



# Customer Voice Report Quarter 3

2023/2024

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# Executive summary

Quarter three – This report summarises where Beyond Housing has made positive changes to services following feedback from customers and the most recent and planned engagement activities.

## Enhancements to services



Several changes and enhancements have been made, including revising the repairs policy to expand on how it supports disabled and vulnerable customers, and a menu of engagement options to further support customer accessibility and understanding of how to get involved.

## Spotlight – Tenant Satisfaction Measures



The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) has introduced a standardised set of measures to assess how well social housing landlords in England are doing at providing good quality homes and services to tenants. We completed the first part of the collection of satisfaction measures in November, the main headline was overall customer satisfaction with Beyond Housing as a landlord is 68%. Read more on page 6.

## What customers are telling us



### Mould and damp:

- **Transparency:** They want a clear understanding of the process, timelines, and potential outcomes
- **Communication:** They expect regular updates, tailored to individual needs and respectful of emotional impact
- **Action:** They want a proactive approach from Beyond Housing about resolution responsibilities.

- **Major works:** They needed more communication from us about the next steps when renewing a major component in their home including kitchens, bathrooms, doors, and windows
- **Repeat repair reporting:** They needed to repeatedly report the same repair due to the repair not being actioned or actioned but without providing a lasting fix.

## What we are doing



### Mould and damp:

- **Transparency:** Reviewing the process to ensure timelines and potential outcomes are communicated to the customer
- **Communication:** Reviewing what and when we communicate to customers to make sure it meets expectations
- **Action:** Ensuring the responsibilities of Beyond Housing and customers are clearly communicated and jargon-free.
- **Major works:** Collaborating with departments across the business to ensure customer communication is embedded in the relevant processes
- **Repeat repair reporting:** We have implemented a procedure to flag multiple repair requests for the same thing.



# Celebrating great customer service

Here are some examples of the great customer service we provided in Q3:

## Timely and quality communication is important in delivering a great customer experience

Ensuring the components in our homes are serviced and when needing a repair they are repaired in a timely manner is essential. Following a recent boiler repair a customer reached out to give a 5-star review of the service they received. The standard of work carried out was excellent but what impressed the customer the most was the communication and politeness of the colleague. When needing to attain an additional part, the colleague explained the repair and the reason for needing a new part, as well as how long it would be before they returned.

This review serves as a powerful reminder that delivering exceptional service goes beyond technical expertise. Excellent communication, transparency, and a proactive approach to customer interaction can significantly elevate the customer experience and contribute to lasting positive relationships.



## A home...not a house

A customer, recently housed after being referred by the Homeless team, felt 'over the moon' with their new home and the amazing support they received from our colleagues. When it emerged that no furniture had been provided, an Income team member sprang into action, securing an advance payment for a fridge-freezer. Meanwhile, a Housing team colleague found a donated bed and sofa, saving the customer from sleeping on the floor.

This collaboration ensured the customer felt truly at home, demonstrating that a house is more than just bricks and mortar; it's a foundation for a new life, built on the bedrock of exceptional teamwork and compassion.

## Helping customers maximize their income

Recognising the importance of maximising customer income, a member of the Income team discovered a missed opportunity for a customer to receive over £75 a week more in benefit credit. A backdated benefit credit request resulted in an increase to the weekly entitlement and a backdated payment of over £7,600 that would have otherwise been missed out on.



# Customers said, we did:

Engagement with customers has influenced several changes and enhancements to our service.



## New home defect reporting

### Customers told us:

There was a lack of communication and action about defects reported when buying or renting a new build home from us.

### What we did:

We improved the reporting process to ensure defects are picked up by the contractor in a timely manner, with additional transparency to enable us to hold contractors to account if they are not delivering the service we expect. Beyond Housing's quality manager and senior project manager now hold monthly meetings with the contractor's construction manager to review defects performance.

## Kitchen layout

### Customers told us:

The layout of some of the kitchens in our new build properties was affecting how useable the kitchen is.

### What we did:

We have reviewed and amended the layout specification of our new build kitchens to make them more user friendly.

## Communicating major works

### Customers told us:

They needed more communication from us about the next steps when renewing a major component in their home, including kitchens, bathrooms, doors and windows.

### What we did:

We collaborated with departments across the business to ensure customer communication is embedded in the relevant processes, together with performance measures to ensure customer requirements are met.

## Repeated repair reporting

### Customers told us:

They needed to repeatedly report the same repair due to the repair not being actioned, or actioned but without providing a lasting fix.

### What we did:

We have implemented a procedure to flag multiple repair requests for the same thing. This triggers an investigation by our repair team leaders to identify the root cause and implement a lasting solution.

## Booking community centres

### Customers told us:

The community centre booking process needed improving as some locations were unavailable due to existing bookings that were not attended and subsequently cancelled.

### What we did:

We have implemented a waiting list so that anyone who indicates an interest is recorded on the booking sheet and contacted if a booking is cancelled.

We have also added the booking process details to our website so that it is easier for customers to make contact and the process is more transparent.

# In the spotlight

## Tenant Satisfaction Measures

In 2020, the government's social housing white paper set the stage for a new era of transparency and accountability in England's social housing sector. The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) subsequently introduced the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) in April 2023, marking a significant step towards ensuring that landlords prioritise the well-being and expectations of their tenants.

These 22 indicators delve into the heart of how we, at Beyond Housing, deliver on our promise of providing good quality homes and services. From repairs and maintenance to customer involvement and empowerment, the TSMs offer a comprehensive lens through which to assess our performance and identify areas for improvement. The TSMs are intended to provide a source of intelligence to the RSH about whether landlords are meeting regulatory standards.

### Beyond Housing's approach to collection

- To accurately gauge customer satisfaction, 12 of the 22 indicators are obtained through customer surveys
- Following consultation, surveys are conducted twice yearly in September/October and February/March.
- By gathering data bi-annually and then consolidating it, we gain a comprehensive yearly overview of customer sentiment to ensure both timely feedback and a holistic understanding of satisfaction trends over time
- The survey asks customers to rate various aspects of our services on a scale from 1 (very dissatisfied) to 5 (very satisfied), with the average score from all respondents calculating a percentage score
- The TSM survey is processed by our research partner through a mix of telephone and self-serve digital surveys
- For the other 10 indicators, these will be generated through data collection and business intelligence analysis and will be monitored throughout.

### Learning so far...

**Sector:** Across the sector, overall satisfaction continues to fall. Housemark, an independent benchmarking body within the social housing sector, reported in October 2023 that landlord's average measurement of overall levels of satisfaction has fallen from 85.1% in 2018-19 to 76% in

2022-23 and 72.3% for April-September 2023. While scores relating to repairs are lower than last year, the sector average found that only 40% of tenants believe landlords listen to customers' views.

**Beyond Housing:** We completed the first part of the collection of satisfaction measures in November and showed 68% of our customers expressed overall satisfaction with Beyond Housing. We're proud of the positive feedback we've received on aspects like work quality, respect, and providing a safe living environment. These strengths serve as a strong foundation upon which we can build.

However, we also recognise the areas where we can do better. Timely feedback, setting realistic expectations, and seamless team collaboration emerged as key areas for improvement. We firmly believe that by addressing these areas, we can elevate customer satisfaction and foster a deeper sense of trust with our customers. See the full set of mid-year TSM results in appendix 1.

### Next steps

We're committed to actively engaging all colleagues in understanding and playing their part in improving customer satisfaction and make a difference to the customer experience. The 'TSM-focused connecting colleagues sessions' held in November 2023 were just the beginning of a broader effort to equip every colleague with the tools and insights needed to contribute to an enhanced customer experience.



# Customer voice



Trust



Satisfaction

“Be clear  
in what is  
happening”

## Damp and mould

We're committed to providing safe and comfortable homes that meet the evolving needs of our customers. This winter, with colder temperatures and wetter weather on the horizon, we intensified our efforts to address potential issues with damp and mould formation.

To ensure we are meeting customers' expectations, we engaged in a comprehensive customer consultation in December. By listening directly to customers' concerns and priorities, we've identified key areas for improvement in both preventing and responding to incidents of damp and mould. This valuable feedback is the cornerstone of our proactive approach to building safer homes for everyone.

### Customers told us that there are three key elements:

**1. Transparency:** Need clear understanding of process, timelines, and potential outcomes.

**2. Communication:** Expect regular updates, tailored to individual needs and respectful of emotional impact.

**3. Action:** Proactive approach from Beyond Housing builds trust and confidence in issue resolution.

The principles of how Beyond Housing will approach the treatment of damp and mould are key to ensuring customers understand what work will be done to remedy their issues. Much like in the assessment of damp and mould, customers need to know the potential outcomes of damp and mould treatment upfront. This clarity builds trust and reduces repeat contact.

Customers want to see information on the service level agreements and associated timescales when damp and mould is being treated, with information on the approach to measuring the success of treatment, and what happens if the intended outcome of the treatment is not reached.

The Repair and Maintenance Operations team is currently reviewing damp and mould processes and practices and is in the approval process of an updated process focused on providing a proactive and effective response to reports of damp and mould.

### Let's look in more detail at what customers said...

#### 1. Greater transparency and empathy in damp and mould investigations

- **Detailed process information:** Customers require a clear understanding of the investigation process, from initial reporting to conclusion. This includes service level agreements (SLAs) and expected timelines for each stage
- **Potential outcome clarity:** Prior to the investigation, customers want insights into possible findings and implications. This helps them assess the thoroughness of the process and their level of confidence in the outcome
- **Accessibility and communication adjustments:** Customers expect information on how communication will be tailored to their needs, considering factors like preferred contact channels, disabilities, and technical knowledge
- **Respectful communication:** Given the emotional nature of damp and mould issues, customers emphasise the importance of respectful communication, especially when discussing potential causes and avoiding blame.

#### 2. Clear and timely communication

- **Proactive communication:** Customers expect transparent updates on the progress of their reported damp or mould issues. A lack of proactive communication from Beyond Housing can erode trust and confidence in the resolution process
- **Establishing two-way communication:** A defined communication method outlining how Beyond Housing will maintain consistent contact with affected customers is crucial. This plan should detail communication channels, response times, and information provided at each stage of the process.

#### 3. Establishing clear responsibilities and the treatment:

- **Shared responsibility guidelines:** Transparency regarding responsibility for damp and mould issues is important for customers. While they expect Beyond Housing to take accountability when clarity is lacking, they also recognise their role in maintaining a safe and dry home. It's important to outline both customer and Beyond Housing responsibilities in managing damp and mould issues. Customers want it clearly defined what actions fall to them, so they understand what they need to do
- **Jargon-free language:** Eliminate technical terms and opt for straightforward, unambiguous language. Phrases like 'completion of jobs' can be misinterpreted, leading to confusion and frustration.

# Sector spotlight



## Damp and mould

Damp and mould issues remain in the spotlight throughout the housing sector following the death of toddler Awaab Ishak in 2020 which was attributed to a respiratory condition caused by exposure to mould in his home.

The Housing Ombudsman continues to assess customer complaints relating to damp and mould and as recently as 18 January 2024 has made two findings of severe maladministration in a North West Housing Association's handling of a damp issue that left the customer sleeping on the floor.

The feedback from Beyond Housing customers on what they expect from the damp and mould service lines up with key findings from the Ombudsman that led to the findings of maladministration.

Richard Blakeway, Housing Ombudsman, said: "We have been clear that landlords should adopt a zero-tolerance approach to damp and mould. Effective diagnosis is critical, and the response to reports of damp and mould should be timely and reflect the urgency of the issue.

"Overall, the landlord's actions fell short of what we expect. Despite early reports of the issue, it took too long for the landlord to act, and delays could not be justified by Covid-related impacts or access issues, with all repairs not confirmed as completed until this time last year.

"Additionally, the landlord failed to act quickly to replace the resident's bed, which had been destroyed by damp, leaving him sleeping on the floor.

"Landlords should be empathetic with their residents and investigate and resolve complaints in a timely and effective way. Residents must not be left living in substandard conditions for months before a decant is considered, and any vulnerabilities of the resident must be considered.

"Our Complaint Handling Code will soon become statutory, and it is concerning that landlords are still not getting response times right or treating complaints in an informal way. Under the new powers we have received from the Social Housing Regulation Act, we will be able to proactively monitor compliance with the code which should help landlords put in practice policies that improve local complaint handling."



# Customer voice



Trust



Satisfaction

"Getting my repair completed"

## Community conversations

We believe in clean, safe, and vibrant neighbourhoods that our customers are proud to call home. We achieve this through high-quality services and close collaboration with residents, partners, and community conversations. In Q3, our Community Partnership Managers focused on supporting thriving communities through engagement initiatives.

The feedback from customers has been instrumental in shaping the new policies, procedures, and initiatives aimed at improving neighbourhoods. It has facilitated the prioritisation, creation and delivery of regeneration locality plans, fostering collaboration between key stakeholders such as local authorities, police, and community organisations.



### Brotton conversations

Working with councillors covering the Brotton area in Saltburn, it was identified that residents surrounding a large open space felt unsafe due to continued ASB, with off road bikes using the open space as a shortcut through the village. Collaboration between Beyond Housing colleagues lead to the development of neighbourhood improvements proposal, addressing the concerns of residents.

Through digital and face to face engagement with residents, with attendance of the local ward councillors, employees from Redcar Borough Council, Community Development Officers and the local Police Community Support Officer (PSCO), the plan received scrutiny and feedback. Amends were made to the plans following community conversations, with a focus on heightened security through fencing and barriers to the green space, while taking the opportunity to address issues with surrounding trees and the provision of additional lighting across the space. Ground maintenance and partnership working is underway to deliver the community improvements.

### Dormanstown conversations

In November, community conversations started in the Dormanstown, an area of focus identified through insight needing a regeneration locality plan. Customers from the local area, local councillors, and colleagues throughout the business, including damp and mould, repairs, housing and employability, attended a drop-in session to discuss and collaborate to identify opportunities to improve the community.

Opportunities were identified to address issues with open spaces and alleyways which facilitated incidents of ASB, issue with fly-tipping and repurposing of the playpark to incorporate more facilities for older children. As well as identifying opportunities for community improvements, customers who attended the drop-in session used the time to access Beyond Housing colleagues to seek support and advice on affordability and finances, cost of living support, benefit advice and legal advice, and prevention of damp and mould in their home.

Following the drop-in session, partnership work has continued, and the customer feedback will be used at a future partnership event, where we will showcase our locality plan.

# Customer engagement – The year so far

## October

### Concerns, Complaints and Compliments Policy

We consulted with customers to gather feedback on the policy content and adherence to commitments. The feedback will inform policy revisions.

### Church Lane North, Grangetown – Estate walkabout

We held an estate walkabout in partnership with the East Cleveland Police and local residents to identify opportunities to reduce anti-social behaviour on the estate.

### Feet on the street

Ward councillors and senior leaders joined housing colleagues on estate walkabouts, where they engaged with customers and responded to their questions.

### Dormanstown and Redcar area – Neighbourhood walkaround

Members of Beyond Housing's Executive team, the director of property and commercial operations, and colleagues from the Housing team met with the local ward councillor on the estates to review opportunities to address reoccurring maintenance issues. Opportunities identified will feed into the creation of the localised action plan.

### Communal space painting options

We surveyed customers to understand their preferred colour palette before starting the redecoration of their communal areas. We selected the colour palette with the highest number of votes.

### Consumer Standards consultation

Beyond Housing customers were invited to provide their views on the Regulator for Social Housing's proposed new standards.

### Chestnut Grove, Brotton – Open space consultation

Based on customer and community feedback about increased anti-social behaviour, we collaborated with customers and partners to review and revise the proposed plans for improving open and garden spaces to reduce anti-social behaviour.

### Beech Walk, Eastfields – Green space consultation

A large area of green space was highlighted by residents via their local councillor regarding ground maintenance and improvements for community use. A number of options have been proposed and a wider customer consultation will take place.

### Seaton Close, Whitby – Parking consultation

Housing officers visited local residents to discuss parking concerns and opportunities for improvement.

### Greengates mural project

Customers in the Kirkleatham area engaged in a project designed to deter graffiti by providing a mural in the area. Initial feedback has been positive and the project has moved into the planning phase.

### Church Lane North community clean up

A community clean up providing an opportunity for customers to dispose of their unwanted items and waste with 61 bags of rubbish being collected, together with areas of fly tipping being cleared.

### Church Lane North residents drop in

A regular drop in for customers in the Church Lane North area to discuss the ongoing regeneration project, works on their homes and to provide community feedback.

## November

### Rent setting consultation

We consulted with customers on the expected rent increase in April. The consultation took place via a digital and postal survey. Alongside the survey, customers were directed to the Beyond Housing website where they could find additional information on how the rent is set and options for additional support.

### Digital services customer consultation

We engaged with customers to learn about their satisfaction with our digital services and to understand their needs and expectations for an online portal. We will conduct several digital research campaigns over the next couple of months.

### Dormanstown, Redcar – Neighbourhood investment consultation

To support the development of the locality plan for the Dormanstown area, we consulted with customers to identify investment opportunities and prioritise them.

### Feet on the street

Beyond Housing colleagues completed estate walkabouts, engaging with customers and responding to their questions.

### Neighbourhood investment consultation

A neighbourhood investment consultation took place in Dormanstown to understand customers' needs. This was followed up by a drop in event, offering customers direct access to services.

### Dovedale heating consultation

A heating consultation took place with Dovedale residents to understand their needs with regards to communal heating within a multi-occupancy flat.

## December

### Damp and mould policy review

We asked customers to provide feedback on the content of the new Damp & Mould Policy to help shape revisions to the policy.

### Church Lane North customer liaison

Home visits and estate walk conducted by the project team to chat with customers who had raised issues on the Church Lane North community group on Facebook. Works identified have been raised, with some being resolved the day after customer engagement.

### Digital service offer engagement

Customers provided feedback on what they want and expect from Beyond Housing's digital service. Insight from this engagement is to be shared at an upcoming customer summit to validate the findings and to inform the digital service offer requirements.



# Customer engagement – What's coming

## February

### **Feet on the street:**

Beyond Housing colleagues will complete estate walkabouts, engaging with customers and responding to their questions.

### **Tenant satisfaction measures:**

Following on from the first round of TSM collection data in October 2023, the second round of data collection will commence.

### **Leasehold management policy review:**

Customers will be asked to provide feedback on the content of the policy and their existing experience. Customer feedback will help shape revisions to the policy.

### **Church Lane North, Grangetown – End of regeneration event:**

This engagement provides an opportunity to involve customers in the content and format of the proposed end of regeneration event.

### **Leasehold management booklet review:**

Leaseholders will be invited to provide feedback on the newly revised leasehold management guidance booklet.

## March

### **Church Lane North, Grangetown – Residents Drop In:**

Beyond Housing will provide another opportunity for customers in the Church Lane North area to engage to discuss the ongoing regeneration work in the area. The drop in will provide an opportunity to discuss any issues with their specific homes and wider feedback on the regeneration of the area.

### **Church Lane North, Grangetown – Open space project:**

Following on from consultation earlier in the year, residents will be given the opportunity to discuss updates on the open space enhancements and the regeneration.

### **Customer summit:**

This year's customer summit will bring together customers and colleagues to discuss opportunities for digital services.

### **Customer scrutiny:**

Building on the collaboration with Tpas in developing Beyond Housing's new approach to customer engagement, we will launch our new scrutiny approach. The new scrutiny approach will focus on two key service areas: Neighbourhood management and asset/property management.



## APPENDIX

# Tenant satisfaction measures

TSM ref	Question	21/22	22/23	23/24
TP01	Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service provided by Beyond Housing?	65%	66%	68%
TP02	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the overall repairs service from Beyond Housing over the last 12 months?	61%	64%	72%
TP03	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the time taken to complete your most recent repair after you reported it?	64%	63%	64%
TP04	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Beyond Housing provides a home that is well maintained?	65%	65%	69%
TP05	Thinking about the condition of the property or building you live in, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Beyond Housing provides a home that is safe?	73%	71%	74%
TP06	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Beyond Housing listens to your views and acts upon them?	47%	48%	56%
TP07	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Beyond Housing keeps you informed about things that matter to you?	56%	54%	61%
TP08	To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following "Beyond Housing treats me fairly and with respect"?	58%	62%	71%
Addition	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Beyond Housing is easy to deal with?	67%	67%	65%
Addition	How strongly would you agree or disagree with the following statement, "I trust Beyond Housing to do what they say they will do"?	59%	54%	53%
TP09	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Beyond Housing's approach to complaints handling?	17%	25%	30%
Addition	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the outcome of your complaint?	22%	25%	35%
TP10	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Beyond Housing keeps these communal areas clean and well maintained?	53%	54%	44%
TP11	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Beyond Housing makes a positive contribution to your neighbourhood?	36%	41%	52%
TP12	How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Beyond Housing's approach to anti-social behaviour?	22%	39%	53%

\*23/24 TSM scores are based on the mid-point collection. (collection 1 (sept-oct) and collection 2 (Feb-March) will be combined to create an overall score for the year)

\*\* Previous year's scores and questions have been mapped to the most relevant TSM question to allow a comparison of customer perception and satisfaction levels.

\*\*\* Where the TSM ref equals 'Addition', these questions are asked as part of the collection but are not questions set by the RSH

