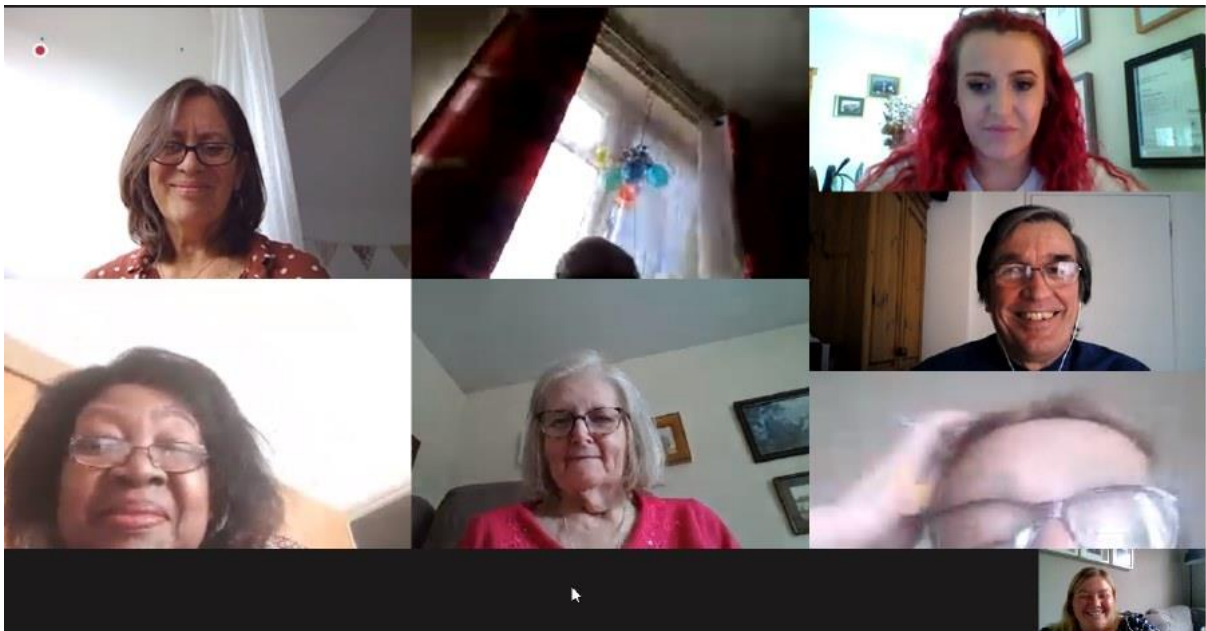




Together 4 Residents

Customer Complaints Journey

T4R met over two days, on the 16th June and 21st July, via Teams to discuss the Customer Complaints Journey and identify areas for development.



Present at the meeting were the following members of the T4R scrutiny panel:

Caroline D, David D, Margaret T, John D, Valerie Hand Leroy S.

In attendance at the meeting were: Mary F, Louise C, and Shannon N. (Customer Insight Team).

During the meeting T4R had presentations from 2 speakers, Leesa Openshaw (Team Leader of Customer Service Centre) and Rachel Callow (Housing Services Manager, South).

Identified discussion areas

The T4R panel discussed the complaints process and all that it entails. This included the following;

- The complaints process from start to finish;
- How to log a complaint;
- Definition of a complaint;
- Definition of a service comment;
- The customer's journey and how the customer feels at each stage.

Experience of the Complaints Journey - Feedback from residents and staff

The Panel were provided with the following evidence:

- Stage One and Stage Two Complaints Acknowledgement letters;
- Make a Complaint web page;
- How to Complain leaflet;
- Customer Feedback and Complaints policy;
- Customer Feedback and Complaints Procedure.
- The Customer Journey Map;
- Housing Ombudsman Code of Conduct
- STAR Survey
- Interview notes from meetings with:
 - Leesa Openshaw; (Regarding the CSC process - stages one and two)
 - Donna Joseph; (Regarding Stage Three process)
 - Residents; (Feedback about their experience of the Complaints Process in the last year)
 - Residents; (Feedback about their experience of the Complaints Process historically).

The Panel discussed the complaints policy and procedure in detail.

The Panel then discussed the complaints letters, leaflet, and complaints information provided on the saha website.

Appendix 1

The Customer Journey Map

The customer journey map explains the resident's feelings and satisfaction level through the process from the start (the reporting of the issue) to the end (the resolution of the complaint) and each touch point on the journey.

T4R were joined by Leesa Openshaw (CSC Team Leader)

Leesa gave an explanation of the complaints and service comment process.

Leesa detailed the procedure that the CSC go through, from the process of logging the complaint or service comment, to its resolution.

Leesa explained that a complaint may need to be passed to the relevant Team in order to reach a successful resolution.

The presentation led to a group discussion regarding the difference between a 'Service Comment' and a 'Complaint'. The panel also noted that internal logging systems for the Complaints Procedure were not easily accessible - particularly on W2.



T4R were joined by Rachel Callow (Housing Services Manager, South)

Rachel attended the meeting and explained the process from her perspective, including:

- the receipt of a complaint from CSC;
- passing the details onto the appropriate senior manager for action;
- returning the complaint to CSC in order for them to log the outcome of the senior manager's review.

The presentation led to a group discussion regarding the time taken to process the complaint, the number of stages involved, and communication to the resident at every stage of the process.

Conclusion

The T4R Panel have found that there are significant shortcomings in saha's approach to the Customer Complaints Journey.

Having taken into account recent guidelines on good practice, we have identified several areas for development.

The panel is hopeful that the recommendations will increase customer satisfaction and also promote more customer feedback.

The Panel acknowledge the good ongoing work of all saha staff involved with the current complaints procedure.

Recommendations



Together 4 Residents

- T4R would like to see a dedicated complaints officer at saha; this person would be responsible for acknowledging, investigating and responding to complaints. This way the process would be more personable, the dedicated person would liaise more with the complainant so that they are informed throughout and this would allow for more feedback to be received on the process. The investigation would also be consistent.
- The recommendation is that all comments from residents regarding dissatisfaction, including those previously logged as Service Comments, are considered as complaints.
- Make it clear to residents that a complaint can be recorded in any available format. Examples of this are: via the saha website, verbally, telephone to CSC, face to face or in writing. Promote the opportunity to use advocates and Language Line to assist with making a Complaint.
- Make it clear that it is possible to have an advocate to support the resident throughout the complaint process.
- Mediation should be offered at the earliest opportunity, not just left to the later stages.

- Acknowledgement letters to be amended - there is no consistency with the letters. Letters are too lengthy and the wording is not conducive to being open about complaints. The letters should be worded in terms of thanking residents for offering feedback and saha is open for learning from feedback.
- The Complaints Process needs to be fair and consistent, therefore appropriate training for members of staff, e.g. Housing Officers should take place. This will help to promote resident confidence in the Complaints Process.
- The complaints flow chart should be included in the complaint leaflet.
- Remove policy information from the letters and include the resident approved leaflet at each stage. This will make the letter easier to read and more relevant.
- The language used in all complaints communications should be open and transparent, for example "saha welcome your feedback..." etc.
- All written communication from saha should remind the resident where they are in the complaints process.
- Have clear guideline for an expected amount of time to each stage published and clear, for example, stage (...) we will be in contact with you in so many days, set the expectations on communications.
- Make the complaint section more visible and accessible via the website and cross posted.
- The group would like to see meaningful learning outcomes published so that residents can see evidence of how saha is continually learning from and developing the Complaints process.
- Changes to the Leaflets and Letters sent to Complainants - detailed suggestions are noted in the minutes of the T4R meeting, reflecting the recommendations for open and clear communications.
- Create a saha reward activity for residents to review the letters and leaflet.
- Following the publication of the Complaints code of conduct, the group were undecided if there should be 2 or 3 stages in the process. Some of the group thought the current 3 stage process works fine, but some thought that a 2 stage process might be better, with stage 1 being investigated by the head of department, and stage 2 being investigated by the director and a resident.