



Scrutiny Group review findings

- Communications

September 2025

Summary

In August and September, tenants reviewed how WCHG communicates with its customers.

Why?

Scrutiny Group noted that the lead cause of complaints to WCHG is:

- not being able to get things resolved quickly
- a lack of communication or action
- how we have communicated with customers

These types of complaints are across all services areas; however, the 12-week 'major' repairs have attracted particular concern for poor communications.

A Scrutiny Group member highlighted a recent experience they had of poor communication after requesting permission to make an improvement to their home.

In March 2025, a 'This is Us' campaign was launched providing guidance to all WCHG colleagues on the tone of voice to use in written communications. Scrutiny Group members wanted to investigate whether this approach is now being used, particularly in teams that deal with enforcement as well as day-to-day customer communications.

This work therefore aims to review a sample of communications with tenants about day-to-day operations. The purpose is to:

- provide an insight into the customer experience of WCHG communications
- make recommendations as to how communications may be improved

The Review

Members set out to answer the following questions

1. Is communication with tenants:
 - o clear
 - o accessible
 - o relevant
 - o timely ?
2. Are communications appropriate to the diverse needs of tenants?
3. Are the 'This is Us' tone of voice guidelines now being consistently applied across WCHG?

In completing the review, members of the Scrutiny Group carried out the following activities:

1. Commissioned an analysis of customer data to understand:

- What are the most common disabilities reported by customers?
- What are the most common additional needs requested by customers relating to communications?
- Are tenants with these disabilities satisfied with WCHG's communications?
- What complaints have been made relating to poor communication? Is it possible to identify the root causes?
- Has WCHG had any compliments from customers relating to good communication?

2. Picked a sample of day-to-day repairs: and major (12 week) repairs.

Reviewed copies of the communications sent and received for these cases.

3. Conducted a desktop review of text messages and letters using 'This is Us' guidelines, relating to:

- tenancy audits
- rent arrears
- anti-social behavior
- overgrown gardens

4. Reviewed the end-to-end process for a 'home improvement request'

Findings

Q1: Is communication with tenants clear, accessible, relevant and timely ?

Findings

No, not consistently but improving. The introduction of text messages has been well received by tenants, making communications about day-to-day repairs much easier. Major repairs has experienced a period of very poor satisfaction and high complaints, with tenants waiting up to 12 weeks for an appointment to be booked. Members are satisfied that the steps taken to rectify this in July 2025 (appointments made by surveyor same day or within 2 weeks of surveyor visit) appear to be an improvement, as does the introduction of surveyors reports for customers required under Awaab's Law.

Recommendations

- Tenants without mobile phones should be offered alternative written communication for: the appointment date and time; and any cancellation or rebooking required
- Consider whether, when we call a customer, instead of 'private number', 'Wythenshawe Community Housing Group' could be shown as the caller
- Callers should always leave a voicemail, if available, explaining who they are; why they called; and any further action required by customer e.g. call customer hub
- Inform customers if there will be a contractor attending their home, specifically: which contractor; what the job is; and when they can expect to hear from them
- All colleagues with an email address should use their out-of-office to let customers know when they are not available
- Consider holding a record of customer's communication preferences and be able to consistently communicate in this way
- Consider making the descriptions of the job in the text message about a repair more detailed

Q2: Are communications appropriate to the diverse needs of tenants?

Findings

Overall, the TSM 2024 data shows that tenants with a disability are just as satisfied with services as tenants without a disability. Current disability data tells us that the top 2 disabilities experienced by WCHG residents are:

Hearing	- affects an estimated 4,000 tenants
Mobility	- affects an estimated 4,000 tenants

Which is then closely followed by;

Fatigue	- 3,000 tenants
Mental health	- 2,000 tenants
Dexterity	- 2,000 tenants

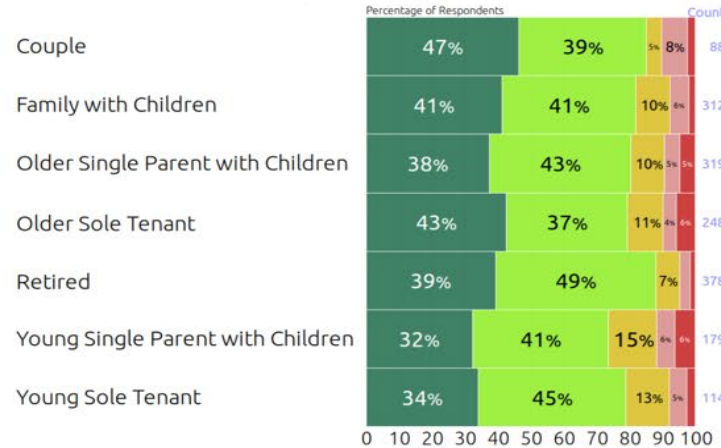
Recommendations

- Develop a disability action group to identify improving communication methods for those with accessibility issues.

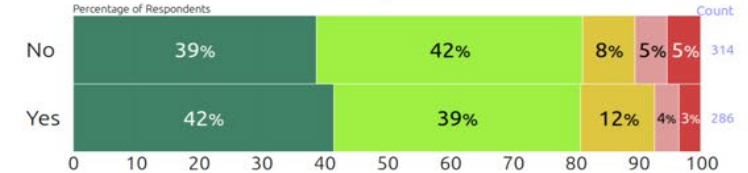
Fair & equitable outcomes



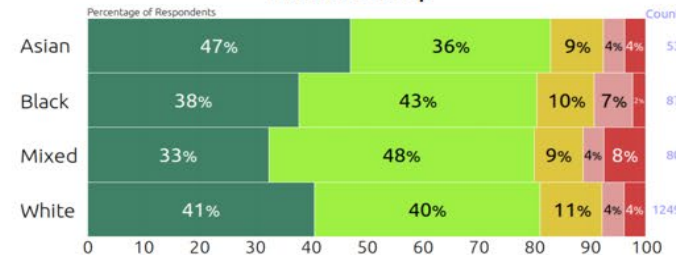
Agreement That Treated Fairly & With Respect By Customer Segment



Agreement That Treated Fairly & With Respect By Disability Status



Agreement That Treated Fairly & With Respect By Ethnic Group



TP08 is showing a consistent score over the last 3 years, sitting just under the upper quartile of the 2023 benchmarking

TP08 is not showing much variation across different demographics

Be cautious due to number of customers within each group

Q3: Are the ‘This is Us’ tone of voice guidelines now being consistently applied across WCHG?

Findings

No, not consistently. Though the communications are clear, accessible, relevant and timely the comms team still need to carry out further work across WCHG for those that have not adopted the tone of voice guidelines.

Members reviewed a number of letters that have been through the process of “this is us” and are determined that this should be adopted right across the board as they found the reviewing of the letters informative.

Recommendations

- Ensure a timely and prompt group wide adoption of the “This is us”
- SG would like to know how the roll out goes and receive feedback once completed.

Q4 - Home Improvements Process – Clear, Accessible, Relevant, Timely

Findings

No, the website doesn't give any indication of where to go for the online application and members were unclear what to search for. Inconsistencies in how the form is completed due to the current form being unclear

Members found that there wasn't consistency in the approach to getting the information, the form online, the app and the paper version all differ.

The online form needs to go through "tone of voice" and additionally members identified areas of improvement to make it clearer for tenants. The form does not consider someone doing improvements due to disabilities.

It is clear that the current **20 working days timeline is not being met due to insufficient resources.**

Recommendations

Ensure one consistent form, regardless of where you go to complete this.

Consider additional resources to ensure timelines are met and customer expectations managed.

Update the website to make the information more accessible

Application form for home improvements to be improved:

- Apply "this is us" wording
- Update the form so relevant questions are asked based on the type of alteration
- Include more information to help tenants understand what is required for approval
- Make it clearer what information is mandatory
- Ensure that disabilities and vulnerabilities are considered
- Explain why you are asking tenants to provide costings of any proposed works
- Explain the process, so tenants know what will happen throughout
- Once form is submitted the tenant should get an email or notification to say it has been received
- There is no option to save and return to the form, this needs to be added if possible

Recommendations

1 - Analysis of Customer Data

- Develop a disability action group to identify improving communication methods for those with accessibility issues.

2 - Day to day repairs

- Tenants without mobile phones should be offered alternative written communication for: the appointment date and time; and any cancellation or rebooking required
- Consider whether, when we call a customer, instead of 'private number', 'Wythenshawe Community Housing Group' could be shown as the caller
- Callers should always leave a voicemail, if available, explaining who they are; why they called; and any further action required by customer e.g. call customer hub
- Inform customers if there will be a contractor attending their home, specifically: which contractor; what the job is; and when they can expect to hear from them
- All colleagues with an email address should use their out-of-office to let customers know when they are not available
- Consider holding a record of customer's communication preferences and be able to consistently communicate in this way
- Consider making the descriptions of the job in the text message about a repair more detailed

3- Desktop review

- Ensure a timely and prompt group wide adoption of the “This is us”
- SG would like to know how the role out goes and receive feedback once completed.

4 -Review of end-to-end process for a 'home improvement request'

- Ensure one consistent form, regardless of where you go to complete this.
- Consider additional resources to ensure timelines are met and customer expectations managed.
- Update the website to make the information more accessible
- Application form for home improvements to be improved:
- Apply “this is us” wording
- Update the form so relevant questions are asked based on the type of alteration
- Include more information to help tenants understand what is required for approval
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5. Lived experiences which Scrutiny Group members feel represent customer views on our communications:

These are verbatim comments from surveys and quotes from customer complaints and compliments

“I asked to rearrange this appointment and yet I still returned home to a card through the door. Trying to get any repairs done is hard work and the time scales are unreasonable”

“Speed of the time my repair is estimated to take”.

“Actually, complete repairs that are booked”

“Better communication”

“Better appointments quicker services”

“Bit more patience giving ppl a chance to get to the door to answer it pls”

“The job was not done they never turned up , I phoned a few times but in the end my husband cleared the gutter.”

“Workers doing the job first time”

“Luke was very professional and pleasant. I got a text alerting me to his arrival. He sealed a few extra bits that were coming loose. Thank you for your help.”

“From start to finish it was fuss free without any drama. Couldn't fault it.”

“The man that came to repair my window is an asset to you guys an a real polite gentleman you lucky to have him as an employee in my opinion top bloke”

“Very helpful customer service over the phone and efficient”.

“The guy was on time checked all round the house he was telling me what he was doing when he was doing it I am very happy with the work he as done”

“Lovely from the reception to the trade man”

“I reported this repair while having a gas inspection and received a phone call on the same day to say the repair would be done the following week so very pleased”

Management response:

- All the recommendations made have been accepted by management.
- Subject to CXC approval, the recommendations will be added to the Scrutiny Group recommendations tracker with target dates and progress will be reported monthly to Scrutiny Group members.
- The recommendation tracker is reviewed annually by Group Audit & Risk Committee.



Wythenshawe
Community Housing Group