



anchor

Spotlight

Annual report for leaseholders and
freeholders



For the year ending 31 March 2018

Happy living for the years ahead



This report explains how well we have delivered our services in the past 12 months and what we intend to improve in the next year. We have consulted with the Customer Panel to ensure the information is relevant and in a format and style that residents want.

Value for money

We see delivering cost-effective services you pay for, whilst maintaining high levels of satisfaction, as value for money.

Each year we produce a report which explains what we are doing to deliver value for money. This year's report highlights include:

- Savings against previous years' costs of £3.4m, made through our purchasing and procurement processes. Examples include: a £0.2m rebate on electricity costs achieved by contract negotiation, a reduction of £0.1m on our company car contract, £0.1m on catering equipment (achieved mainly through a standardisation of equipment), and £0.1m on hoist and bathing equipment
- We are now three years into our long term repairs contracts and we continue to target average costs, at the same time as ensuring the quality of the service is maintained. At the end of March 2018, the average repair cost was £138.63 and we delivered just short of 60,000 repairs, (compared to £142 and 55,000 for the previous year). During the year work was undertaken with the contractors to reduce the amount of time taken and the number of visits needed to complete a repair, and this is now delivering a more cost-effective service
- A reduction in travel costs (which include rail, air, car miles, car allowance and hotels) from £4.9m in 2015/6 to £4.1m in 2017/8
- Savings of £50,000 on property and council tax rates

Of those surveyed
63.2% believe
Anchor provides
value for money

How we spend your money

Feedback suggested the breakdown of how we spend a £1 of service charge wasn't useful as it didn't always reflect individual estates' expenditure.

The budget and service charge accounts are the only true reflection of how we spend your money at your estate, and we have been working with the Finance Topic Forum to improve these documents. Their recommendations have made the content and layout easier to read and understand.

The management fee

This fee makes up part of the service charge payment. It is the amount paid to Anchor to cover costs incurred for managing your estate and arranging services that are not already included in the other service charge elements.

It includes operational management, support colleagues, offices and equipment such as the buildings, computer systems and telephones, as well as people costs such as salaries, national insurance contributions and pensions.

The management fee is calculated as an average cost per leasehold/freehold property. We review these costs each year as a part of our budget process. At each estate these costs are then apportioned per property in accordance with the terms and conditions of the lease/transfer.

At some locations such as Leasehold Schemes for the Elderly (LSE) Homes England places an annual limit on the amount of management fee we can charge. For more information speak to your estate manager.

Breakdown of the management fee costs:

- 60% goes to colleague costs
- 30% goes to technology systems and solutions. Within a business which works across multiple sites and in a highly regulated sector, this figure shows the investment in current and future digital innovation
- 10% goes to other associated costs such as office costs, professional fees and subscriptions

How satisfied you are

Over the past few years we have worked with residents to develop the questions and help improve response rates. We've also moved from one large survey to two smaller surveys every year. These provide us with a better idea of how satisfied residents are throughout the year and has resulted in significant cost savings.

The new surveys ask residents to score us between 1 and 10, which is more in depth than the previous five options (very satisfied, fairly satisfied, neither, fairly dissatisfied, very dissatisfied).

65.6% of residents are satisfied with the service received from Anchor (as at March 2018)

This means that the satisfaction results are slightly lower than previously but is normal for this way of measuring.

We plan to introduce telephone satisfaction surveys with residents who are happy to take part in this way. This will allow us to better understand any issues you raise and follow these up - providing us with a much better picture of how we are doing and what we can improve.

How residents influenced our policies and services

Margaret Britton Chair of the Customer Council said: “I first got involved with customer engagement a few years ago when I joined the Scrutiny Panel. I later joined a Topic Forum and then the Customer Council in June last year. In March of this year I became the Chair. This role, for me, is an honour and I will strive to make any decisions in the interest of enhancing the lives of customers.

“I have really enjoyed being part of involvement as you can put your ideas to Anchor in various ways. ‘Customer-focused’ has always been my key phrase. We are involved in setting the meeting agendas for forum and council meetings so we take the lead rather than being led.

“All customers can get involved in some way. Whether it’s local meetings, the Customer Panel or joining a topic forum – there’s something for everyone. You’ll find more details about these groups below.”

Customer Council

Our Customer Council acts as a voice for our diverse customers. The group is made up of six elected members and the chairs of the topic forums. The council has an active role in decision making to:

- Help shape service standards and service delivery
- Drive continuous improvement in Anchor services
- Scrutinise the performance of the organisation
- Determine the number of topic forums and review feedback from each group

This year the Customer Council, in partnership with the topic forums, have had an impact on a range of topics including satisfaction surveys, budget packs, the ‘moving in’ process, MyAccount testing, laminate floor guidance and helping to reduce the number of non-emergency calls received by Anchorcall.

Everyone welcome

We work hard to ensure diversity, dignity and equality for all customers. The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT+) advisory group was set up in October 2007 and the aims of the group are to:

- Help make Anchor a safe and welcoming environment for LGBT+ customers
- Promote Anchor as a LGBT+ friendly organisation
- Provide support and guidance to other customers and colleagues

- Act as a sounding board on LGBT+ issues
- Benchmark activities with other associations
- Network with other organisations and share best practice

The group now has more than 40 active members and over the last 12 months they have worked closely with our care home colleagues on the Care Home Challenge, an awareness project funded by Comic Relief. In conjunction with Middlesex University, the project delivered an audit tool which can be used by care providers nationally to assess the inclusion of older LGBT people in care home environments.

Customer Panel

We encourage all of our tenants and lease/freeholders to join the Customer Panel as feedback is essential in helping ensure we are always improving our performance and customer services.

We have more than 500 people on our Customer Panel. This mechanism is really popular as members are able to give feedback at a time that's convenient to them. The feedback we generate from the panel can be in the form of a survey, email or phone call, or by attending an occasional meeting with other customers and Anchor representatives

You can read more about customer involvement in our Customer Impact report. Visit www.anchor.org.uk/customer-impact-report

Planned merger between Anchor and Hanover

Proposed merger of



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In May Anchor announced plans to merge with Hanover later in 2018. Combining two of the most well-known and longest-established providers of older people's housing and care would bring real benefits and we've been consulting with customers and colleagues to find out their thoughts.

Under the proposals, the two organisations would come together as the Anchor Hanover Group, making it the largest provider of specialist housing and care for older people in England.

Listening to your feedback

Complaints, compliments and feedback help us to understand how we have succeeded and where we can improve. We think it is important that if we have done something wrong, we apologise and make sure we put things right. This means that when we make a mistake we change policies or practices and work with colleagues to make sure we learn from complaints.

Between April 2017 and March 2018 we:

- Received 2,780 complaints from tenants and leaseholder/freeholders. This is an increase of 118 from last year

- Only 6 complaints were transferred to the Ombudsman Service. Of those, the Ombudsman found no maladministration had taken place, however in three cases recommendations were made
- Of those complaints* received 93% were resolved within 10 days
- Our average number of days with a complaint* open was 7.12 days (10 days is our target)
- We closed 63% of complaints* within 7 days or less. Compared to last year's figures, there's been a small 1% drop in resolution time and closure time within 7 days
- 984 compliments were received from tenants and leaseholder/freeholders. These are shared with colleagues and their managers. These compliments are wonderful to receive and help us recognise where we are providing great service

The top three complaint reasons were*:

1. Property (includes planned works, repairs, local property issues, window cleaning) = 1181 (42.5% of total)
2. Perceived attitude and behaviour of colleagues = 537 (19.3% of total)
3. Communication and consultation = 536 (19.3% of total)

* The figures above show complaints received from **all** Anchor services.

Customer Complaints Panel

Where a resident isn't happy with the outcome of their complaint, they can request that the Complaints Panel review the decision and make recommendations.

- Between April 2017 and March 2018 the panel reviewed 19 complaints across all Anchor services. Of those reviewed two went on to the Ombudsman service.

Did you know...over the last year our independent Customer Complaints Panel has developed a new way of working to cut costs and save travel time. They now hold the majority of their meetings to discuss cases via conference calls.

Customer disputes/disagreements

We logged 767 (rented and leasehold/ freehold) customer disagreements or disputes with only a small proportion associated with anti-social behaviour (ASB).

Just over a year ago we set up an improvement group to help us better handle suspected cases of ASB and the more common neighbourhood disputes. The group has:

- Developed and improved the incident diary to help log suspected disputes more effectively
- Helped introduce new e-learning for colleagues
- Streamlined procedures to make reporting easier and faster for customers
- Provided workshops, which share best practice, for colleagues in areas where there are more issues
- Introduced dispute champions – we have identified a person in each region that can

provide other colleagues with practical advice and support when they're dealing with disputes or suspected ASB

Technology

Almost 60% of customers who responded to a recent survey now regularly use the internet through smartphones, PCs/laptops or tablets and it's likely this figure will continue to grow. We have therefore invested a great deal in improving our website and increasing what customers can do online.

We have successfully bid for money from Aviva to purchase a number of tablets that will be shared between locations. This will allow managers to help residents access their accounts, use benefit calculators and advice, and increase digital inclusion.

We are also looking at how mobile devices can help us save time at locations – allowing managers to carry out online checks around the location rather than filling in paper forms and then adding the same information to online systems.

Last year's commitments - what we've achieved

Anchor's website

Our aim – to develop our website and make it easier for users to find the information that's relevant to them.

We achieved – the new website was launched in May 2018. From the outset of the project we consulted with customers and colleagues to ensure that the website met their expectations and was user-friendly. Since its launch, enquiries using the 'Contact Us' website form, are up 49.67% on the same period in 2017. The new website is much quicker with the average page download time being 66% faster than the previous site.

Managing your account online

Our aim – to enable residents to have the ability to do more online.

We achieved – residents can now update personal details, set up a Direct Debit, contact us to log a complaint, neighbour dispute or compliment, complete surveys and make payments.

Anchorcall

Our aim – for Anchorcall our 24 hour emergency call centre to get its TSA (Telecare Services Association) accreditation. This body ensures that providers meet the highest standards of service.

We achieved – we achieved the accreditation in October 2017. We've also worked with colleagues and the Anchorcall Topic Forum to remind residents that Anchorcall should only be used in an emergency and the correct way to report repairs. This has helped reduce the number of non-emergency calls received.

- Last year Anchorcall answered 457,271 calls
- 97.06% were answered in 60 seconds (from them connecting with Anchorcall)



Our aim – to partner with Oysta and offer customers the chance to purchase a mobile device with an inbuilt emergency button, fall sensor and GPS tracking allowing residents to get assistance if they need it wherever they are.

We achieved – we have worked with Oysta to promote the device to customers and colleagues.

Customer newsletter - Anchor Living

Our aim – to review our customer newsletter Anchor Living and ensure it provides great value for money.

We achieved – we worked with the Technology, Communication and Information Topic Forum to redesign Anchor Living saving almost £2,000 on printing and postage.

Commitments for the coming year

Due to proposed merger with Hanover we haven't included any commitments in this report as these are like to change if the merger progresses. We will be working with our Hanover colleagues to ensure we learn from each organisation in order to provide the best value for money service and will be working hard over the coming months to keep you updated about this.

Do you have any feedback or want to find out more?

If you'd like to provide feedback about this report, submit any questions on the topics covered, or want to see a longer version or our Value for Money report email communications.team@anchor.org.uk or write to Communications Team, Anchor, 2 Godwin Street, Bradford, BD1 2ST or visit www.anchor.org.uk

This report cost 9p to produce.

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