

# Voice Newsletter

## Short Notice Inspection Action Plan Survey Feedback

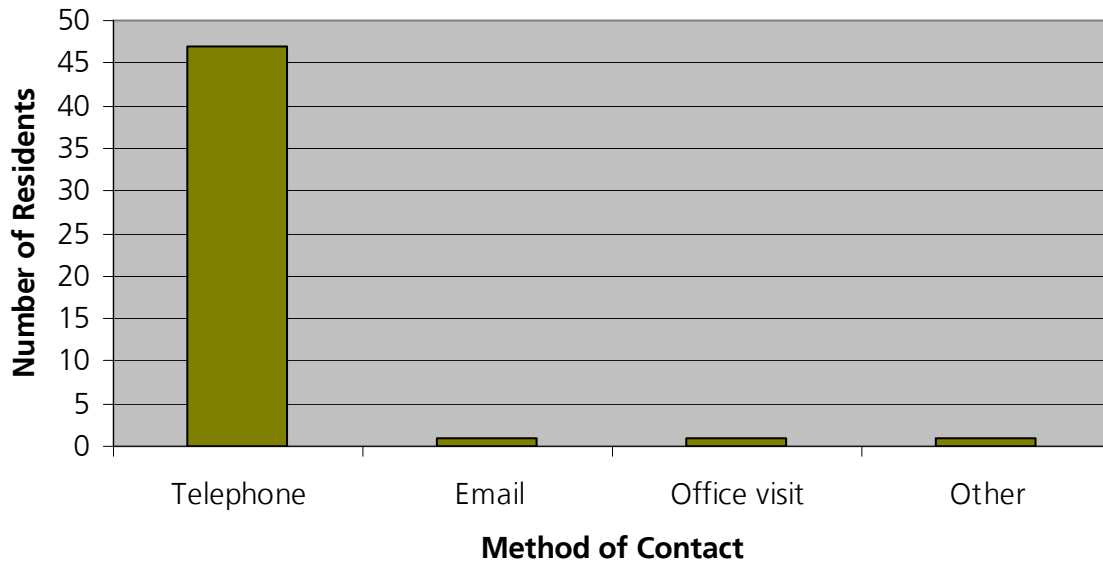
September 2009

An extra big thank you to all of you who returned the Voice survey on the Short Notice Inspection Action Plan. We received a total of 87 completed surveys.

# You Told Us...

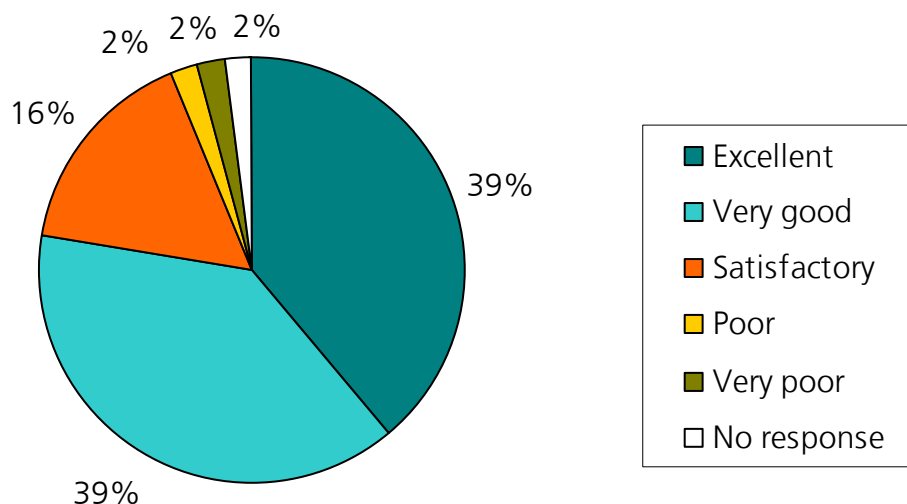
**49 residents (56%)** told us they had contacted us for any reason within the last 3 months.

The methods these residents used to contact us can be seen in the chart below:



We aim to handle all customer enquiries on a “right first time” basis. The majority of residents (**33/67%**) told us the last time they contacted us, their query was dealt with the first time they contacted us. **11 residents (22%)** said they had to contact us 2 times and **2 residents (4%)** said they had to contact us 3 times before their query was resolved.

When considering any contact residents have had with us recently, residents rated their experience as follows:



When asked ‘what can we do to improve our service when customers contact us, or what do you think makes excellent customer service?’ residents made the following comments:

- “Well thought out forward planning. Good clear advice. Prompt repairs and right first time.”
- “When we telephone and are told someone will ring back, the time we have to wait could be improved.”
- “To make an appointment that suits the individual.”

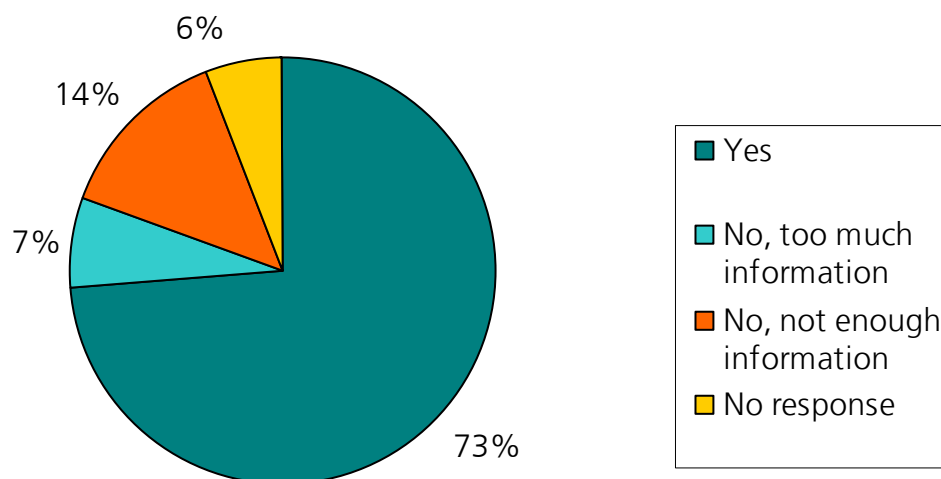
# You Told Us Continued...

- “Friendly, helpful staff and text confirmation of appointments along with polite informative contractors make WPS outstanding. No complaints with dealing with First Wessex! Keep it up!”
- “To be treated politely and efficiently, no matter what the query. Train staff to be able to answer most questions instead of having to pass to another colleague.”

**8 residents (9%)** told us either they or someone they know experience difficulties accessing our services, for example as the result of a disability. When asked what the problem is and what we can do to make accessing our services easier, these residents made the following comments:

- “I have trouble getting about so my daughter has to help with any problems.”
- “My health is not 100%, although I try to carry on a normal life, my health condition, Chronic Fatigue, means I am unable to complete arduous tasks like decorating, etc. It would be helpful to have assistance/ practical help.”

**Do you think you receive enough information about our performance, for example how we have learnt from customer complaints or how we are performing against our Service Standards?**



56 residents suggested receiving information about our performance via our residents magazine, Talking Tenants. Some of the other suggestions residents made for how they would like to receive performance information include:

- On display in reception.
- On our websites.
- On local communal notice boards.
- Via email.

When asked ‘What performance information about Atlantic would you be particularly interested in receiving from us?’ residents made the following comments:

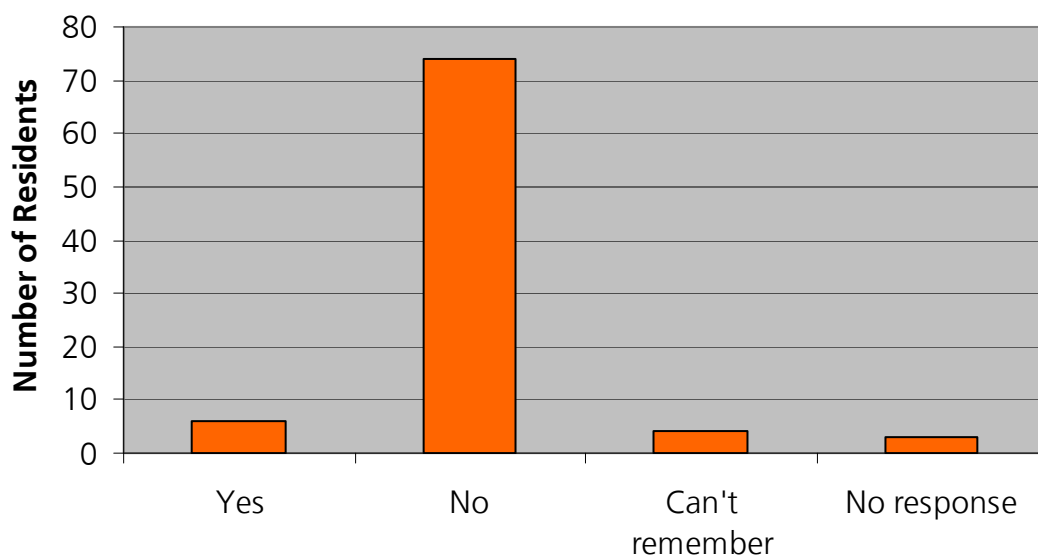
- “How you are addressing the issues raised (show improvement in performance as a percentage). The number of repairs carried out - broken down into categories, i.e. plumbing, painting.”
- “About stock turn around, people I know have been on waiting list for years and are still waiting, while others seem to jump straight into a home.”
- “Times of work carried out on time, i.e. cleaning and gardening to time and job done to good standard.”
- “Performance against Service Standards.”

# You Told Us Continued...

We will soon be updating our Customer Handbook. Some of the suggestions residents made for information they would like to see in the handbook and what style they would prefer are listed below:

- "I have found the tenants handbook quite easy to use. I would prefer it not to be so bulky and heavy - more slim line if possible. Difficulty for people with arthritis to manage I think."
- "More info about when tenants are entitled to home improvements. Our kitchen is a mess, but we have never been able to get anything done, where do we go from here?"
- "Exactly what repairs you are responsible for. Too many times you make a phone call about a repair to WPS, only to be told 'we don't do that'."
- "As long as the text is in plain English with perhaps images to help tenants for whom English is not their first language. The present handbook as a base is good."
- "More images - smaller ones on each page. At the moment it's a bit unbalanced - big blocks of writing for a few pages, then a few graphics and other sections with lots of graphics. (Tenant Participation competition - views of our estates - get the tenants photographs about life on our estates.)"
- "All phone numbers to do with being a tenant - complaints, house and garden affected numbers."

## Have you ever used the Atlantic website ([www.atlantichousing.co.uk](http://www.atlantichousing.co.uk))?



Some of the suggestions residents made for how we can improve our website for customers, and what information/ services they would like to access online are listed below:

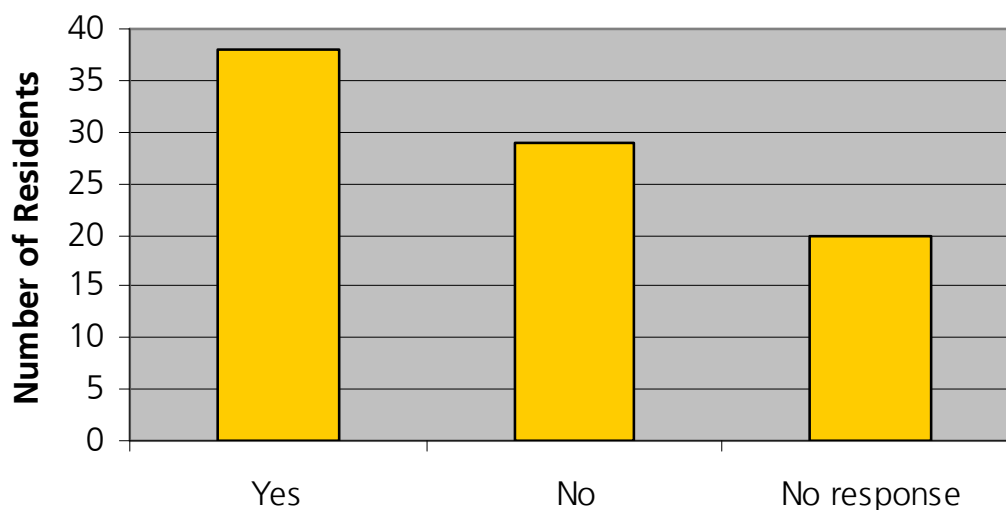
- "The size of the fonts could be bigger."
- "I would like to see at the end of the site short interview process - quotes from tenants on different aspects of estate management - works you've carried out, community projects, photos, what your tenants like about their community."
- "Booking repairs online."
- "Mutual exchange info and properties available."
- "Where association houses are located, where they will be built in near future, how waiting list works, about buying association houses, how ASB is dealt with, activities organised by HA."

# You Told Us Continued...

Some of the suggestions residents made for information they would like to see available on local communal notice boards include the following:

- "Local community events and activities."
- "Details of how to contact warden, i.e. phone numbers. Where to find the stopcock to get water to flat turned off if needed."
- "Addresses, phone numbers, email addresses of important links to Atlantic departments."
- "Information about exchanges."
- "Repairs programme if one coming up. Housing for rent."

**Do you feel you are able to influence local services to customers, decision making and priorities through becoming involved with us as your landlord?**



We aim to provide an excellent service for our customers. Some of the suggestions residents made for things we can do to improve other service areas include the following:

- "More information regarding decorating indoors."
- "Pay more visits to area and inform people to keep to the rules that are laid out like parking on grass verges where they are making holes in the grass."
- "To keep tenants informed as much as possible."
- "Explain how you are dealing with complaints."
- "Financial errors and significant alterations to rent has been frustrating."
- "The auto phone call after you report a repair, what about a phone call the morning of the visit?"
- "Improve the shrub borders around property, brambles, tress, seedlings, etc, including weed grown everywhere. Brambles are dangerous growing out over path, people can be scratched badly! Place notice boards in communal areas lower as we get older, we get shorter and cannot read if notices are high up."

# What We Will Do With The Results...

First, a big thank you to everyone who participated. Your feedback was enormously helpful in writing our Short Notice Inspection (SNI) improvement plan, which is now part of our annual operating plan for 2009-10. This sets out all of the major improvement activities that we aim to achieve this year.

We also would like to apologise for the delay in updating you on our actions and how you have influenced our services. We're sure you can imagine we received a lot of feedback, and about a wide range of service areas, and while we've been considering each suggestion and whether it was possible to include it on our plans for this year we've also had to respond to the Audit Commission regarding the SNI, develop a strong operating plan, and start to actually deliver improvements in addition to ongoing services.

We're very pleased to say that the Audit Commission judged Pavilion as having "Promising Prospects for Improvement", a decision that reflects on the whole Group, so we're all now determined to make sure we make the improvements we have committed to, and that our residents see the positive outcomes of this.

## Your Feedback

### Contacting Us

It is a concern for us that 26% of customers told us they had to call back in order to have their issue or query resolved as we aim to provide a "Right First Time" service and have Service Standards that tell staff when they should get back to customers if an answer can't be provided right away. We need to monitor the service you receive when you call us, to ensure that we are providing a good service and meeting your needs. As a result of your feedback we are introducing new satisfaction surveys for call handling that should tell us how good the service you receive is and monitor trends. We need honest feedback from customers if we are to make improvements, and we'll develop action plans to put right any issues. It is reassuring that only 4% of customers feel they have recently received a poor service after contacting us, however we will monitor satisfaction regularly to make sure that things are always getting better.

### Performance and Information

We have taken on board your comments about reporting performance to customers, and have already made a number of changes with additional improvements planned:

#### In reception and on communal notice boards

You should see some noticeable improvements to the information we display on communal notice boards, including contact lists, estate inspection schedules, estate inspections results, and other useful local information. Of course if there is anything missing from your local notice board, or you have any suggestions, please do contact us to let us know. You should also see an increase in information in our receptions including leaflets and performance information.

#### On our website

Unfortunately we can't make changes to the structure and functionality of our websites at the moment as we have some formatting restrictions and changes would be very expensive; we are going to review this for future budgeting decisions. We can, however, improve a lot of the information that is available on the websites. Some of the improvements already made as a result of resident feedback include:

- Updating the "Contact Us" pages with better staff details

# What We Will Do With The Results Continued...

- Adding a Customer Feedback page so that you can report complaints, compliments and suggestions by completing a form online.
- Adding an "Anti-Social Behaviour" page under "Contact Us", telling you how you can report incidents online.
- Improving our Publications Library – you can now access leaflets, Talking Tenants and (a new addition) summaries of our policies. The list of policies available will be added to once new Group ones are approved and adopted. If the one you're looking for isn't there yet please bear with us – Customer Services are always willing to advise you.

More improvements are planned, and we always welcome suggestions from customers about what could be improved. We hope that when improving the functionality of the websites is budgeted on a future Operating Plan, you will see some real differences to the website including some other suggestions you have made.

## In Talking Tenants

In the Autumn edition of Talking Tenants you will find our Local Performance Plan, detailing our performance over the past year. From the Winter edition you will see a new and improved approach to performance reporting as we dedicate 2 pages to updating you on key areas you have asked for information on, including repairs, lettings, customer service, estate inspections, welfare and benefits, customer feedback, Anti-Social Behaviour and customer satisfaction.

You've also told us you want to know what we're doing about complaints, so look out for a regular feature on Lessons Learnt where we will tell you how your feedback is helping us to improve services.

From Autumn 2009 Talking Tenants will also have a new look! As part of our rebranding project the magazine has been redesigned. It will also include more pages, giving us more opportunity to provide you with the information you want to see including community stories, key events, pictures of completed planned maintenance works, and important updates plus feature articles that you've asked for – plus jargon busters to help understanding. We hope you like your new and improved magazine!

## Customer Handbook

As a result of the Audit Commission's SNI recommendations, and customer consultation adding to the Operating Plan 2009-10 we have decided to postpone redesigning our Customer Handbook in order to focus on residents' other priorities. We will keep all of the comments you made about this and use the feedback to help design it later. We hope that more customers will be involved in creating it, so watch this space!

## Influencing Services

Although the majority of customers feel they are able to influence local services, decision making and priorities through becoming involved, 33% of customers feel they are not. It is obvious we need to increase resident awareness, and confidence in us, so we'll be promoting resident involvement activities as much as we can. We also recognize that we need to tell you when we've made the changes you ask for, and to explain why if there's anything we can't do.

# What We Will Do With The Results Continued...

## Our Improvement Plan

Some key additional activities on the improvement plan as a result of the consultation include:

- Writing new Service Standards with customers (in progress)
- Shortening the automated telephone greeting message (completed)
- Reviewing the estate inspection process with customers (in progress)
- Developing estate standards with customers (in progress)
- Revising and improving satisfaction surveys (in progress)
- Improving the WPS appointments system (in progress)

Also look out for our new branding being put in place, including new signs, uniforms, ID badges and leaflets.

Some customers also asked if we could provide an assisted gardening service for elderly or vulnerable customers; this requires extra funding, and unfortunately some other major applications for additional funding had to take priority this year. We will however continue to work with local voluntary organizations to arrange this service for customers wherever possible.

Customers have also told us you'd like to see a number of improvements that we already have in place! It's clear that we need to promote these better so that customers are aware, and we'll be finding ways to improve communication. These include:

- Increasing text size on the website – there is a "Text Size" button on the websites so you can make the text size as large as you need it to be.
- Booking repairs online – just click on "Report a Repair" on the website

Thank you again. We genuinely value your feedback; without it we're unable to make the improvements that are important to you, and while we can't always do everything you ask for we hope that you see the benefits when we can.

## Prize Draw Winner Congratulations!

...to our Voice prize draw winner **Alexander Maunder** from Hedge End, who won £50 in High Street Gift Vouchers for completing the Short Notice Inspection Action Plan Survey.

