.
- The Senate met with the Head of Business Resilience to discuss the Repairs function
- The Senate shadowed the Work Planners
- The Senate met with 2 of our Trades Operatives
- The Senate called customers to discuss their experience of the Repair journey

Group discussions

As with all investigations the group are fully aware that all comments and information are treated in the strictest confidence.

Senate members have signed a code of conduct and confidentiality agreement and feedback will not be attributed to individual managers or customers who took part in this investigation.

All customers being contacted were previously asked by the Customer Experience Officers if they would be happy for a Customer Senator to call them to discuss their experience. They were asked if they gave permission for their details to be shared with the Senate to allow this to happen.

6.0 Results

Method	What happened	Comments
The Senate met to discuss possible areas to be investigated.	<p>They considered a number of areas including complaints, allocations process, service charges, repairs and internal communications.</p> <p>They agreed that they would like to scrutinise the customer repair journey.</p>	Senators who had been part of the CCTV focus group reported that feedback from customers taking part in that group was that they had experienced some issues with repairs. In addition to this, the Senate took the view that this may be as a result of communication issues therefore a decision was reached to look at the

		'Repair journey from a customer's perspective'
The CET Manager and a CET Officer met with the Senate	They presented to the group showing their process for dealing with telephone repair requests.	<p>The Officer mentioned that other people are able to report repairs on behalf of customers e.g. Housing Officers and members of the general public. It was noted that some people calling in prefer to remain anonymous for a number of reasons. However all requests are logged and acted on.</p> <p><i>The presentation and minute from the meeting is available on request.</i></p> <p>The Senate noted:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Customers Repair handbook b) The CET manager's endorsement that communications between teams internally could be improved upon. c) That there are other ways in which to request a repair.
Senate shadowed CET call handlers		<p>Customers were asked for their permission, at the point of call, for a Senator to listen into the call. The findings were:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call Handlers use Active H • Customers are offered morning or afternoon appointments • Calls made to Work Planners to gain updates for customers on

		<p>overrunning timescales for jobs or call backs</p>
<p>The Senate met with the Head of Maintenance</p>	<p>Fiona Campbell met with the Senate at Springkell St</p>	<p>The Senate were advised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There will be a new dynamic scheduler implemented in phases • Performance figures have improved • The Repairs Team stagger holidays and clear handovers are given when annual leave is due to be taken • Clerk of Works now called Technical Officers (TO) • Currently there are a few Trades vacancies • New managed stores facility • New updated tool kits and kitting out of new fleet with improved stock control is planned as part of the new managed service • High Access machine to be purchased • Joint visit of Technical Officer and Housing Officer within 28 day notice period of terminating tenancies

<p>Visit to Work Planners Office.</p>	<p>Shadowed the work planners and viewed Active H and Optimise (Total Mobile) systems</p>	<p>The Senate found that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was a lot of information on the two screens, the Work Planners were using • They recognised Active H as being the same system the CET use • They were shown how jobs were entered into Trade Operatives diaries • On occasion customers are called to update them if a Trade Operative is held up on a job. This does not always happen.
<p>Senate met with two Trade Operatives</p>	<p>General discussion took place</p>	<p>The Senate report that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both were joiners with well over 10 years' experience each • Identified need to have more accurate measuring up of Void repairs at initial assessment to reduce time wasted leaving job for additional supplies • Need new tool kits
<p>Senate called customers who have had recent repairs</p>	<p>The Senate called 30 customers and had 23 responses.</p>	<p>Seven questions were asked in relation to the repair journey from the initial report being made to final conclusion of the repair itself.</p>

7.0 Investigation supporting notes

7.1 The Senate were pleased to note that the joint visit to terminating tenancies, as highlighted by Fiona Campbell, which was a recommendation made by them in their first scrutiny investigation 'Short Term Void Re-let Times' is actively undertaken.

7.2 Customers who had recent repair works carried out were in the main extremely happy with their experience from reporting the initial repair to having the work completed.

7.3 The two final recommendations below are proposed out with the actual findings of this specific scrutiny exercise. These are based on updates from previous investigations where there were ongoing restructuring of services and teams, a new Housing Management System being implemented in stages and IT changes, all leading to slippage of timescales. The information requested here will show where there have been improvements and or Value for Money. It will also ensure the actions are regularly reviewed and the Senate informed.

8. Recommendations

The Recommendations agreed are:

	Recommendation	Reason for making this recommendation
1.	Replace Trade Operatives power tools as a priority and remind operatives that they receive an allowance for other tools. Ensure that risk assessments are in place that capture monitoring/checking of tools prior to commencing any job.	Discussions with the Trade Operatives highlighted the need for investment in tool kits which were thought not to be fit for purpose. The Senate also recognised this potentially having health and safety implications. The Senate understand that this may form part of the new managed stores service, however, consider that this should be a priority.
2.	Customer satisfaction calls to be restarted and planned to occur on a regular basis by the Customer Experience Team.	It was difficult to measure the satisfaction levels of customers who had been part of the process as this information did not exist and therefore this is why the Senate themselves decided to conduct a random survey.

		They feel that gaining this business intelligence would improve the overall customer experience in this area.
3.	Develop a process to contact customers in regards to updating them on the status of their requested repairs	<p>The Senate took the view that customers would appreciate for this to be undertaken as a matter of course and believe that it would reduce complaints in this area if they are simply told there will be a delay to their repair whether this is by 1 hour or by longer.</p> <p>The Senate would request information detailing the process of how this will be undertaken.</p>
4.	Improved communications between Work Planners and Customer Experience Team	<p>Discussions with both teams indicated that communication between them could be improved which would in turn improve the overall service to customers.</p> <p>The Senate appreciate that this is aligned to the fact that the teams are not located in the same office, however would recommend that more detailed notes are input on to the system and that a process is in place for discussions between teams regularly</p>
5.	Improve communication to Work Planners around project works being undertaken and ensure robust contract management especially in regards to what follow on works are included in the contract	Discussions with the Work Planners indicated that this was an issue and the Senate therefore recommend that the Project Team at the outset inform the Work Planners of works they are instructing. This lack of information currently causes delays, inefficiencies and a negative reputation as customers take the view that 'one hand doesn't know what the other hand is doing'.
6.	A more focussed approach to contract management	There should be more clarity around what contracts exist and who manages them to allow for officers to use approved contractors appropriately.

7.	When assessing work for Voids, ensure accurate measuring and ordering of repairs material	<p>Review and implement more robust reporting methods to increase the likelihood of having a 'first time fix'.</p> <p>They suggested careful ordering of bulk supplies whereby some stock might be end of line and therefore difficult to source at a later date when a replacement is required.</p>
8.	The Senate to pilot the new proposed customer visual diagnostic app for reporting repairs prior to launch	This would ensure that the portal has been customer tested and therefore then end product would be more user friendly.
9	Action Plan to incorporate a column to report on the actual impact to service and any savings made.	<p>In order to assist with monitoring going forward, they have requested that the action plan contains information in relation to what has actually been started and when; how is it working; how it is measured for success or failure; and if it isn't proving to be successful they want to be given the reasons why.</p> <p>The Action Plan should be worded in a customer friendly format and actions should be referred to as 'implemented' and not 'completed' to ensure that it is clear they are part of the process going forward.</p>
10	Team Leads to attend Senate meetings quarterly to update on Action Plans.	This will assist with monitoring going forward and with comments in action 9 above.

9.0 Review

9.1 The Senate will meet to discuss the Boards acceptance or rejection of any of the recommendations.

9.2 An action plan for the recommendations approved by the Board will be generated by the responsible Director and presented to the Senate.

9.3 Team Leads will be invited to the Senate meeting on a quarterly basis to report progress on their actions

9.4 The Senate will seek to attend any subsequent meetings of the Board or Performance & Services Committee during which an update of the action plan is being presented by the relevant Director.