

## ReAction Report For Income Management Focus Group 10/02/2009

At this focus group meeting, we asked our customers to suggest ideas on how we can improve our income management service. Our response to the issues raised and the action we plan to take follows.

You Said:	Our Reply:
<p><b>1. Eviction Appeals Panel (EPA)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If the EPA is transferred to GCH, there should be a balance on the Panel between 'tenant friendliness' and good business practice.</li> <li>• In addition to above, there should be independent people on the panel, including a tenant from outside the area of the tenant up for eviction plus an independent board member.</li> <li>• Any appeals process should be made more efficient and should not be run by the Income Management Team due to the increased workload.</li> </ul>	<p>We are currently seeking to move control of the eviction appeals panel to GCH. We are undertaking a review as to the form it should take and a further focus group will be held to discuss the options available.</p>
<p><b>2. Incentives for rent payers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send thank you letters or cards to tenants who maintain a clear rent account.</li> <li>• When sending out generic rent reminder letters, screen out those in credit to avoid aggravating those who are careful to pay their rent on time.</li> <li>• Increase the number of prizes for the rent prize draw e.g. instead of one £500 prize, have five £100 prizes.</li> <li>• Introduce a 'gold repairs service' whereby tenants with clear rent accounts receive a faster response repairs service.</li> </ul>	<p>Next year we will consider sending letters to tenants who pay their rent on time.</p> <p>From next financial year this we will try to produce more targeted campaigns.</p> <p>We will change how the prizes are provided for the prize draw.</p> <p>When consultation was carried out tenants did not want a gold service for repairs</p>
<p><b>3. Credit Crunch support</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is already enough agencies providing information on "surviving the credit crunch" – GCH does not need to do any more than it is already (e.g. regular Tenant Times articles).</li> <li>• GCH should continue to hammer home the message that tenants who find themselves in difficulty paying their rent should contact us straight away.</li> </ul>	<p>We will try to provide information and signpost those needing help to other organisations.</p> <p>We will try to continue to produce campaigns and letters to raise awareness.</p>

# REACTION



<p><b>4. Worklessness initiatives</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Publicise in regular Tenant Times articles.</li> <li>Include inserts with rent statements – but NOT with other inserts in order to maximise attention.</li> </ul>	<p>Information will be provided where possible and as a clearly identifiable insert.</p>
<p><b>5. Service standards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Standard: We will always give you at least 4 weeks notice of any change to your rent or other charges.</b> Comments: the group agreed this should be a minimum of 6 weeks to provide more notice especially for tenants who work.</li> <li><b>Standard: Methods of payment (8 methods).</b> Comments: one attendee suggested PayPal should be included as a means to pay.</li> <li><b>Standard: We will send you a statement of your account every 3 months.</b> Comments: could these be sent electronically to those tenants able to access email? This would save significant costs in postage. For those in arrears, could statements be sent monthly to remind them to clear their account?</li> <li><b>Standard: We will do our best to ensure debt-counselling partner agencies contact you within 3 working days (1 working day if urgent) to agree a time to meet.</b></li> </ul>	<p>We try to give 6 weeks notice but due to problems this year there will only be 5 weeks notice of the rent increase.</p> <p>We would not drastically improve our services for the extra investment needed. We already offer internet and automated phone payments.</p> <p>We do not have the technology currently to do this.</p> <p>Agreed</p>

If you have any further questions or comments please do not hesitate to contact us:

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