

Resident Scrutiny Panel

We are an independent body of residents, working with staff to check, challenge and help improve Phoenix's service delivery and performance.



OUT OF HOURS EMERGENCY SERVICE

Summary report to Phoenix Board, September 2015

What is the out of hours emergency service?

Any calls made to Phoenix on weekends, bank holidays or between 5pm-8am weekdays are directed to an external company. They process these calls and take immediate action when needed.

1. What we wanted to cover in this review

The scope of this review was:

- Find out more about the out of hours emergency service
- Identify any value for money savings
- Review how resident satisfaction is monitored
- Review communications to all residents about the out of hours service.

2. Our key findings

- The external company charges Phoenix £8.50 per incoming call
- When operatives attend an emergency repair it is to "make safe only" until a full repair can be carried out
- Residents do not receive satisfaction surveys after an out of hours emergency repair is completed.

3. Our recommendations

- Strengthen our partnership with the external provider by reviewing telephone scripts, manuals and holding regular meetings
- For complex out of hours emergency calls, the external provider should contact the Phoenix Repairs Service supervisor who can assess the severity of the repair and put in place temporary solutions
- Include residents who have used the out of hours emergency service in telephone satisfaction surveys
- Let residents know about the service when we first meet them, as well as in our publications and online.

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.



What we did

We requested key documents including benchmarking information. We also met with Phoenix staff and visited the external company to:

- Meet the team and view operations
- Understand how staff learn from complaints
- Understand how Phoenix deals with major incidents such as flood and fire.

What we discovered

In addition to our key findings we found that:

- In 2014-15, 1,885 households made calls to the out of hours emergency service
- 16 out of 62 repair complaints made to Phoenix related to the out of hours emergency service
- A rota or 'on-call' system is not in place for key Phoenix staff. The Caretaking Manager responds to most out of hours emergencies for housing related issues such as flooding to property, fire damage and access to loft spaces.

Limitations of our review

- The contract with the external provider is new and was signed in April 2015 as part of the Phoenix Repairs Service. (It was previously managed by the repairs contractor Willmott Dixon)
- It was too early to assess if the out of hours emergency service should be brought fully in-house or out-sourced to another contractor.

Lessons learnt

- Before the review, the panel did not know that an external company was responsible for managing the calls for the out of hours emergency service
- The panel understand more about the residents who use the service. Members assumed that the residents accessing the service would have been older residents but the highest number of orders raised were for female callers, aged 25-34 and living in single parent households.

What's next

If you have a suggestion for a service area that you think needs to be scrutinised, please let us know!

Join us!

There are still vacancies for Phoenix residents and leaseholders to join us. If you'd like to help put Phoenix under the microscope and improve services, please get in touch! scrutiny@phoenixch.org.uk

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