

## Summary report

Review period July 2016 – November 2016

# Complaints review

Welcome to our fourth review. The role of the Scrutiny Panel is to check the processes that are in place on behalf of other residents and if Phoenix is meeting the standards. For this report we chose to explore the way that Phoenix responds to and learns from complaints. Generally, complaint numbers have decreased year on year, and we wanted to check that the Phoenix standards are being upheld for residents. The scope of our review was:

“To investigate how learning from complaints is used to shape policy, procedures and service improvements.”



### To measure the success of our review, we hoped to find that:

- Evidence is in place to demonstrate how learning is identified from resident complaints.
- Evidence is in place to demonstrate how the learning is implemented to shape policy, procedures and service improvements.
- Recommendations are made if needed about how Phoenix can improve learning from complaints.

## How we carried out the review

Our review began in July by requesting key documents to carry out an initial desktop review. We looked at existing procedures and policies including the Phoenix standards and researched how other housing associations dealt with complaints.

After reviewing the documents, we interviewed the Customer Resolution Team and teams that handle the majority of complaints. We then assessed how each team approached learning from complaints, to improve their performance.

### During the interviews, we discussed:

- different ways that complaints could be made by residents
- how complaints were recorded
- the most common complaint types
- how complaints are managed within their team
- how learning was identified and implemented
- operational improvements to increase learning outcomes from complaints



Staff receive regular training on general letter writing, but do not receive specific training on handling a complaint.

We discovered that complaints are not always logged when reported face to face, which means residents may have to wait longer for a resolution. We found that this is due to a system not being in place to track or pull together all communication methods, which does not comply with the Phoenix standards.

The decrease in complaints year on year could be partially due to a reduction in complaints about the decent homes programme of work as this is now completed. Another reason could be due to the complaint not being logged correctly or being logged at all as residents are asked to make the complaint by email and may not have internet access.



When a repair is required following an inspection there can be delays in the repair being logged in the system.

**“We discovered that complaints are not always logged when reported face to face, which means residents may have to wait longer for a resolution.”**

## Learning from complaints



Residents are advised to make a complaint by email, which is not in line with the Phoenix standards. Residents should be able to make a complaint in person, by email, by telephone or in writing to ensure the service is fully accessible.

Producing learning outcomes from complaints to improve performance is inconsistent across the departments. Some departments show positive learning outcomes. Others are resolving complaints but are not producing learning outcomes.

### Resident satisfaction

Although the complaints service does not currently monitor resident satisfaction with complaint handling, plans are in place to monitor satisfaction by telephone.

## Meet the panel

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



Eileen  
Davies



Akon  
Kindozoun



Sandra  
Stephenson



Komi  
Noudoukou



Karen  
Stokes

## 5

### Our top five

At the end of our review in November, we made 18 recommendations which can be viewed in our full report. These are our top five:

- 1** Review the Complaints policy and procedure and train staff on the revised versions.
- 2** Following an inspection information should be produced for residents explaining the inspection process and repair timescales.
- 3** Evidence of learning outcomes. From those we sampled, it was unclear whether the actions identified had actually been implemented.
- 4** Consider holding monthly meetings with a member of the Customer Resolution Team to review learning outcomes for every complaint.
- 5** Improve communication methods by logging complaints when reported face to face and tracking them.



### What we've learnt

The information that is being given to residents to make a complaint is not in line with the Phoenix standards and limits how residents are able to make a complaint.

Departments are operating independently and are not discussing the problems with each other.



Simon Barlow  
(observer)

### Join us

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

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

11

We use a traffic light system to help us:

17

11 not started

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

18

There were 18 recommendations in our full report. Some of these have been combined on our action plan tracker to form 11 actions.

## Other activities



### July 2016

We hosted a coffee morning for Hexagon Housing Repairs Scrutiny Group who wanted to find more about how we work. The coffee morning was an opportunity to network with another association, meet other residents, exchange ideas and discuss approaches to scrutiny.

### September 2016

Panel member Karen Stokes spoke at a Scrutiny Live session at the House of Lords, alongside two other tenants from SOHA and Kensington and Chelsea TMO. Karen questioned a panel of Lords and Chief Executives about stereotyping of social housing tenants.

## What's next

Our next review will be on the Handy person Service.



More info

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

Get in touch

W [www.phoenixch.org.uk](http://www.phoenixch.org.uk)  
T 0800 0285 700  
E [info@phoenixch.org.uk](mailto:info@phoenixch.org.uk)  
@phoenixtogether  
The Green Man, 355 Bromley Road, London SE6 2RP

