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Gloucester City Homes

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MYSTERY SHOPPER EVALUATION

On the whole we are reasonably content with the results from the Mystery Shopping evaluation conducted on behalf of Gloucester City Homes between the 19th and 27th of May 2008. However we do appreciate and value such exercises in helping identifying any areas of weakness and helping us target specific areas which may require improvement.

How the calls were answered:

We are pleased that the calls were answered within the required service standard and that, on the whole, the callers found our operators courteous and helpful. We are concerned that the voice mail was not responded to, which resulted in the caller having to call again.

Rechargeable repair requests:

Whilst we would inform a tenant on the approximate cost of a rechargeable repair, we have no involvement regarding payment options. In such circumstances we direct the tenant to contact the Client in order to make appropriate payment arrangements. As to the no offer of help regarding 1b, the tenant should have been directed to the tenants handbook.

Non-rechargeable repair requests:

It is unfortunate that one of the callers found one of our operators 'quite brusque'; our operators always identify themselves at the commencement of any call so it would have been helpful if the caller could have identified the operator concerned. We endeavour to make appointments which are suitable to the tenant rather than the tenants having to make alternative arrangements to meet an appointment date set by us. At present it is not normal practice to arrange appointments on a Saturday. Job numbers are not normally given over the phone, unless specifically requested.

Summary and remedial actions:

Given the time that has passed and without any transcript of the calls it is difficult to comment precisely on each of the calls concerned however:

At the time this exercise was undertaken the operators in place were relatively inexperienced and on the whole we are pleased that they were deemed to have handled the calls satisfactorily.

In addition, Office Response, the company engaged to undertake handling our out of hours call handling service had only relatively recently been engaged. On the whole the service they provide is first rate but at the time this exercise was undertaken their knowledge and understanding regarding the repairs processes was still under development. We have been constantly developing their processes and closely monitoring their progress and are extremely confident regarding their ability to operate the out of hours service.

We have recently undertaken an in-depth review of our administrative procedures and are currently in the process of introducing a radical restructure to our call centre and administration, with the introduction of a dedicated training programme for all administrative staff which already encompasses a number of the areas identified within the mystery shopper report. We are currently awaiting board level approval regarding our administrative restructure but in anticipation have already commenced the training programme. We are confident that the weaknesses identified within the report have been substantially addressed by our review and would welcome similar exercises in the future so that we may better assess our progress.

Dave Charlton
Office Administration Manager