



This slide has a white background. In the top right corner is the Islington Council logo. A light green rectangular box contains the title 'Housing Property Services - Background' in bold black text. Below this box, the text 'The service aims to:' is followed by a bulleted list of three points. At the bottom of the slide, there is a decorative graphic consisting of overlapping wavy shapes in shades of green and white.

**Housing Property Services - Background**

- The main activity of the service is the improvement and maintenance of the housing stock owned and managed by Islington Council.

The service aims to:

- Provide high quality, customer focussed responsive repairs and gas services to all tenants and leaseholders living in properties managed by Islington Council.
- Through the capital works programme ensure the council's housing stock is maintained to a reasonable standard while providing value for money to residents and the council.

## Customer Services Team (CST)

- The Customer Services Team are responsible for the receipting and investigating complaints and Members Enquiries for Responsive Repairs, Gas Service, Mechanical & Engineering.
- The Customer Services Team investigate the complaint and Members Enquiries to provide a response in accordance with the policy & procedure set out by the Council and also in adherence to Ombudsman guidance
- The Customer Services Team are also responsible for the receipting and logging of complaint responses provided by the Capital Programme Team.

## How to complain

Residents can complain in a variety of ways:

- Face-to-face
- Telephone
- Letter
- Email & Twitter
- Advocate (MP, Councillor, solicitor, CAB, Islington law centre, family, friends etc.
- On-line via Islington Website Form

## Arrangements for Vulnerable Clients

- We have endeavoured to make easy access to Repairs Services for our vulnerable clients and residents.
- We provide contact via E-mail, Web SMS (mobile) and we use 'Big Word' for language translation service for those users who have difficulty communicating in English
- where appropriate we use Text methods for Repairs carried out
- We also use British Sign Language (BSL) 'Lingoing' for video conferences via the PDA and BSL Sign Interpreters for physical visits.
- We accept complaints by telephone for those that cannot read or write; we also provide support via Area Housing Office Tenancy Team to submit repairs and / or complaints

## Complaints Process

- Stage One Complaint investigation is carried out by CST
- Chief Executive Stage / Stage 2 Complaint investigation is carried out by the Council's Central Complaints Unit (CCU)
- A Review can be carried out by CST if CCU feels that an escalation to Stage 2 is not required in cases such as where compensation can be raised or if the Stage 1 response did not fully answer all the issues raised.
- If complainant remains dissatisfied they can escalate to the Housing or Local Government Ombudsman

## Main Reasons for Complaints

- Property Services Complaints areas are broken into different 'corporate' categories for primary analysis:

Reason For Complaining
• Customer Services
• Decision about an individual case
• Discrimination by council
• Failed to provide a service
• Late provision of a service
• No failure category (Other Enquiries)
• Policy
• Poor quality of service provided
• Staff Conduct

## What is it like to work in CST

### The challenges:

- Often working with angry and distressed residents
- Helping vulnerable residents, many with mental health problems
- At times we experience abuse, threats of violence, threats of suicide
- Not having full control of repairs as this is outside the remit of CST
- Limited flexibility on policy decisions
- Limited resources (i.e. not enough specialist operatives)
- The name change of the team to CST has been confusing for residents

### The positives:

Resolving issues for residents is rewarding, especially vulnerable residents and making a positive impact to their quality of life.

### How CST is supported and developed:

The team have received training on Letter Writing, Write First Time, LBI Policy, Ombudsman Policy, Safeguarding, Mental Health Awareness, MS Office modules, Dealing with Stress etc.

### **CST aim to reach a satisfactory resolution.**

- As part of the investigation process we may carry out a home visit if this is considered most appropriate
- Where appropriate we may award compensation on grounds of Ombudsman guidance and Complaints Policy (CCU)
- We identify trends in complaints and ensure continuous improvement by listening to customers
- Our service views complaints positively; it is an opportunity to learn and improve.

### **Complaints Response Performance**

#### **Stage 1**

- Target for complaints response in 100% per month
- In the first quarter of this financial year complaints performance has been 100%.
- CST deals with more stage 1 complaints than any other LBI service areas (1080 in total for 2016-17)
- For 2016-17 responsive repairs: 783 complaints represent 1.17% of the 67,000 responsive repairs jobs completed by the service which signifies that good service is being provided and learnings acted upon
- The number of responsive repairs complaints upheld in 2016-17 (347) was lower than those upheld in 2015-16 (385). This is a 16% reduction.
- Gas services complaints upheld reduced from 50% in 2015-16 to 39% in 2016-17. This is a 11% reduction.

## Complaints Response Performance

### Stage 2 & Observations

- In 2016-17 of all Stage 2 escalation requests only 19 were accepted for investigation by CCU; only 4 upheld
- This shows the excellent work being done by CST to address complaints accurately; also reflects learning and improving the service.
- Although responses may be done within timescale, there may be outstanding works which fall outside on the complaints process
- CST cannot project manage outstanding works on all occasions due to resource restraints

## Complaints Performance Table

	2016-17	Apr	May	Jun	YTD	2017-18 Monthly Target
<b>Stage 1</b>	97.32					
<b>Responded to In Time</b>	%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100%
<b>Upheld</b>	727	67	59	58	184	
<b>Chief Executive</b>	22	25	34	81		
<b>Stage 2</b>	88.89	None at stage 2	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100%
<b>Responded to In Time</b>	%					
	16	0	2	1	3	
<b>LGO: Initial Enquiries</b>	91.67	None	Received			
<b>Responded to In Time</b>	%					
	--	--	--	--	--	
<b>Member Enquiry</b>	95.98					
	%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100%
		25	42	24	91	

## How Property Services Learn from Complaints

We learn by:

- Listening to complainants & grievances
- Liaison with corporate complaints and all relevant contacts in order to resolve complaint being made
- Identify learnings and recommend Service Improvements


The two areas that are primary causes for complaints are:

- Late Provision of Service
- Poor Quality of Service Provided

The main reason for this is follow on repair works not always actioned in a timely manner by repairs service.

## Actions taken to implement learning

- CST officers capture internal and/or contractor service failures in the Service Failure Form (SF1 - see caption below)
- This is then passed to the Resident Liaison Manager (RLM) who undertakes investigations into the failure with the relevant team manager
- The outcome and the actions to be taken from that meeting is captured, and records kept in the Individual Team Service Failure form (SF2 – see caption below)
- The actions are then followed up and reviewed via a bi-monthly 'Complaints Call Over' meeting between CST manager, RLM and all relevant service managers and Group Leaders to ensure that learning has been implemented; if not then seeking ways to improve service delivery.

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### Service Failures Form – SF1

Name of Customer: CST Advisor:	
Date:	
Full Address (including post code):	
Reason for Service Failure(s):	
Job Number(s):	
Operative(s) / Officer (s) Responsible:	
Team(s) Responsible	
Summary of Service Failure:	
Learning & Service Improvements:	

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### Individual Team Service Failures Form – SF2

Team: Repairs Team 1	
Address:	Job Number:
Service Failure:	Operative/Officer & Team:
Summary of Service Failure:	Learning & Service Improvements:



### **Learning From Customer Feedback**

- To maintain impartiality, Housing Property Services use an independent company called KWEST to carry out customer satisfaction surveys.
- Currently overall customer satisfaction is above 90%
- Both satisfaction and dissatisfaction are addressed.
- We focus on dissatisfaction by ensuring that the Resident Liaison Manager informs and works with relevant teams to learn from service failures

### **KWEST Customer Satisfaction Survey – Active Response and Learning**

- Dissatisfaction feedback is sent by KWEST to the service within 24 hours of completing a survey
- The Customer is contacted within 24 hours of the feedback being received to acknowledge the feedback and seek to resolve any outstanding repair issue and / or clarify details of the reasons for dissatisfaction.
- Action is taken to resolve any outstanding repair issue
- Learning points are collated by the Resident Liaison Manager to provide trend analysis of customer dissatisfaction and learning recommendations
- Feedback reviewed and improvement actions agreed at bi-monthly 'Complaints Call over' meetings

