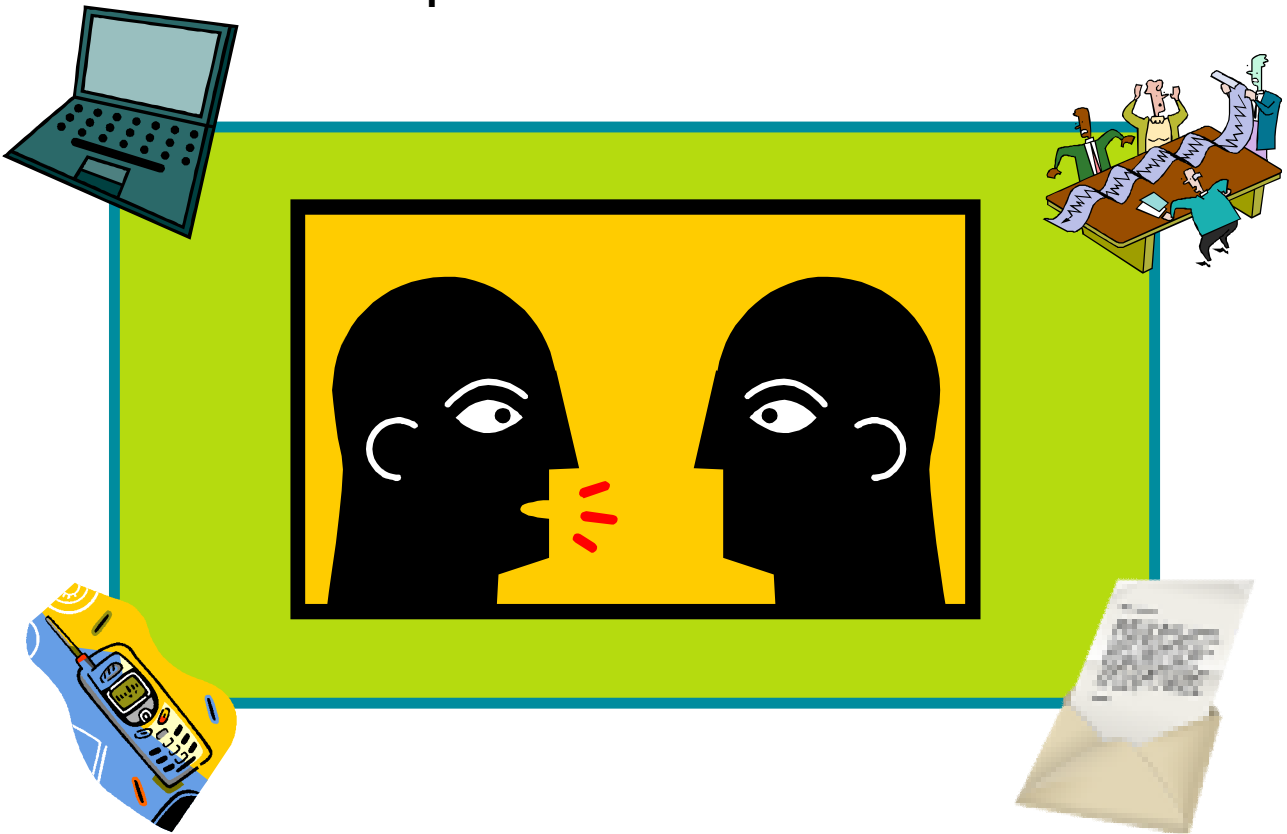


What Connect Tenants Want... And How They Told Us

April 2010 – March 2011



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1. Introduction



This report summarises, from the widest range of sources, what Connect's tenants and customers are saying to us about what is important to them and what they want.

The report is looked at every year at the beginning of the Business Plan cycle by Board, Management Team, the Connect Residents' Federation (CRF), Management Group and the Service Improvement Forum (SIF). The purpose is to make sure that customer opinion has an impact – from the highest strategic level through to the delivery of frontline services.

The contents of this report are firmly linked to all the association's tenant involvement activities. These activities try not only to gain tenant opinion but to make sure that these opinions are used to prioritise improvements and to design services.

This approach is tenant-centred, but it also meets the needs of the business. The use of this information ensures that increasingly constrained resources are used efficiently because they are prioritised in ways that are sensitive to the "frontline" service delivery and to the tenant experience.

2. What Tenants Tell Us... After Receiving a Service

After customers have used a service, Connect asks for feedback through satisfaction surveys. In 2010/11, almost 3,500 surveys were received relating to 17 different services. The use of surveys gives the widest range of customers the opportunity to be involved at a point in time when they have had a recent service experience and have something specific to comment on.



Customers are asked to score aspects of the service and also to comment on both good and bad experiences. The satisfaction scores are valuable (see Appendix 1 for trends in satisfaction surveys). However, customer comments about their experiences of the service are even more valuable, as they give a clear insight into what is important and what is not (see Table 1).

Table 1: Satisfaction Surveys 10/11



Some Typical Customer Comments

<p>Lettings</p>	<p>"I found the staff who I had contact with more than helpful and went that bit further to help me in my housing need."</p> <p>"This people from Connect, I tell them am not understanding English but they help me and I understand what they say."</p>
<p>Void Work</p>	<p>"The repair jobs should have been done before I got the keys or just after."</p>
<p>Customer Services</p>	<p>"Connect customer service staff are very good – the only thing to make (the service) better would be to pay my rent for me!</p>
<p>Rent Collection</p>	<p>"As my rent is paid direct as housing benefit there are no problems. I found the help given by the housing support worker to get benefit was invaluable."</p> <p>"All staff that I have ever spoken with have always been exceptionally kind. The conversation over rent arrears was handled in a very understanding, sympathetic, friendly, practical manner. All the info she explained was clear."</p> <p>"Do well - provide leaflets with information of methods, website, easy readable material, using the mobile to pay rents."</p> <p>"Although I pay monthly by DD the statement always shows I am in arrears when I am not."</p> <p>"For people like me who pay by standing order every month, and never miss a payment it is very disappointing seeing the words in arrears after every weeks rent date until the SO is paid."</p> <p>"I want you to make (the rent statement) a bit clearer especially when someone is in credit over his/her account balance."</p>
<p>"Es Positive" Service</p>	<p>"Friendly, practical advice provided in a non judgemental way."</p> <p>"(The staff member) was very easy to get on with. She gave me confidence. Made me feel I was not alone. Very helpful. I never knew Connect had people like this. Its been a great help for me. Many thanks."</p> <p>"(The staff member) came into my home and although I had saved and filed every letter that came through the door I couldn't read them. I was terrified of how much trouble I was in. She read all the letters, made all the calls and explained everything in a clear professional manner. The worry felt like a weight pressing me down and she made that go away."</p> <p>"My stress level subsided from the first visit. I am able to sleep better and don't have to jump up and run to the window when I hear a car pulling up."</p> <p>"I would recommend this service to other tenants - they are very experienced, very helpful and help in every way that is possible. Also very friendly and informal and fill out forms for you."</p>

Table 1: Satisfaction Surveys 10/11



Some Typical Customer Comments

<p>Nowell Court - Supported Housing Scheme</p>	<p>"They helped immeasurably nothing was too much for them and because of my key-worker I have finally found a very suitable house for me and my two children. I will never forget what they have done for us."</p> <p>"Most important of all my keyworker and staff helped my son to go to nursery for the first time - first step in his education. For the first time in 2 years I had quality me time during the day knowing my son was in safe hands. (Staff name) you are a star."</p>
<p>Youth Activities</p>	<p>"Being a mentor made me feel like someone had noticed me for something good instead of being bad."</p> <p>"Art club is something good to do instead of sitting on the street."</p> <p>"We were very pleased for our son to be given this opportunity – it is right up his street."</p>
<p>Aids & Adaptations</p>	<p>"Very good job. Lot easier now – before it was very hard to get in and out of the bath."</p> <p>"Lot easier now, couldn't turn taps before."</p> <p>"Made life a lot easier."</p> <p>"I'm very happy with it. I'd score with a 10+ if I could!"</p>
<p>Planned Maintenance</p>	<p>"<i>Bathroom replacement</i> – It could not have been improved. It was excellent. The workmen were a credit to their company and to Connect Housing."</p> <p>"<i>Bathroom replacement</i> – I felt the consultation process was a little rushed. Didn't have much time to decide colour of tiles etc."</p> <p>"<i>Heating system replacement</i> – I cannot praise this team of talented young men enough. They have worked hard all day without supervision, always courteous and polite. A big thank you to the Connect team for excellent organisation."</p> <p>"<i>Heating system replacement</i> – I was completely satisfied with everything. All the workmen were very hard working, polite and informative. I cannot fault them. I would have them all back again."</p> <p>"<i>Kitchen replacement</i> – I have no complaints and am thrilled with my beautiful new kitchen. Hang on to the team of hard working men, always on time and well organised."</p> <p>"<i>Kitchen replacement</i> – Plenty of choice but would have been better if we had more time to choose units/colour etc because people were thinking afterwards if they had said the right choice."</p> <p>"<i>Kitchen replacement</i> – The kitchen fitting took much longer than stated and could have been inconvenient if extra time had not been allowed for."</p>

Table 1: Satisfaction Surveys 10/11



Some Typical Customer Comments

<p>Landlord Services</p>	<p><i>"Window cleaning – Windows are not washed well and we never know when they are coming."</i></p> <p><i>"Communal cleaning – I feel the cleaner should come once a week – the entrance always looks untidy from mud on the carpets."</i></p> <p><i>"Gardening services – Our gardeners are very helpful and will help you in any way you ask – they do an excellent job."</i></p> <p><i>"Gardening services – The garden is not in a good state. We are very dissatisfied with the service we have received and are still paying for."</i></p> <p><i>"I am very satisfied with everything. Thank you."</i></p>
<p>Responsive Repairs</p>	<p><i>"It would be very difficult to improve the service I received. The contractor was a very polite and courteous young man and left my home spotlessly clean."</i></p> <p><i>"No appointment was given they just turned up (for external repair) and were already doing the repair when I noticed they were there. Done quickly and left."</i></p> <p><i>"In my experience I have always had/received an excellent service from the company. I do not give praise easy. They have never let me down and I am completely satisfied with them. A 1st rate company."</i></p> <p><i>"The work has not been done as the wall was still damp and they promised to come back to check on it but did not until I called repairs again."</i></p> <p><i>"It took over three months to get the work done. Work is done now. Lack of communication. A lot of my time has been wasted by telephoning you and waiting for (the contractor) to contact me."</i></p> <p><i>"The contractor said he needed a scaffold to do the work but never came back. The work was not done. The work is still not done. Better communication with staff at Connect and workmen."</i></p> <p><i>"This repair should have been sorted a long time ago. This is the third time I have had to call Connect Housing for the same thing."</i></p> <p><i>"The service couldn't possibly be bettered. I've lived in this flat for 10 years and in all that time have only had helpful friendly and extremely polite and professional treatment from everyone. You really are gold medal standard."</i></p> <p><i>"They could not have been any better. Reported Monday, fitted Wednesday. Brill"</i></p> <p><i>"Never keep to the appointed time. Went to the wrong address and telling me they came to my home. Calling me a liar when I told them I was in waiting for them to call. Was very annoyed."</i></p>

Table 1: Satisfaction Surveys 10/11



Some Typical Customer Comments

"I reported it on Tuesday 4th Jan 2011 around 9.00am. By 4.20 Forrest had arrived, installed the strip light and left. I'm utterly and completely satisfied. Well done!"

"It would be beneficial if all repairs could be done at the same time/day - coordinated as to prevent having to take too many days away from work."

"The Ranger who came was polite, professional and effective. He knew exactly what to do and did. Very, very pleased. He was superb!"

"The Ranger was booked for 10am and he turned up on time. I was very impressed. Usually it's a morning or afternoon appointment but to have a time given is much more beneficial to the tenant in planning their day."

"The Ranger is a lovely man. He is polite and friendly and makes you feel at ease."

Satisfaction surveys have shown us this year that:

- All services that offer support or help to tenants and young people are very popular. These services include aids and adaptations, the "£'s Positive" help service and all youth activities. They provide something beyond the expected landlord function and are much appreciated for that. Their impact on the quality of individuals' lives is very high.
- All services that involve customer contact with the hotlines and reception are rated very highly. Connect is viewed as having very good customer services. However, when responses to queries have to be passed to other staff (especially for repairs and planned maintenance), if staff fail to respond, customer frustration increases.
- Satisfaction with more traditional housing services is also high. People are very happy to have a new house – their only problem may be the repair work on the property not being completed (but the trend shows that the new void standard is resulting in improvements). People are surprisingly satisfied with both the rent arrears service and the ASB service. The ASB service benchmarks very highly when compared with other services nation-wide. The main problem with the income collection service is that tenants do not like their rent statements to show that they are in arrears when they do not believe that they are. This is an especial problem for tenants who pay by direct debit and standing order.

- ➡ People are very happy to have a new kitchen or bathroom **but**:
 - The timetable needs to be clearer and communicated better.
 - People want more time to make the available choices and to discuss options.

- ➡ Overall tenants are happy with the repairs service but there are still areas to work on:
 - The Leeds contractors need to reach the levels of service provided by the Kirklees/Calderdale contractor.
 - Complex repairs or multi-trade jobs need better organisation so that tenants do not have to make repeated phone calls.
 - Tenants do not like needing multiple visits for the same job.

- ➡ Landlord services (for which tenants who are not eligible for housing benefit pay a service charge) face a strong challenge from tenants about value for the money that they pay. Tenant expectations may be for a fuller service than that which they actually receive, e.g. a gardening service rather than a more affordable grass cutting and bush trimming service. Cleaning services may be done to a lower standard than the tenant would do it themselves.

3. What Tenants Tell Us... When They are Unhappy With a Service



Connect received 88 Stage 1 complaints in 10/11. Two thirds of complaints received were judged to have an element of justification (see Appendix 2, Justified Complaints 10/11). In many cases in which there was a problem, the issue arose because communication with the customer failed at some point.

Just over half of all complaints were related to responsive repairs (51%, 45/88). Over half of these were because the tenant felt that they had to “chase” the progress of the work or they had some form of leak that they felt was not being dealt with adequately. Most of these complaints were linked to complex or multiple repairs that were more difficult to resolve.

Complaints have shown us this year that:

- Customers want to know what is happening with their repair. More complex repairs (often related to leaks, when new parts are needed or when a number of different trades are involved) sometimes get “stalled” in the process. Customers feel frustrated because they do not know what is happening
- Customers want to get appointments easily for repairs. They do not like to wait 2 or 3 days to confirm an appointment.
- Customers do not like to have multiple visits for the same repair. Some jobs require repeated visits due to multiple problems or a need to order parts, and this is frustrating (especially for customers who work and need to take days off).
- Customers are not happy to claim on home contents insurance when they believe Connect’s actions have caused the damage. When a failure by a Connect contractor is the cause of damage to tenants’ decorating/contents, they are unhappy about being asked to claim on insurance due to loss of no claims bonus and payments of any excess required.
- Customers want advance notice of planned maintenance programmes so that they can plan their own decoration and replacement work. Some customers feel frustrated when they cannot get confirmation of when a replacement programme will be carried out.
- Customers want value for money for the landlord’s service that they pay for. Customers are unhappy when they perceive that the service they pay for is not being delivered at all, is being delivered to a poor standard or is not value for money.
- Home owners (shared ownership) require a rapid response about the possible sale of their property back to the association. Delays can cause great distress at a time that is already very stressful.

4. What Tenants Tell Us... When They Get Much More Involved



The Connect Residents Federation (CRF) is Connect's representative collective tenants' body. Any Connect tenant can become a member of the CRF and its officers are elected by the membership. The membership currently stands at almost 12% of Connect's total number of homes. The CRF has worked hard to make sure that its membership is representative of the wider stock by both age and ethnicity although, naturally, those who

are most involved, especially at strategic levels, tend to be older.

The CRF acts as a "critical friend" to Connect so that what is important to tenants is kept high on Connect's agenda and so that promises to tenants are kept. CRF members attended over 60 meetings involving tenants and staff during 10/11.

➔ In 10/11, the CRF carried out a Tenant Inspection of planned maintenance. Highlights from their report, which was delivered to the Regeneration Directorate in March 2011, included:

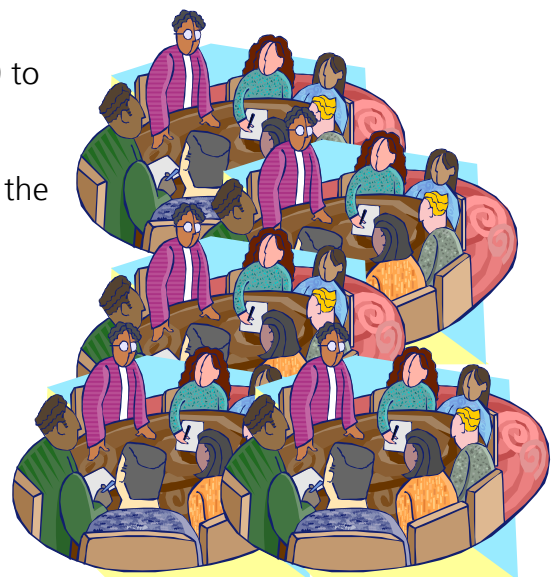
- Prior to a replacement programme, rely less on written communications and use personal contact by phone or a visit to make sure that tenants understand what will happen when.
- Prior to a replacement programme, ensure that sufficient time is given for tenants to view the options that are available for a choice and to make the decisions.
- After a programme, ensure that the request for feedback on the process happens within a few weeks.
- Make sure all contractors have seen and operate to the Considerate Contractor Guidelines.
- Have a "Connect Commitment" for Planned Maintenance.
- Improve the general understanding of component life cycles as a guide for replacements and not a target.

- Ensure early involvement of the CRF in the following year's planned programme.
 - Have tenant involvement in drawing up component specifications.
- ➡ The CRF's priority for improvement in 11/12 is the day-to-day repairs service, especially:
- Value for money, including expansion of the Ranger service and doing all needed jobs in one visit.
 - Communication between tenants, contractors and Connect, especially being proactive in telling tenants when things will be done and updating them on any changes.
 - Right first time so that contractors have good information in advance so that they have the right equipment and parts to complete the job to a high quality on the first visit.

5. What Tenants Tell Us... When They Come to "One-off" Events

During 10/11 there were 5 "one-off" events designed to investigate specific service areas:

- The "Changing Rooms" conference in April 2010 to look at planned maintenance.
- The "Big Ask" conference in July 2010 to look at the TSA standards and accountability to tenants.
- A focus group on anti-social behaviour in October 2010.
- A focus group on the Tenant Handbook in November 2010.
- A focus group on complaints in March 2011.



A total of 96 tenants attended and there were very clear messages for Connect at each event.

➡ The “Changing Rooms” conference on planned maintenance found that:

- Tenants do not necessarily agree with the replacement life cycles currently adopted by Connect, particularly in relation to kitchens and bathrooms.
- Tenants believe Connect should continue to invest in good quality components that last well and provide long service, as this represents better value for money.
- Tenants put good communication, keeping promises and having as wide a choice as reasonably possible at the heart of what they want in terms of delivery of planned maintenance work.
- There should be clear expectations and service standards required of contractors and these must particularly reflect that contractors must respect tenants’ homes.

➡ The “Big Ask” conference on tenants’ priorities for services and accountability concluded that:

- The “top 5” priority areas for the TSA’s local offers (or “Connect Commitments” – a name chose on the day) that tenants wanted Connect to be accountable for were:
 1. Repairs
 2. Anti-Social Behaviour
 3. Landlord Services
 4. Planned Maintenance
 5. Aids and Adaptations
- Tenants’ concepts of checking performance in all of these areas was very “personal” – they wanted to know the results of post-service satisfaction surveys, phone surveys, mystery shopping and spot checks/post-inspections by Connect staff (of the work done by contractors).

➡ The ASB focus group thought that:

- When someone has reported ASB, communication is key. Tenants want to be kept informed regularly about what is happening and prefer to relate to the same member of staff.

- The out-of-hours service for reporting ASB should be kept and promoted more to tenants.
- An ASB information pack should be developed for new complainants.

➡ The Tenant Handbook focus group thought that:

- The current Handbook is too big – it should be smaller and have a clear section for phone numbers.
- The most important sections of the Handbook were “Looking after your home” and “Who to speak to if...”

➡ The Complaints focus group thought that:

- The “Connect Commitment” should be about “Listening to Tenants” rather than about complaints – listening is more positive and broader.
- The Complaints leaflet should be revised so that it is very clear that a complaint can be made verbally and the process is simple.
- Tenants said a complaint is handled well if:
 - They are respected for complaining and the complaint is not perceived as a nuisance.
 - They are believed.
 - Staff listen.
 - The problem is resolved.
- Tenants said they were frustrated if:
 - They were not listened to or not believed.
 - If the complaint was not understood and bits were missed out in the response.
 - They were kept in the dark about what was happening.
 - Nothing gets done (even if the staff were nice).
- Tenants much preferred it if a problem could be resolved before it became a formal complaint.

6. What Tenants Tell us... When They Talk to Us

Tenants often tell us spontaneously, without invitation, what they think of us! Table 2 illustrates some of the compliments received in 2010/11.

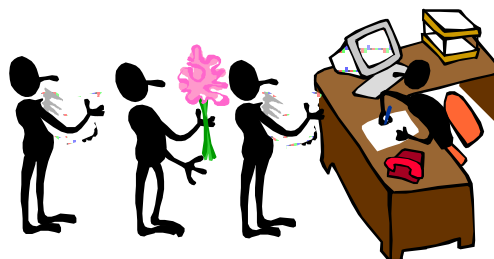


Table 2: Compliments Received in 10/11

"The Reception staff were very good – you cannot improve anything, the service is really GOOD."

"I am moving to care for elderly relatives. May I congratulate Connect Housing for the lovely homes you provide for us over 55s. I am sorry to leave..."

"Well done all. Trinity are fast, friendly and tidy. IDM workers are fantastic for fixing my boiler when it needed a repair."

"Following my visit today to sort out my rent, the advisor who dealt with my enquiry was very helpful and I felt reassured. Thank you."

"(To a scheme manager) A massive THANK YOU for all the help and care that you gave my Auntie whilst she lived at [scheme name] and the kindness you have given me."

"(To a Neighbourhood Housing Officer) Thank you. I feel a sense of relief for not being judged."

"(To a lettings officer) Thank you for your professional, tactful and caring attitude."

"(E-mail about a Neighbourhood Housing Officer) I am relieved to say that the matter has now been resolved. Thank you."

"Thanks for dealing with my previous e-mail so swiftly. All have been completed as best as! Well done Connect."

Frontline staff also do a lot of listening to customers. Frontline staff's understanding of what is important to customers is very close to the views

obtained directly from customers themselves. This was demonstrated when staff were asked to prioritise services in order of importance to tenants. The list was almost identical to that given by tenants:

1. Repairs – knowing when it will get done and getting it done
2. Planned maintenance – knowing when it will be done
3. Aids and Adaptations – clarification of what Connect can and cannot do
4. Security (especially in communal blocks) – worries about entry doors, lighting, window and door “quality”, etc.
5. Dealing with ASB (in certain areas) – what Connect can do and what it is doing
6. Value for rent and service charge money paid – for all services and products.

Staff hear customers saying that an excellent service, from the customer perspective, will:

- Listen and believe what the tenant is saying, showing respect to the individual
- Give a direct, clear and accurate answer to the question (without having to be passed around or wait for a call back)
- Be flexible and be able to be responsive to an individual’s needs when possible
- Do what we say we will do
- Be pro-active about keeping the tenant informed about any changes or delays.

In a survey in 09/10, staff were very clear that they have learnt a lot by listening to customers (see Appendix 3). This “listening” has influenced both staff’s views of frontline service priorities and has communicated “respect” to customers.

“It is easy to listen to the people who shout the most but perhaps we need to listen more to the quieter voices.”

Staff comment

7. Conclusions

The purpose of this report **is not** to feed back how tenant input is being used by Connect (that is done in other ways). However, it is very clear from:

- An analysis of the 2010 STATUS satisfaction survey results
- Tenant input into the Business Plan and analysis of outcomes achieved
- The tenant report “How is Connect Doing?”
- Reported performance to tenants on all the Connect Commitments
- Tenants’ views of the impact of tenant consultation events
- The planning for service improvements, reviews and consultation events
- ...and many other areas

that the information in this report is both useful and used and is, in fact, an essential business driver.

The purpose of the report **is** to provide the Board, Management Group, the CRF, the SIF and frontline service teams with a summary of tenant opinion for the autumn period when Business Plan, service improvement and resource allocation priorities are being assessed and decided for the coming financial year. The contents of this report demonstrate that consultation and involvement activities generate high quality information that is a vital foundation for business activities. The hard work and dedication of CRF officers and the customer service skills of frontline staff who work with a commitment to Connect’s values are crucial to the gathering, generation and understanding of this information. It is up to others to use it!



Appendix 1: Trends in Satisfaction Survey Scores

Surveys			Overall % satisfaction* ¹						
			06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11		
Housing Services	ASB		75% (37)	74% (29)	78% (9)	79% (25)	79% (44)		
	Complaints		63% (21)	78% (12)	67% (21)	66% (4)	53% (10)		
	Lettings		86% (42)	87% (64)	91% (68)	91% (34)	92% (44)		
	Rent Collection * ⁴		--	--	84% (231)	84% (338)	84% (568)		
Regeneration	General	Aids and Adaptations		98% (71)	99% (77)	100% (68)	98% (74)	99% (41)	
		Responsive Repairs		88% (1661)	88% (1193)	89% (1350)	92% (1239)	91%* ² (1464)	
		Voids Work		67% (11)	78% (64)	80% (68)	88% (34)	90% (44)	
	Planned Maintenance* ³	Kitchen replacements		86% (67)	96% (12)	92% (22)	91% (40)	94% (88)	
		Bathroom replacements		--	--	86% (16)	89% (19)	94% (34)	
	Landlord Services	Annual Survey	Gardening		77% (365)	72% (447)	73% (380)	78% (291)	73% (260)
			Communal Cleaning		69% (156)	73% (213)	69% (291)	76% (167)	77% (119)
			Window Cleaning		56% (141)	63% (182)	61% (195)	65% (128)	63% (81)
			Lift Servicing		70% (43)	83% (69)	77% (78)	80% (50)	72% (84)
			Fire alarm System		83% (257)	75% (263)	82% (286)	82% (197)	75% (247)
			Door Entry System		66% (127)	70% (179)	74% (218)	70% (130)	64% (166)
			Overall		70% (N/A)	72% (N/A)	73% (N/A)	76% (N/A)	72% (N/A)
	Supported Housing and Help Services* ⁵	Nowell Court		94% (37)	89% (35)	93% (40)	89% (40)	87% (34)	

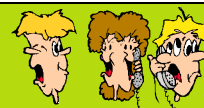
1. Overall % satisfaction is calculated by adding together the individual scores (which were answered on a scale of 1 – 10 where 10 is perfectly satisfactory and 1 is absolutely not satisfied) for all the scored questions and then calculating an average multiplied by 10.
2. There was a difference in satisfaction between the Kirklees/Calderdale contractor (94%) and the Leeds contractors (88%)
3. Planned Maintenance satisfaction surveys were also carried out for boiler replacements (92% from 49 surveys)
4. Rent Arrears (94% from 18 surveys) and Financial Inclusion (98% from 18 surveys) surveys were also carried out.
5. Youth club satisfaction surveys (90% from over 50 surveys) were carried out for a variety of groups.

Appendix 2: Justified Complaints, 10/11

Category of Complaint	Nature of Problem
Repairs	Window blinds not installed in timeframe told – also contractors not wearing ID.
	Multiple outstanding repairs in a new tenancy not completed.
	Outstanding work not done to fit a window and repair a kitchen extractor fan.
	Repeated reporting of work needed in the kitchen and bathroom.
	Delayed repair to shower.
	Need to “chase” repairs work and delay in getting appointment from contractor.
	Repeated need to repair communal TV aerial.
	Parts needed to be ordered for a boiler work but work not done when told it would be.
	Confusion about handling of re-tiling around the bath – repeated appointments.
	Repeated reports about kitchen units but nothing done.
	Incorrect advice given to tenant when there was a fire at the property.
	Ongoing damage to tenant’s flooring caused by damp – failure to keep tenant informed about what is happening.
	Failure to respond to a long-term leak.
	Leak caused damage to bathroom and kitchen and damaged the laminate floor.
	Overflow pipe in flat above repeatedly causing damp in flat below.
	Several reports of a leak and a pest problem but no response.
	Promised skip not provided and other jobs not finished after a leak.
	Recurring damp in several rooms in property – required tenant to redecorate but she can’t afford it.
	Damp in bedrooms – repeatedly reported and various attempts to rectify. Ongoing pest problem.
	Tenant reported a repair but contractor not equipped to deal with it – had to have another appointment and stay in again.
Multiple problems with a boiler resulted in wasted days taken off work.	
Poor service from out-of-hours contractor who was rude.	
Unprofessional attitude of a contractor.	
Attitude of contractors who parked van across tenant’s drive.	
Contractor damaged copies of the Koran.	

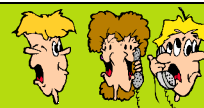
Category of Complaint	Nature of Problem
	<p>Fire alarm going off repeatedly.</p> <p>Fence blown over but no plans to repair until new financial year.</p> <p>Tenant told he was not longer eligible for work when access problem was not with him but his neighbour.</p>
ASB Service	<p>Poor service to deal with ASB.</p> <p>Way ASB report handled by NHO.</p> <p>Multiple letters received about case close with different names.</p> <p>Failure to act on security upgrades linked to ASB.</p>
Planned Maintenance	<p>Very poor quality of painting work plus poor attitude of contractors.</p> <p>New boiler leaked – also work on cupboards not completed.</p> <p>Higher specification of new kitchens than the kitchen the tenant got.</p> <p>Time taken to rectify damage – poor communication.</p>
Landlord Services	<p>Failure of gardeners to weed area with shrubs.</p> <p>Time taken to repair lift.</p> <p>Use of weed killer by gardener.</p>
Customer Services	<p>Staff not wearing ID badges.</p> <p>Failure to pass on messages to other staff.</p>
Rent Accounts	<p>Tenant told cannot have credit in rent account.</p> <p>Tenant received a phone call on Christmas Eve re: rent arrears.</p>
Shared Ownership	<p>Delay in response from Connect about buying back property.</p> <p>Delay in response to a query about Right to Acquire.</p>
Staff Issues	<p>Staff not doing what promised.</p> <p>Way tenant was talked to by staff at a supported scheme.</p>
Supported Housing	<p>Not happy with lack of support received and attitude of staff.</p> <p>Not happy with shower in flat and attitude of staff member at supported scheme.</p>
Estate Management	<p>Inability to open windows in communal areas</p>
Lettings	<p>Applicant initially offered a property but withdrawn when it became clear she was under 55.</p>
New Development	<p>Dirt and mud outside property.</p>

Appendix 3: What Lessons Staff Have Learnt from Customers



ASB Service	<p>“Even if there is no progress with a case, tenants like to get an <u>update</u> and know we haven’t forgotten about them.” (Senior Neighbourhood Officer)</p>
Estate Management	<p>“Like most people, tenants want to feel <u>listened to</u> by their housing officer (HO) and also feel that the HO is spending enough time on their estates. It is unfortunate that HOs are unable to spend enough time on estates undertaking <u>proactive work</u> rather than working reactively most of the time.” (Neighbourhood Housing Officer)</p> <p>“Tenants want to <u>feel included</u> in all decisions made about their estates whether these are about planned maintenance or security improvements. I think tenants want to see that Connect is <u>taking their concerns seriously</u> when it comes to security improvements.” (Neighbourhood Housing Officer)</p> <p>“Tenants want <u>clean, tidy estates</u> and want to see that <u>the money they pay on services charges is being spent appropriately</u>. Tenants don’t always understand the relationship between Connect and contractors... tenants want to see that contractors are on the estates when they are supposed to be, e.g. when completing gardening services, etc. I think we could <u>improve our communication</u> to tenants in relation to communal services.” (Neighbourhood Housing Officer)</p>
Lettings	<p>“People are happy overall with the lettings service – we do get some lovely comments – but they are not so happy with <u>the repairs side</u> of things.” (Lettings and Marketing Officer)</p> <p>“Most applicants want <u>a clean and well-maintained property in a reasonable / good area</u> (although the definition of this is down to an individual’s perception) at a <u>reasonable cost</u>.” (Lettings and Marketing Officer)</p>
Supported Housing – Floating Support	<p><u>Clear communication</u> is a theme of what tenants have described is important to them.” (Floating support worker)</p>
Customer Services Hotline	<p>I have learnt that people do score the customer services team highly, especially to do with <u>personality, helpfulness and attitude</u>. I have also learnt that when asked about any other comments about the customer service they receive from Connect, it is clear people do not differentiate between teams and departments – to them <u>Connect is Connect</u> (and rightly so). So if a contractor has made a mistake or another team hasn’t called them back, they see this as a fault with Connect... and they seem to associate Connect the most with the hotline.” (Senior Housing Services Advisor)</p> <p>“People who phone the hotline <u>don’t want to wait long</u> [for the phone to be answered] and want to speak to someone who has the <u>specialist knowledge</u> to answer their questions.” (Housing Services Advisor)</p> <p>“A source of customer frustration and dissatisfaction is the failure of other staff to <u>return calls</u> to customers that have been passed on by the hotline.” (Housing Services Advisor)</p>

Appendix 3: What Lessons Staff Have Learnt from Customers



	<p>"One thing that does annoy tenants is when they have <u>no control over trying to heat their properties</u> due to the type of building or heating system and this means that they cannot afford to heat them – this has a knock on effect that they either don't bother to try and then get damp issues or get into debt with heating bills. I think, though, we are looking at these buildings." (Housing Services Advisor)</p>
Rent Collection	<p>"Tenants are very sensitive to being labelled as '<u>in rent arrears</u>' if they do not think they are." (Housing Services Advisor)</p>
Complaints	<p>"The most important aspect of the complaints system for tenants is <u>the manager's response</u> – how completely it addresses their complaint and concerns, and how thoroughly the manager has investigated the situation." (Corporate Services Assistant)</p>
Responsive Repairs	<p>"Tenants are happy with the service in general but there are improvements to be made. It would be nice if the service from the contractors could be more like the Neighbourhood Rangers... I think we should continue to work towards this." (Assets Officer)</p> <p>"Repairs staff and contractors should <u>keep tenants informed</u> about what is happening on a regular basis, even if it is to say that they are still waiting for a part. Communication is one of the key issues that needs to be addressed." (Senior Assets Officer)</p> <p>"Contractors need to <u>arrange appointments</u> with tenants and not just turn up. Work needs to be completed on time and, if this is not possible, tenants need to be <u>kept informed</u> about what is happening." (Senior Assets Officer)</p>
Planned Maintenance	<p>"Most tenants said they were given plenty of notice about when the planned work was due to start, but not a <u>realistic timescale</u> for how long the work would take. Many tenants said the work dragged on a few days longer than anticipated..." (Assets Officer)</p> <p>"...a lot of tenants would have preferred to have been given <u>specific days and times for when work was going to be done</u>. A lot of people said that they were given a week for when the work would be done and found themselves having to stay in a lot, not knowing if someone was going to turn up or not." (Assets Officer)</p> <p>"As <u>priorities</u>, most tenants want <u>new kitchens</u> above anything else, such as bathrooms or boilers. Also security, i.e. improved windows and doors is a top priority for most tenants." (Assets Officer)</p> <p>"<u>Good communication</u> seems to be what matters most to tenants in terms of customer service; being kept informed of what will happen exactly and when." (Assets Officer)</p>