

Summary report

Review period July – October 2018

Caretaking Standards review

Welcome to our seventh review. The Scrutiny Panel explores, examines and tests Phoenix services on behalf of residents. We make recommendations to improve services and satisfaction. For this review, we investigated caretaking standards and service delivery.

How we carried out the review

We started with desk-based research, looking at caretaking and inspection standards, performance and benchmarking data, cost calculations, and satisfaction survey results. We also looked at enquiries and complaints received for the service between July 2017-June 2018.

We toured the Ambleside estate and Nayland House with the estates management team to see how the caretaking service works in practice. The team explained how they inspect the quality of the service. We looked at the main storeroom and mobile caretaking van to find out what tools and supplies the caretakers use.

We conducted interviews with the Principle Estates Services Manager, Estates Services Manager and two Caretakers.

The scope for the review was to investigate:

- whether the service delivers value for money, provides necessary services and meets the quality standards which have been set.



To measure the success of the review we hoped to:

- understand areas of responsibility, timing and frequency of services, allocation of resources and inspections
- ensure staff have the training, tools and supplies needed
- confirm the service meets the value for money standard.

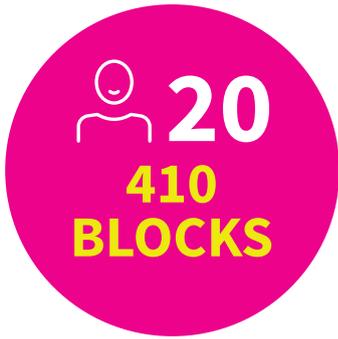
Meet the panel

The panel was formed in 2014 and is made up of four members.

Join us!

There are still vacancies for Phoenix residents to join the panel. If you'd like to help put Phoenix under the microscope and improve services and satisfaction, please get in touch.



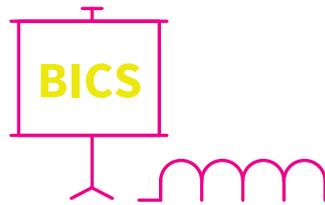


The Caretaking team is made up of 20 caretakers, including two senior caretakers. They are responsible for roughly 410 blocks. The team are supported by two managers, who also carry out inspections of 300 blocks every month to ensure standards are high.



A previous timing exercise, which said that 30 minutes is required to clean a block of four flats, is outdated and no longer relevant to current working practices.

The PeopleSafe device currently provided for lone workers may not work effectively and does not provide a sense of security for all staff.



Industry accredited training from the British Institute of Cleaning Science (BICS) will soon be brought in house and existing training is ongoing and consistent.



We were impressed by how well the team works together, the strong management support and continual service improvements. They are already looking at ways to improve the service and reduce costs to increase value for money.



Supplies and tools seen in the van and storeroom were more than adequate. There is a stock control system and bulk ordering to help keep costs down.

Resident satisfaction!



84.5%

In a telephone satisfaction survey conducted between April and June 2018, 84.5% of the 262 residents contacted were fairly or very satisfied with their caretaker's overall performance in terms of their attitude, treatment and care of the communal areas.

From July 2017 to June 2018, caretaking represented 6% of complaints and 10% of compliments across Phoenix.

When interviewing ...we noted



Caretaker, Nathan Bigland

The service also operates on weekends and bank holidays from 8am-12pm for checks and spot cleaning. Caretakers work weekends on a rotation.

Caretaker, Siphon Ngwenya

There are four mobile caretakers who travel between blocks which are spread out. Their tools and supplies are stocked in the van as mobile blocks don't have any storage sheds.

Estates Services Manager, James Peters

The team meets monthly to look at things like health and safety concerns, standards, staffing and service changes. They've recently started using a new app to electronically record fire checks, increasing efficiency.

Principle Estates Services Manager, Karen Ward

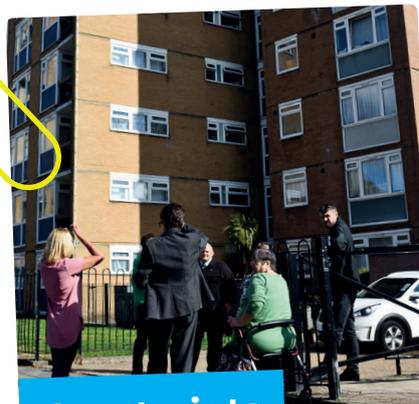
The service is reviewed and changes are made on an ongoing basis. This is in response to resident enquiries and to improve services and increase value for money. For example, new tasks are introduced into the workload and caretakers' patches are adjusted for the best coverage of the blocks. To keep costs down, managers avoid using agency staff and will be re-tendering contracts for caretaking supplies.

Our top five



At the end of our review in October, we made ten recommendations which can be viewed in our full report. These are our top five:

- 1** Ensure Phoenix meets its duty of care to staff by providing an effective system to ensure the health and safety of lone workers.
- 2** Publish the inspection standards and results on the estates so residents understand what is expected and how the service in their block is performing.
- 3** Review the timing required for each type of block so it is relevant and can be used consistently by all caretakers.
- 4** Review the provision of waste bins and dog waste bag dispensers.
- 5** Consider the purchase of long-reach poles to allow caretakers to clean higher windows.



Constraints

- The review of services for different types of blocks was based on a tour of only two of approximately 410 blocks.
- Understanding of the experience and perspective of frontline staff was limited to two caretaker interviews.

What we've learnt

- The estate tour showed a wide variety in the types of blocks that caretakers are responsible for across Phoenix estates.
- Caretakers have a lot of area to cover considering the size of the blocks and their responsibilities.
- Residents have different expectations, aspirations and levels of interest in their communal areas and green spaces.

1

Traffic light monitoring

To make sure that services are improved for residents, we monitor recommendations from our previous reviews to track when actions have been completed.

21

30

We use a traffic light system to help us:

9 not started

- red (delayed)
- amber (in progress)
- green (completed)

Phoenix and regulatory standards

At the core of every scrutiny review, we look to improve services for all residents in line with the Phoenix Standards and regulatory code set out by the Regulator of Social Housing.

In this review, we found that the Caretaking team keeps the promises made under Phoenix Standard 5 (Neighbourhood and Community) while meeting the Regulator's Value for Money Standard.



The Phoenix Standards are available on the Phoenix website. If you require a hard copy, please get in touch with Phoenix.

What's next

- Complete our review of the garden scheme which we started in August.
- Follow the progress of recommendations from past reviews.
- Continue our recruitment campaign to increase panel membership.



More info

This is a summary version of our report. If you'd like to read the full report, please call 0800 0285 700 or visit the Phoenix website.

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