



RENFREWSHIRE TENANT SCRUTINY PANEL

CUSTOMER SERVICES REPORT {January 2016}

Acknowledgements

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel would like to thank the following people for their help and support in putting together this report.

- The thirty two tenants who gave of their time to complete customer surveys with the TSP at Renfrewshire House, Renfrew neighbourhood office and Johnstone Town Hall.
- Alasdair Miller, Douglas Morrison and Paul MacLean
- The council staff whom we shadowed and those we interviewed.
- Lorraine McLaren our independent advisor.

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1. Introductions

Following the introduction of the Scottish Social Housing Charter, tenant-led scrutiny is now a key aspect of external appraisal to landlords regarding the delivery of housing services.

Renfrewshire Council was an early adopter of tenant-led scrutiny and Renfrewshire Tenant Scrutiny Panel was set up in 2013.

Currently the TSP is made up of the following tenants

Chris Gilzean { Chair }

Margaret Dymond { Vice-chair }

Pauline Trevarthen

Gordon Lethorn

Mary Logan

The Tenant Scrutiny Panel is independent of housing, and supported by the Consultation Officer, it will

- Scrutinise housing's landlord services only
- Look at high level long term service planning
- Monitor performance
- Challenge Weakness
- Undertake one off in depth examination of specific service aspects
- Prioritise work on services which show low tenant satisfaction

2. Why we selected Customer Services

-2.1 It was on a short list of four topics regarding housing that the Tenant Scrutiny Panel drew up between them and Customer Services was at the top of the list. We were keen to assess the day to day communication between the Council and its tenants.

-2.2 Having drawn up our short list we gave a copy to the Tenant Consultation Officer and asked him to enquire of the Council, if there was any particular topic of the four the TSP had chosen, that they would have liked us to look at. The response was Customer Services which was in line with our own thinking.

3. Our Approach

-3.1 We aim to conduct short sharp reviews wherever possible, that offer the landlord constructive challenge. We aim to minimise the cost both to the landlord in terms of supporting the review process, while also taking into account the capacity of the volunteer Tenant Scrutiny Panel membership. This is the second review undertaken by the Panel and we were assisted, when requested, by an independent advisor.

-3.2 We designed a Customer Services questionnaire and the TSP engaged directly with fellow tenants at Renfrewshire House, Renfrew neighbourhood office and at Johnstone Town Hall. The TSP also designed posters and leaflets for display at these venues, so that tenants using Customer Services on these premises knew who the TSP were and why they were there.

-3.3 We undertook a review of the Council's website looking how quickly information and advice could be accessed on a variety of housing subjects. We also took into account the relevance of the information available. The list of subjects was drawn up by the TSP and their independent advisor.

-3.4 The TSP spent a day at the Contact Centre at Renfrewshire, with members each paired with an operator to listen in on calls concerning housing issues, repairs, rent, etc..

-3.5 We conducted interviews with staff from the relevant departments.

4. Our Findings

Neighbourhood Offices: Customer surveys were carried out at Renfrewshire House, Renfrew neighbourhood office and Johnstone Town Hall on the following dates and times.

Renfrewshire House – Tuesday 10th February 2015 9am-1pm

Tuesday 17th February 2015 2pm-5.45pm

Wednesday 25th February 2015 10.30am-3.30pm

Renfrew neighbourhood office – Wednesday 18th February 10am-3pm

Johnstone Town Hall – Wednesday 29th April 2015 10.00am-3.30pm

Overall the customer satisfaction ratings was good. Staff were deemed to be helpful and even people with problems, some of them long running, blamed the system and not the staff who were dealing with them. Of the 32 customer survey questionnaires completed, 24 had a good satisfaction rating and the other 8 were fair.

Housing issues given by tenants for attending either of the three surveyed venues were;

10 – Housing Benefit

9 – Application and Terminations of Tenancy

8 – Rent Payments and Rebates

1 – Repair { Boiler Breakdown }

1 – Garden Maintenance { Can Council Cut Grass }

1 – Notification of Tenant's death

1 – Reference for Private Landlord - £12 fee to be paid

1 – Didn't understand a letter referring to a previous council house which was broken into – letter was for recharge even though Council have Police reference number for the crime.

Reasons tenants gave for calling in person at Renfrewshire House, Renfrew neighbourhood office and Johnstone Town Hall were;

Most were there because they preferred to discuss their business face to face.

Some felt they were fobbed off on the phone, or found the telephone system in general confusing.

A few others had no website access.

Our own interaction with members of staff on all these dates was very good. A few negatives did however crop up over these visits.

The ticketing system had to be explained to tenants calling in at Renfrew neighbourhood office by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel, instructions regarding the system weren't clearly evident.

There was no privacy at counter area at Renfrew neighbourhood office and anybody wishing to discuss anything in private had a long wait till a room became available.

In Johnstone Town Hall privacy was also an issue as a tenant relinquishing a tenancy had her private life aired in the waiting area.

Issues where any conversation may include an in depth discussion of a tenant's private life should always be conducted in private.

Website: Tenant Scrutiny Panel members Chris Gilzean and Pauline Trevarthen conducted a survey of the Council's website using 21 search questions.

The 21 search questions and the responses to the questions from the two TSP participants can be found in the appendices.

Pauline Trevarthen summed up the website thus.

"I feel that as we are in the 21st Century, and as a website, it should be a lot more accessible, less PDF documents and more direct information."

Presently the website is tired and very dated with very little for customers to interact with. Some of the PDF documents on the website were found to be out of date, with the wrong information given especially as regards contact details. The Welfare Reform PDF was out of date and wrong contact phone numbers were present on two others. Key search words seemed to be at a premium, with both TSP participants having to try a variety of words to try and access information, this took ages in some cases.

Information on rents was sketchy with no direct access for tenants to their rent accounts, also information on rent free weeks was not available.

Information on local Councillors was minimal.

Chris Gilzean had a meeting with the Senior Communications Officer and the TSP are fully aware that the website is currently undergoing a complete overhaul which will provide an up to date platform going forward.

The discussion with the Senior Communications Officer covered a range of topics which had been highlighted by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel's website review and also what all parties who had to access the Council's website could expect from the new platform.

The weekend prior to the meeting with the SCO, Chris Gilzean attended the TPAS Conference and one of the plenary sessions was given by the CEO of East Lothian Housing Association and concerned the launch of their new website. This was interesting as their website has been two and a half years in development and is now ready to be launched. Tenants will be able to access rent information and pay {with instant update} their rent online. They will also be able to report repairs online, including booking appointments for repairs to be carried out. The SCO accessed the website and he and Chris Gilzean had a discussion on what was available.

Both Chris Gilzean and the Senior Communications Officer agreed that Renfrewshire Council's new website platform should be seen as just that, a platform for further improvement and growth of the website in the future.

The SCO asked if the Tenant Scrutiny Panel would like to be kept abreast of the website project going forward, attending a presentation, maybe taking part in a trial run, etc.? Chris Gilzean replied he'd like to see the invitation extended to take in more participation and consultation groups, Tenants and Residents Associations, Quality Circles, etc.

Contact Centre: Three members of the TSP, Chris Gilzean, Margaret Dymond and Mary Logan visited the Contact Centre on Tuesday 21st July 2015, where between 10.15am-noon and 1pm-3pm, they were each assigned an operator whose calls they could listen in to.

As well as the calls regarding housing issues the operators showed a very good depth of knowledge dealing with calls covering other topics such as blue badges, clothing grants, community meals, etc..

The operators were asked their opinions on whether they thought the trial satellite Contact Centre which used to work out of Clark Street was a better system? They thought in terms of repairs it had been as each operator could see how busy each department was and it led to greater efficiency. The operators thought they were better connected.

It was explained to us by the Service Standards Manager that the Council decided not to continue with this practise on the grounds of staff flexibility. Currently at Renfrewshire House Contact Centre staff can be deployed and redeployed depending upon which is busiest, between the frontline face to face service and the phones. We were informed that usage is monitored at all times.

We asked the operators and the service standard manager what was the main problem the Contact Centre faced on a daily basis and they all thought it was the lag time after lines were raised and passed down to Building Services. A number of calls each day concerned tenants who'd heard nothing regarding reported repairs and were now having to phone back to find out what was happening.

Panel member Pauline Trevarthen asked us to ask, if a tenant was given a reference number regarding their reported repair, would this speed up any future communication regarding it? The operators felt that this wouldn't help as the way the system was set up they'd still have to go through the tenant's details.

We asked the Service Standards Manager if implementing a text service, whereby tenants could be kept abreast of follow-up appointments or delays regarding repairs had been looked

at. They replied it had, but they had no idea how high up the agenda it was although they were in favour of such a system to cut down lag time on repairs reporting.

Service Standards Manager explained that the Council are currently taking on and training more staff to work in the Contact Centre.

5. Key Recommendations

-5.1 Ticketing system at neighbourhood offices needs to be more clearly defined.

-5.2 In neighbourhood offices privacy should be paramount regarding issues where a tenant's private life has directly affected the housing issue raised. Such issues shouldn't be discussed in public areas. In situations like this, if no room is available, we would like to see the customer given an appointment, so that any discussion can be in private.

-5.3 Information on website should be up to date and no PDFs. It is felt that PDFs are the easy option and that written text information can be more easily accessed and updated.

-5.4 More key words to help with searches on the website. These key words should be everyday words that people use, i.e. currently on the Council website any reference to death can only be accessed through the word bereavement, other words such as deceased, passed away, etc. should also be links.

-5.5 Rent information and accounts to be made accessible online. Tenants should be able to access dates of free rent weeks and check the balance of their rent account online.

-5.6 Councillors' profiles should include any positions they hold within the Council and any Boards they sit on.

-5.7 A repairs tracking system could be incorporated into the repairs system with a reference number issued for every raised repair. The status of a repair could then be tracked through the website using the reference number by the tenant.

-5.8 An analysis of costs and benefits of integrating a texting service into the Contact Centre service whereby tenants could be notified of follow-up appointments or delays to repairs.

-5.9 More promotion of participation and consultation groups, especially through the website. Regular updates of how Tenant Scrutiny Panel, Tenants and Residents Associations, Quality Circles, etc. are interacting with the Council.

Report Timetable

- The report will be presented to the Housing Service Senior Management Team {SMT}

- The SMT will be asked to produce an Action Plan in response to the recommendations in the report, in eight weeks from the presentation.

- The recommendations made by the Tenant Scrutiny Panel together with the SMT Action Plan will be published in the Peoples News, the Annual Report to tenants, the internet and other methods available to the Council.

- The Tenant Scrutiny Panel will review the Action Plan in six months.

Report Appendices

- Reviews of website by Chris Gilzean and Pauline Trevarthen.

- Written reports of Contact Centre visit by Margaret Dymond, Mary Logan and Chris Gilzean.

- Completed Customer Services questionnaires.

WEBSITE CHECKS – carried out by Chris and Pauline

1. What are the opening hours at my local housing office?

Two clicks. Information was good. Information totally up to date with office's new address at Johnstone Town Hall listed.

Main page has contact number and directions how to get there, but no opening hours. Another click took me to list of PDF documents where opening hours for Renfrewshire House are listed 4th after library opening times, etc.. As this is my neighbourhood office I did not feel this was easy to access.

2. What can I do about noisy neighbours?

One click. Information was useful. Information was up to date and took the form of leaflet "Stamp out Anti-social Behaviour in Renfrewshire". Two clicks on leaflet got you telephone number 0800 169 1283

2 clicks took me to leaflet on anti-social behaviour with phone number.

3. I need a ramp to get in and out of my house, how do I get this?

Two clicks. Information was useful. "A joint strategy for people with physical disabilities and sensory impairment 2009-14" leaflet. It gives info on how you go about having your disability assessed through Social Work and other departments.

2 clicks again gave a PDF document which explained assessing situation, etc.. I felt this was a bit in depth so clicked again onto housing {left hand side} and found basic information, i.e. contacting Occupational Therapy with phone number, felt this was easier to read and more to the point.

4. I'd like to move house

Two clicks through Housing heading. Information was useful. Tenants Information leaflet online.

2 clicks gave details on how to apply for a house, another click to get the Council's housing policy. Straightforward.

5. I want to report a repair

One click. Information was good. Gave ways to contact the Council to report repair.

2 clicks gave details on different methods of reporting repairs, however on the main website page the online service heading prioritises the online APP which is only useful if you have a smartphone. Think it would mislead people into thinking this was only way of contacting repairs department.

6. I want to make a complaint

Two clicks. Information was good. Gave info on various types of complaint.

2 clicks, useful, clear and concise about ways to complain and when you cannot complain. Phone numbers and email contact.

7. I've lost my job, what do I do about my rent?

Two clicks. Information was useful. Gives information on Housing Benefit and access to Welfare Reform leaflet online. Leaflet is however out of date.

Found this quite difficult, I eventually went under benefits and found advice which was quite useful, feel you would have to know what benefits you were entitled to. Not any key words.

8. Can I keep a pet in my house?

Three clicks. Information was very clear.

2 clicks, again another PDF document, think this is quite off putting, would be more user friendly if taken straight to a detailed page.

9. There's graffiti outside my flat, how can I get this removed?

Three clicks. Information is poor. Only phone number 0300 300 0380 given to report graffiti.

2 clicks, another PDF!!! Though quite useful information detailing when to expect a response, also gives details of companies that are responsible for bus shelters, rail network, etc..

10. Can my grandson come and live with us?

Three clicks. Information is poor. Tried rewording this one to get response on website. Only information was all to do with change of claim for Housing Benefit.

Could not find anything relevant.

11. Can I buy my council flat?

Two clicks. Information was useful. Glaring omission was that there was no information of the end of right to buy in August 2016.

12. My mum has just died and she was the tenant of our council house, can I still live there?

Nothing!

Could not find anything, even looked under bereavement.

13. Will the Council cut the grass in my garden?

Two clicks after I entered "Garden Assistance". Information poor. Basically tells you service available April to October for those medically unfit. Gives you telephone number to call if you're interested in the service 0300 300 0380. Doesn't say what proof is required to pass you medically unfit.

I used the A-Z index for this as could not find anything, not very useful only states that this service is for retired or medically unfit, does not state that you have to be in receipt of DLA/PIP.

14. How do I apply for a council house?

Two clicks. Information was useful. Information was basically an online application form.

Much the same as moving house, 2 clicks and got the housing policy.

15. My parents want to throw me out, what can I do?

Lost, couldn't find a thing.

3 clicks, went through homelessness, found good information regarding a prevention service, including mediation.

16. Which councillor has responsibility for housing?

Three clicks. Information okay. Had to read reports of meetings to find this one. Councillor profiles should say what jobs they have within the council.

2 clicks to find a list of councillors. Had to read quite a bit about each councillor, gave up.

17. Will my rent change if I move house?

Couldn't find any information.

Couldn't find anything, ended up with a table of standard rent charges for council houses.

18. How can I get information in large print for my partially sighted father?

One click. Information was good. Number of types of information in large print, braille and on tape available. Foreign languages also available.

Found this time consuming as again it was a PDF document

19. How do I order a new swipe card for my rent?

Gave Up! No information. Swipe card only mentioned in how you may pay your rent.

20. What are the current rent free weeks?

Gave Up! No information.

There was no information on rent free weeks. Whilst trying to find this I came across the table for standard council rents.

21. Tenant participation

Two clicks if using Tenant Consultation and Involvement. Information was useful. Tells you what groups are available and to contact Strategy and Development Section on 0141-618 6260 and also gives an email address. Very little on what the various groups do and what they have done in the past.

Renfrewshire Tenants Scrutiny Panel – Website Review Recommendations

1. Main page should have Renfrewshire House opening hours.
2. Should give details of Wardens Service or ASSIST. Discussion about phone number on leaflet, is it out of date?
3. Info will change this year { 2015 } as department changing.
4. Headings needed for different moving reasons – are you moving within your current area, etc..
5. Concerned that App being prominent at the top, may have people thinking they have to download App. People could be put off especially the elderly. Multiple choice on phone not helpful.
6. Happy with information supplied.
7. Remove the leaflet from website and replace with a direct phone contact number.
8. Happy with information supplied.
9. Basic. Graffiti hit squad has been disbanded.
10. Should contact local Housing Officer.
11. Information on the end of right to buy on 1st August 2016 should be included.
12. Succession 12 month rule from The Housing { Scotland } Act 2014 should be on website. Bereavement contact details online would also be beneficial.
13. As conditions apply please contact your local neighbourhood office. New common areas policy could see fit tenants getting their grass cut for a price.
14. Housing application form was fair enough.
15. Details for young people support team and George Street homelessness unit.
16. First page of Housing should have name of councillor responsible for housing listed on it. Councillor profiles should give details of what positions they hold within the council.
17. Rent structure for rents in different house types and areas should be online.
18. Very good – no problems
19. All rent enquires 03003000222
20. Details of rent free weeks should be available online.
21. Want details of what tenant participation groups are doing and what they have done in the past.

Pauline sums up website.

I feel that in the 21st century that the website should be a lot more accessible, less PDF documents and more direct information.

More key words needing to be recognised in search mode.

I looked on Glasgow City Council website and felt it was a lot more informative and easier to use.

Would like to see online rent accounts although may have an initial cost, surely they would be beneficial in the long run, people choosing to view

online rather than being sent paper statements or having to phone for rent balances.

TENANT SCRUTINY PANEL

VISIT TO CALL CENTRE, RENFREWSHIRE HOUSE

21st JULY 2015 10:00am TO 15:00pm (Lunch 12:00 to 13:00pm)

Operator A	He made me relax, showed me how the ear lope works	He went over how the system works and what I would hear (they would not hear me)
(1) Caller was put at ease by Operator A	Tenant asked for the time and date of the repairs to be done in his home. He had 2 jobs to be done.	1st Joiner for bedroom and Bathroom, 29th July between 8am and 1pm; 2nd Painter – he had no access to their diary, but a card will be put through his door (job has been raised) Operator A explained and the tenant said he understood
(2) as above	Report a leak in living room Heater (not bad) noticed it on Friday when Husband went to get his shoes and noticed a puddle in them (under heater)	Operator A explained that it is normally 5 working days but managed to get an appointment for Friday 24th July between 8am and 1pm, Tenant happy
(3) as above	Wishing to parking fine	Customer informed that it was the wrong number and gave them the right one
(4) as above	Water tank in loft! Water is dirty coming from it (checked it yesterday) needing cleaned, is this the Councils job? Tank feeds the bathroom toilets	Date arranged for 22nd July between 8am and 1pm. Happy and agreed to be transferred to someone in Building services who will explain about the process of cleaning/maintenance of tanks
(5) as above but Wrong number	Freedom Pass (U/Credit Line)	Operator A explained that they get 20 + each week and have to give them the right number
(6) as above	Inspector's visit – mix-up with date has 26th July down but that's a Sunday – New front door	Date is 21st (today) July between 12 noon and 4:30pm, Tenant glad she phoned and thanked Operator A
(7) as above, told us that she was phoning on behalf of her daughter	No water in the house, has it been turned off? Operator A asked if Scottish Water were working in the area! No and daughter has no house phone	Operator A suggested she phone SW, Mother said water trickling in toilet but not enough to flush. Operator A gave Mother a next day appointment and the Number of SW. She said she would phone back her daughter's address and mobile number.

(8) as above	Front Door/dead lock (New PVC in a while) difficult to lock door, out 6 times and still not working Gas central heating – no hot water or heating	Heating / no hot water – line for next day (tenant explained he has hospital appointment and not back till 3pm) Operator A said he would try and get him an appointment for today Front door – appointment for Friday 24th July between 8am and 1pm, Tenant happy
(9) as above	Report launderette number 3, shows heating error	Operator A told Tenant he will pass this to the contractor
(10) as above	Pensioner in distress that sockets downstairs are not working; checked fuse box but can see no problem, lights are working upstairs and downstairs but not the sockets; William asked her to check the brown trip switch	Tenant did this and everything worked, very thankful. Asked if we can do something about the light fitting in bedroom! As this is a standard repair (15 days) the appointment was made early for Wednesday 29th July between 8am and 1pm. Happy with this
(11) as above (but said had to wait 19 minutes) Operator A said it was 4 minutes on the screen	Tenant thinks this is an emergency - Boiler in kitchen cupboard (copper pipe is leaking) floor is soaking	Operator A explained that this is normally a next day repair but will get an appointment for today; managed to one between 12 noon and 4:30pm, Tenant happy and asked if she should turn off the boiler! Reply was yes
(12) as it was quite	Operator A showed me the Repair app	Explained how this works and how many they get in a week
(13) as above no 11	No hot water coming out of taps only cold water, it's a comp boiler. Neighbor has key. Checked it on Saturday	Operator A next day repair, made appointment for 22nd July 8am onwards
(14) as above	Water coming in at wall bedroom, Inspector came 30th June, lost his number to get update on situation; also checked with neighbor re the chimney	Operator A will pass his details on to the Assessor
(15) as above	New tenant – Housing officer told her to phone in the list of repairs (reported earlier) and is now looking for update. Rubbish still to be uplifted from back door. External repair – fence which is down – Inspector was out 2nd July, need to	Rubbish – Housing officer will need to arrange this but Operator A will add this to list. Tenant thanked Operator A for his help

	send letter to owners (takes 21 days) Metal poles wait for price then a line will be raised	<u>Lunch Break 12 noon to 1pm</u>
(16) Checked e-mails	Blue Triangle (Homeless Unit) Report a toilet handle	Write back that plumber be out tomorrow 8am to 4:30pm
(17) as above	Leak in Bathroom sink/citern and Kitchen inch above socket at washing machine Buzzer system not working, line has been raised waiting for Acorn to fix	Appointment for 22 nd July 8am onwards
(18) as above	Pressure of water in the house, phoned last week and were asked to check if SW were working in the area, reply was no. problem is with boiler.	Line raised, appointment made for 22 nd July 8am to 4:30pm
(19) as above	Need an electrician, when put on TV a bang occurred all the sockets are dead. Operator A asked her to check the fuse box, did this and lights and cooker ok rest not working.	Operator A explained that he would make an appointment for 22 nd July 8am onwards He said it was better to arrange this for her as she has no one to help out
(20) as above	Gas engineer came out on Thursday 16 th July put a new valve in as heater was leaking; hot water is on but the heating is not working (HEATERS ARE COLD WHEN BOILER SWITCHED ON)	Operator A explained that he will put this down to as a recall visit (new number) will send to the department for them to arrange for an engineer to call. This should be done with-in 5 working days
(21) as above	The gutters on her building have not been cleaned; phoned 10 months to put in a request for them to be done; a couple of weeks ago put in a further call and told if not done to put in a complaint. She did not wish to do this.	Operator A explained the complaint procedure, after which she would be happy to put in a complaint. Operator A said that after she has put in her written complaint and does not hear back from them by Tuesday or Wednesday to call back and get update. She called off happy enough
(22) Operator A received a message that a scheduler at BS had asked that he contact her ASAP	Operator A phoned but the person was not at their desk	Found out it was a mix-up, so all was ok (sorted)
(23) as above	Boys bedroom carpet has lots of carpet insects,	As line was engaged Operator A gave her the number 0380

	Operator A explained that he will try and put her through to Environmental Services	0300 300 and option 3 then 4, Tenant was happy to do that
(24) as above	Security Light at back door – has been out for 2 years, neighbor told her she had reported it 5/6 times, Operator A checked the last call was in Oct'13	Will raise a line for next Wednesday 29 th July
(25) as above	Smoke alarm in house which is attached to one on landing is not working	Operator A said that is an emergency and will need to be fixed within 24 hours
(26) as above	Annual Gas Check – RED LETTER. Operator A explained that an appointment needs to be made by 7 th August. He explained that he will try and avoid them getting a FORCED Entry letter.	First available was 29 th or 30 th July – neither not suitable; another date was Monday 10 th August 8am to 1pm, but send down to Gas Scheduler who will phone and make an earlier appointment before 10 th August.. Operator A explained that they usually leave a few appointments for this kind of problem.
(27) as above	Repair (Homeless unit for a new Tenant) shower not working, lights on but no water coming through, though making noises	Operator A managed to get an appointment for Friday 24 th July 8am to 1pm (happy)
(28) as above	Tenant from No 19 call to let us know that the boiler light has gone out	Did not catch Operator A reply
(29) as above	Tenant waiting for new door; ordered on the 2 nd July; May no access and been on hold till 25 June.	Will receive a call when door is in the depot

M Dymond, 12 August 2015

TENANT SCRUTINY PANEL {Mary Logan}

VISIT TO CUSTOMER CONTACT CENTRE 21-07-2015

STAFF MEMBER: OPERATOR B {OB}

- 1. Tenant phoning re problems with shower for his disabled wife {now unable to use it}.**
A} tile falling of wall causing bracket to become insecure and shower unusable.
OB. made this high priority {24hr emergency}.
OB. checked entry to building would be okay.
B} tenant asked how he could get a new 'Support Seat' for shower?
OB. gave info on contacting S.W.D. and what process would be.
OUTCOME: tenant satisfied and reassured.
- 2. Tenant phoned re tree on pavement and roots causing problems e.g. tenants tripping.**
OB. checked through details and organised inspection.
- 3. Tenant's blue bin had been 'removed' and new one ordered, however blue bin has now 'reappeared'.**
OB. sent an email to cancel order.
- 4. Tenant phoned for gas safety check.**
OB. checked details and arranged appointment.
- 5. Tenant needing new blue bin.**
OB. checked details and organised replacement.
- 6. Caller dialled wrong number – looking for GENESIS Housing Association in London.**
OB. advised this happens frequently and checked through caller's info {telephone numbers similar}.
- 7. Tenant reported strip light in kitchen needed replacing {kitchen refurbished!}**
OB. checked info and explained it was the tenant's responsibility – if tenant had mobility problems, etc. help was there.
OUTCOME: tenant would replace it herself.

8. Tenant reported his water supply had stopped during night – water now running from taps but very discoloured – no water in toilet cistern.

OB. advised on practicalities and organised plumber.

OB. noticed noise from tenants smoke alarm – tenant hard of hearing and didn't think it important.

OB. organised electrician as an emergency.

9. Application for SKIP permit.

10. Tenant reported problems with water supply, started during the night {see point 8} – toilet making terrible noise!

OB. checked details and organised plumber.

11. Tenant reported water leaking through kitchen ceiling.

OB. After negotiations with tenant to allow access emergency plumber

organised.

12. Tenant reported blocked drain in shared back garden.

OB. Once exact drain was established, emergency line was raised.

13. Tenant requiring food recycling bags.

OB. checked what type of door entry system was in place

- organised delivery.

14. Tenant reported hedge badly overgrown and becoming dangerous to Tenants.

OB. organised to have it cut back.

15. Callers reported repairs needed to new let eg patches on walls, hearth

risen from floor, window frames, etc..

OB. organised inspector to view these different but necessary repairs.

16. Tenant reported gutters needing repaired – this is a Long Term Problem

and is causing dampness in the building.

OB. referred this to COMPLAINTS as there has been no resolution to past

Complaints.

17. Caller reported dog 'dirt' being left on pavement outside Mum's building.

OB. organised a clean-up, also asked questions re possible pattern?

OB. informed that Dog Wardens will check to resolve problem.

18. Tenant called re Gas Safety Check – already completed when new boiler

was fitted on 9th July.

OB. checked all details and advised tenant to disregard letter received

received that morning.

19. Tenant needs old brown bin lifted, caller has made several complaints

since 6th June and this issue has been highlighted several times by Contact Centre.

OB. referred complaint to relevant department.

20. Call from owner-occupier re the potential cost of fence between her and Council tenant's garden.

OB. established that an Inspector had called in May to take

measurements etc.. Second person {unknown} had also called to measure up – no record of this person in Council system.

OB. sent an email to Inspector re no work having been done + who was

2nd person?

21. Tenant called re recycling bins, they are never emptied unless a complaint is made {4th complaint!}.

OB. once again notified relevant department, flagged up repeat complaint.

22. Owner-occupier in tenement {block of four} notified Contact Centre that cellar at back of close was in dangerous condition.

OB. checked that door entry system is active and organised Inspector to call.

23. Tenant phoned re switch behind cooker not working and had not been

able to use cooker for the last week.

OB. established that fuse in isolator switch was gone and cooker was

not at fault.

OB. organised emergency electrician ASAP.

SUMMARY OF CALLS

Plumbing	5
Recycling bins	5
Garden, tree, fence	3
Electrical	3
Gas safety checks	2
Wrong number	1
Skip permit	1
New let {poor condition}	1
Gutters	1
Dog Fouling	1

N.B. 2 of the above were ongoing complaints

Tenant Scrutiny Panel { Chris Gilzean }
Contact Centre visit 21st July 2015

Operator C

Tenant called regarding grass cutting for the elderly, but unfortunately due to a backlog in the system they had to wait a while to speak to someone. Once through they stated they would call back, as music had done their head in!

Tenant phoned regarding replacement fencing at backdoor and side of building. The tenant had previously phoned on 15th July and had been told line for job was in the system. This was 4 months down the line from Assessor visit.

Operator established that line had not been activated by Building Services Team and sent email to Assessor and department.

Tenant called reporting they had no heating or hot water.

Operator quickly established that the boiler had a recurrence of a drained pressure problem which had been repaired a few weeks previously.

Operator organised for a gas engineer to call today as priority as caller was 92.

Tenant called to explain that a joiner had called to fit two new doors in her home yesterday and that he expressed his concern that a glass kitchen door was unsafe as it could smash, if coming into contact with an adjoining door.

Operator couldn't ascertain from caller if joiner was going to report his concerns himself, so an appointment for an Assessor to call was organised.

Request for brown wheelie bin – was ordered previously but not delivered.

Operator contacted back office to have it delivered as a priority.

Tenant called about lack of water in toilet cistern.

Operator thought it sounded like stop-cock problem, but then established that there had been a burst main and that water had been off in the street. Appointment for plumber was arranged for following morning.

Tenant called regarding overgrown weeds and hedges at general car park in Thomson Street.

Operator established that Council cut the grass in tenant properties in neighbouring Graham Street and informed tenant that Street Scene were already trying to establish who owned the car park.

Tenant phoned to request uplift of a cooker and some other items.

Operator listed items for uplift and passed details to appropriate department.

Tenant also wished to report that gate to property needed attention as spring was burst and latch wasn't squaring up.

Operator organised for a joiner to visit and assess problem.

Tenant phoned to complain about cheeky phone call she'd received from Clark Street that morning regarding a plumber being at her house at 9am and being unable to gain entry. Tenant said appointment was for this afternoon.

Operator quickly established that the tenant was right and system was also showing that it was an afternoon appointment.

Operator spoke to depot and plumber would call that afternoon when he was supposed to.

Elderly tenant called asking when they're hedge was going to get cut.

Operator established that they were on the list and then explained that hedge cutting programme had just started and that they hadn't been forgotten.

Tenant phoned to say that their front door would only stay closed when locked.

Operator arranged for a joiner to call the following day.

Tenant also enquired about what was happening with their gutters as Assessor had already been out and they were to be checked front and back.

Operator discovered that line was lying with plumbers and that it would be chased up.

Caller called to complain about lack of ground maintenance in Tinto Square, Renfrew with weeds all along the pavement, also children's play area overgrown and hedges and trees in neighbouring Council tenants properties overgrown.

Operator arranged for Street Scene to assess the area as soon as possible.

Caller wished to give notification of the death of a tenant.

Operator spoke to and then transferred call to Housing Options.

Tenant reported dog barking constantly in adjoining property when it was left alone.

Operator arranged for Dog Warden to visit and also advised tenant that noise enforcement team could also be an option.

Worried tenant called to say that she'd had a gas safety check carried out on her boiler that morning and that it had been making a funny noise since. She also found a piece of plastic on the floor and she was concerned about safety as her 3 year old daughter was in the house.

Operator arranged for the gas engineer concerned to call back at the property as soon as possible.

As well as the calls regarding housing issues, the operator I was assigned to also dealt with fourteen other calls covering blue badges, clothing grants, community meals, a registration of death and a garage payment.

I was impressed with the operator's depth of knowledge as per each enquiry and also in some cases her ability to offer alternatives to the caller.

I asked the operator if they had worked in the satellite Contact Centre which was at Works depot in Clark Street? And if they thought that was a better system?

Their reply was that for some housing issues especially repairs it worked far better when part of the Contact Centre was at Clark Street. Operators could see how busy each department was and it led to greater efficiency. The operators felt they were better connected.

I asked the operator what one thing she would change regarding the contact system?

The operator felt that the biggest problem was lag time after lines were passed down to the Repairs Department. They dealt with a number of calls daily from tenants who had heard nothing from the Repairs Department even after a line had been raised.

Scrutiny Panel member Pauline had expressed her opinion in the past that she would like to see a reference number given to tenants when a line was raised for a repair, in the hope that it would speed up system if repair was to be queried for any reason.

I put this point to the operator.

Operator said that they could already give a reference number if the tenant wished it, but that the way the system was set up they would still have to go through tenant's details and what call was about, so quoting a reference number would not save any time.

At the end of our time listening to calls we were able to talk to one of the Contact Centre Line Managers.

Again lagging time once lines are passed down to the Repairs Department was in their opinion the issue that needed changed the most. Some lines are not followed up once they are passed down.

I asked if implementing a texting service had been looked at, especially for follow up appointments, letting the tenants know of delays, etc.?

They replied that it had been, but they weren't sure how high it was on the agenda, although they themselves were in favour of such a service, especially in getting Repairs Department to take more responsibility for contacting tenants once a line had been initially raised.