



Assessment Report
Customer Service Excellence

Northwards Housing

Successful
17 June 2009

Assessment Summary

Overview

Overall Self-assessment Satisfactory

Overall outcome Successful

Northwards Housing is an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO) created in December 2005 by Manchester City Council as part of the Housing Investment Options programme. Northwards took over management of 12,900 Council homes in North Manchester, pledging to bring all the properties up to at least the Government's "Decent Homes Standard" by 2011.

Northwards Housing has made rapid and successful progress, providing a very high quality service. The Audit Commission's ALMO Inspection Report, February 2009, gave Northwards the highest possible rating as an "excellent" three-star service that has excellent prospects for improvement.

Northwards Housing achieved the Charter Mark Standard in 2007 and has quickly and successfully transitioned over to the Customer Service Excellence Standard. There is a strong focus on customer care within the organisation and consultation is clearly central to service improvement.

1: Customer Insight

Criterion 1 self-assessment Satisfactory

Criterion 1 outcome Successful

Northwards Housing has an in-depth understanding of its customers that has enabled it to design and provide services that meet the needs of the full range of customer groups. Satisfaction levels are high and improving.

The one area for improvement relates to the need to show that the Service maps customers' journeys and takes steps to improve these.

2: The Culture of the Organisation

Criterion 2 self-assessment Satisfactory

Criterion 2 outcome Successful

There is strong corporate commitment to putting the customer at the heart of service delivery.

You empower and encourage all staff to actively promote and participate in the customer focused culture of the organisation.

3: Information and Access

Criterion 3 self-assessment Satisfactory

Criterion 3 outcome Successful

The high quality of verbal, published and web-based information that you produce merits Compliance Plus, particularly the clear and innovative DVD of the Tenants Handbook, the attractive and colourful Annual Report, the impressive Northwards Natter newsletter and the interactive web site.

Your partnership arrangements are another strength of the Service meriting Compliance Plus. You have very strong partnership arrangements with other providers particularly Manchester City Council, and including Manchester Strategic Housing Partnership, North Manchester Regeneration Partnership, Anti-Social Behaviour Action Team, partner contractors such as Manchester Working, the award winning IMPACT Manchester not-for-profit housing consortium and Manchester Police.

Additionally, you support the wider communities in many outstanding ways that merit Compliance Plus. You now run the award winning and highly valued Neighbourhood Wardens Service across the whole of the Northwards area.

4: Delivery

Criterion 4 self-assessment Insufficient

Criterion 4 outcome Successful

The Service has challenging standards and sound monitoring procedures for its main services that are used to raise standards and effect continuous improvement.

You consult and involve people in a wide range of ways, learning from best practice and benchmarking your performance against similar organisations.

The main area for development lies in Complaints, where there is a need for you to publish information on the improvements you have made, specifically relating the actions you have taken to the complaints you have received.

5: Timeliness and Quality of Service

Criterion 5 self-assessment Strong

Criterion 5 outcome Successful

Northwards Housing has clear and measurable standards and monitoring procedures in relation to timeliness and quality of service.

You are responsive to customers' needs, taking steps to inform the customer of any delays.

The main area for development relates to the need for further evidence to demonstrate conclusively that your performance in relation to timeliness compares well with similar organisations.

1: Customer Insight

1.1: Customer Identification

1.1.1: We have an in-depth understanding of the characteristics of our current and potential customer groups based on recent and reliable information.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E01: Customer Profiling Results

Fair and Equal Survey has been carried out to help identify the make up of our tenants and any individual communication needs that will assist us in delivering services. This information is broken down by Area Panel and then by Wards and has been shared with Area Panel and Sub Committees.

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

E04: CORE Data

Information collected by the Rehousing Team which is inputted into the CORE Lettings Log. This information gives us an insight into who we are rehousing. Types of data collected is gender, ethnicity and status of the individual.

E05: Retirement Housing Client Database

This is an in house database the has information on all Retirement Housing Residents.

E104: Surveys

Post Let Survey and Customer Profiling Survey are completed with all new tenants at the sign up. This identifies customer groups and any communication needs.

E105: Customer Profiling Data - How it has been used

The report highlights how we have used the data collected to improve the services we deliver and we plan to use the data for further improvements.

1.1.2: We have developed customer insight about our customer groups to better understand their needs and preferences.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E07: Equality Impact Assessments

EIA carried out to improve the services provided by Northwards Housing by ensuring it does not discriminate against, BME, disabled, age, sexuality, gender and race. There are examples of completed EIAs and actions taken to avoid discrimination.

E104: Surveys

Partnering Contractors pre entry survey, Fair and Equal survey and Post Let Survey are all used to collect information about our customers to adapt the services to meet their individual needs.

E53: Resident Involvement Database

This a database that holds information on all residents that are actively involved with Northwards Housing.

E106: Forums

There are a number of Forums across Northwards which focus on a particular service area and are valuable in gaining customers feedback to assist us to improve services. Improvements made are setting up an LGBT Forum, exploring a specialised adviser at On Call for Tenants with Learning Disabilities.

E107: Sign Up Procedure

This procedure highlights when information needs to be collected regarding the customers communication and individual needs.

1.1.3: We make particular efforts to identify hard to reach and disadvantaged groups and individuals and have developed our services in response to their specific needs.

Applicant Self Assessment: Insufficient

New Evidence

E07: Equality Impact Assessments

EIA carried out to improve the services provided by Northwards Housing by ensuring it does not discriminate against, BME, disabled, age, sexuality, gender and race. There are examples of completed EIAs and actions taken to avoid discrimination.

E13: Tenants Handbook DVD

Information provided to all new tenants and leaseholders on standards and services that are available and how to access them.

E12: Home Improvement DVD

This DVD informs Tenants of Home Improvements Works the process and the choices available. Also available in various languages and with subtitles.

E105: Customer Profiling Data - How it has been used

The report highlights how we have used the data collected to improve the services we deliver and we plan to use the data for further improvements.

E108: Access to Services Strategy

This strategy was produced following a review in consultation with tenants It shows how we deliver our services and what improvements we plan to make.

E106: Forums

There are a number of Forums across the organisation which focus on a particular service area and are a valuable tool in gaining customers feedback to assist us to improve services. The LGBT residents forum was established as a result of feedback from the customer satisfaction survey and HIP survey.

1.2: Engagement and Consultation

1.2.1: We have a strategy for engaging and involving customers using a range of methods appropriate to the needs of identified customer groups.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E16: Northwards Website

Provides information and interactive access to all services.

E15: Staff Suggestion Scheme

We run two Reward schemes (staff suggestions and Value for Money Suggestions) to motivate staff and improve productivity, efficiency and service delivery.

E14: Resident Involvement Agreement

Resident involvement Agreement developed in consultation with customers and residents and monitored by the Resident Involvement Task Group. There are a wide range of forums which are used to gain valuable feedback from customers. This strategy also links in with MCCs Community Engagement Strategy.

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 20087.

E109: Business Planning 2009

An annual event held with tenants to feedback on how Northwards has acted on there ideas given and also consultation for future planning.

E115: Single Equality Scheme

Northwards produced a three year strategy and action plan to meet our commitments under the Race, Disability and Gender Equality Duties, and in anticipation of a new single Equality Duty. The Scheme details the actions to be taken to promote equality of opportunity and to remove barriers to service.

1.2.2: We have made the consultation of customers integral to continually improving our service and we advise customers of the results and action taken.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E11: Access Review

An Access Review was carried out with staff and residents to ensure all services are accessible to all our customers. Following on from the review a Access to Services Strategy was produced.

E07: Equality Impact Assessments

EIA carried out to improve the services provided by Northwards Housing by ensuring it does not discriminate against, BME, disabled, age, sexuality, gender and race. There are examples of completed EIAs and actions taken to avoid discrimination.

E20: Team Improvement Plans

Team Improvement Plans set out how individual teams will improve services over the forthcoming period. This links to the organisations aims and objectives.

E19: Voids Review

Consultants commissioned by Northwards to carryout a review on the voids management process. Focus groups held with tenants and staff to obtain feedback. The aim of the review was to reduce relet times. Further consultation with residents looking at void standards is currently being carried out.

E18: Welcome to Northwards Report

Sub Committee Report on findings of the Welcome to Northwards Survey. The report highlights actions taken or planned as a result of the survey.

E106: Forums

There are a number of Forums across the organisation which focus on a particular service area and are a valuable tool in gaining customers feedback to assist us to improve services. Customers have helped design and deliver the Hate Incident Policy.

1.2.3: We regularly review our strategies and opportunities for consulting and engaging with customers to ensure that the methods used are effective and provide reliable and representative results.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E11: Access Review

An Access Review was carried out with staff and residents to ensure all services are accessible to all our customers. Following on from the review a Access to Services Strategy was produced.

E19: Voids Review

Consultants commissioned by Northwards to carryout a review on the voids management process. Focus groups held with tenants and staff to obtain feedback. The aim of the review was to reduce relet times. Further consultation with residents looking at void standards is currently being carried out.

E07: Equality Impact Assessments

EIA carried out to improve the services provided by Northwards Housing by ensuring it does not discriminate against, BME, disabled, age, sexuality, gender and race. There are examples of completed EIAs and actions taken to avoid discrimination.

E14: Resident Involvement Agreement

Resident involvement Agreement developed in consultation with customers and residents and monitored by the Resident Involvement Task Group. This has been subject to a review and a revised version has been approved. Recently a review has been carried out on the Area Panels constitution.

E22: Performance Improvement Group (PIG)

Group of Northwards staff and partners which looks at Performance of the organisation and makes suggestions for improvement.

E105: Customer Profiling Data - How it has been used

The report highlights how we have used the data collected to improve the services we deliver and we plan to use the data for further improvements.

1.3: Customer Satisfaction

1.3.1: We use reliable and accurate methods to measure customer satisfaction on a regular basis.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

E24: Mystery Shoppers

An initiative using a register of customers to assist with monitoring the quality of the service.

E25: 1/4ly Performance Report

Quarterly Performance Management Report (January-March 09).

E26: Satisfaction Levels for Home Improvements

Reports taken to Asset Management Sub Committee on residents satisfaction levels for all Decent Homes Work.

E27: Customer Satisfaction Timetable

This report sets out the timetable for proposed customer satisfaction activity for Northwards Housing for 2009/2010

1.3.2: We analyse and publicise satisfaction levels for the full range of customers for all main areas of our service and we have improved services as a result.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

E25: 1/4ly Performance Report

Quarterly Performance Management Report Jan-March 09.

E29: Satisfaction Reports to Sub Committee

Reports taken to various Sub Committees on residents satisfaction levels for all Northwards services.

E20: Team Improvement Plans

Team Improvement Plans set out how individual teams will improve services over the forthcoming period. This links to the organisations aims and objectives.

E28: Northwards Natter

The March 09 edition of the Northwards Natter published the results of the Customer Satisfaction Survey 2008.

E110: Area Panel Customer Satisfaction

Report highlighting the results of the annual customer satisfaction survey and minutes from the area panel meeting highlighting their comments.

1.3.3: We include in our measurement of satisfaction specific questions relating to key areas including those on delivery, timeliness, information, access, and the quality of customer service, as well as specific questions which are informed by customer insight.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E11: Access Review

An Access Review was carried out with staff and residents to ensure all services are accessible to all our customers. Following on from the review a Access to Services Strategy was produced. The group also looked at extended opening hours and carried out a pilot scheme.

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

E104: Surveys

Customer Satisfaction Survey, Decent Homes Improvement Survey, Post Let Survey, Complaints Handling Survey and Repairs Satisfaction Survey.

E106: Forums

There are a number of Forums across the organisation which focus on a particular service area and are a valuable tool in gaining customers feedback to assist us to improve services.

E109: Business Planning 2009

An annual event held with tenants to feedback on how Northwards has acted on there ideas given and also consultation for future planning.

Active Evidence

N200: Various evaluation of events

Evaluation of various events held by Northwards asking customers for their views.

1.3.4: We set challenging and stretching targets for customer satisfaction and our levels are improving.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E25: 1/4ly Performance Report

Quarterly Performance Management Report Jan-March 09.

E33: KPI Targets

Key set of Performance Indicators to ensure consistent monitoring of the capital programme across the framework of contractors.

E34: Housemark

Report of the costs and resources involved in managing the housing management and maintenance functions.

E112: Setting Targets

Report sets out satisfaction targets for 2008-2010.

E111: Covalent

This new performance management software enables us to monitor performance and identify trends.

1.3.5: We have made positive changes to services as a result of analysing customer experience, including improved customer journeys.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E19: Voids Review

Consultants commissioned by Northwards to carry out a review on the voids management process. Focus groups held with tenants and staff to obtain feedback. The aim of the review was to reduce relet times. Further consultation with residents looking at void standards is currently being carried out.

E35: Annual Report

The Annual Report informs Tenants how much it costs to run the services.

E36: Big Word

As a result of a review carried out on language use. It was decided that 'The Big Word' was more cost effective.

E07: Equality Impact Assessments

EIA carried out to improve the services provided by Northwards Housing by ensuring it does not discriminate against, BME, disabled, age, sexuality, gender and race. There are examples of completed EIAs and actions taken to avoid discrimination.

2: The Culture of the Organisation

2.1: Leadership, Policy and Culture

2.1.1: There is corporate commitment to putting the customer at the heart of service delivery and leaders in our organisation actively support this and advocate for customers.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E38: Northwards Mission Statement / Objectives

Mission Statement, values and objectives for Northwards Housing,

E01: Customer Profiling Results

Fair and Equal Survey is in the process of being carried out to help identify the make up of our tenants and any individual communication needs that will assist Northwards in delivering services.

E52: Leadership Training

Northwards ran a bespoke Leadership Development Programme for 48 Directors, Heads of Service, Managers and Deputies on building a high performance team, creative problem solving, managing change and leading and developing people.

E40: Community Regeneration Strategy and Improvement Plan

Northwards Housing is committed to helping create successful sustainable communities, including addressing inequalities that exist between areas of North and East Manchester and the rest of the City.

E41: Business/Delivery Plan

This Business and Delivery Plan is a statement of objectives and targets which address the Mission and Values of Northwards Housing, within the constraints of available resources, both staff and finance.

2.1.2: We use customer insight to inform policy and strategy and to prioritise service improvement activity.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E11: Access Review

An Access Review was carried out with staff and residents to ensure all services are accessible to all our customers. Following on from the review a Access to Services Strategy was produced.

E07: Equality Impact Assessments

EIA carried out to improve the services provided by Northwards Housing by ensuring it does not discriminate against, BME, disabled, age, sexuality, gender and race. There are examples of completed EIAs and actions taken to avoid discrimination.

E105: Customer Profiling Data - How it has been used

The report highlights how we have used the data collected to improve the services we deliver and we plan to use the data for further improvements.

E19: Voids Review

Consultants commissioned by Northwards to carry out a review on the voids management process. Focus groups held with tenants and staff to obtain feedback. The aim of the review was to reduce relet times. Further consultation with residents looking at void standards is currently being carried out.

E90: Complaints Review

A Review of the Complaints Policy took place with Tenants and staff. This led to the policy being revised with the main point being that customers are contacted personally to discuss their complaint.

2.1.3: We have policies and procedures which support the right of all customers to expect excellent levels of service.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E13: Tenants Handbook DVD

Information provided to all new tenants and leaseholders on standards and services that are available and how to access them.

E42: Equality and Diversity Policies

Policies which set out overall commitment to Equality it incorporates both the equal opportunity policy in service provision and equal opportunities in employment. Other policies relating to Equality and Diversity are the Single Equality Scheme, Translations Policy and the Hate Incident Policy.

E44: Customer Care Standards Leaflet

The customer care standards adhered to by all Northwards staff. Set minimum standards for responding to our customers.

E38: Northwards Mission Statement / Objectives

Mission Statement, values and objectives for Northwards Housing.

E20: Team Improvement Plans

Team Improvement Plans set out how individual teams will improve services over the forthcoming period. This links to the organisations aims and objectives.

2.1.4: We ensure that all customers and customer groups are treated fairly and this is confirmed by feedback and the measurement of customer experience.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008. This information has also been analysed by the six equality strands.

E29: Satisfaction Reports to Sub Committee

Various reports to Sub Committees highlighting levels of satisfaction across the organisation.

E24: Mystery Shoppers

An initiative using a register of customers to assist with monitoring the quality of the service.

E102: E & D Work Group

Officers of the organisation look at Equality and Diversity issues.

E60: Letters of Praise

Letters of Praise received by staff at Northwards from customers which highlight the personal experience of our services.

2.1.5: We protect customers' privacy both in face-to-face discussions and in the transfer and storage of customer information.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

E46: Data Protection/Freedom of Information

Information on procedures for staff on how to deal with Freedom on Information or Data Protection requests. This information was cascaded to all staff at a cascade briefing. We were challenged by the Information Commissioners Office regarding the security of data we held.

E49: Information we hold leaflet

Leaflet telling customers what they need to do to request information.

E116: On Call Validation Script

Script used by all staff at the Contact Centre checking the validation of the caller.

E117: IT Security Policy

Internal policy for all staff on the use/security of all IT equipment and data.

Active Evidence

N048: Various Posters

Posters informing customers that if they require to speak in private rooms are available. These posters are displayed in all of our local offices reception areas.

2.1.6: We empower and encourage all employees to actively promote and participate in the customer focused culture of our organisation.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E14: Resident Involvement Agreement

Resident involvement Agreement developed in consultation with customers and residents and monitored by the Resident Involvement Task Group. This has been subject to a review and a revised version has been approved.

E52: Leadership Training

Northwards ran a bespoke Leadership Development Programme for 48 Directors, Heads of Service, Managers and Deputies on building a high performance team, creative problem solving, managing change and leading and developing people.

E20: Team Improvement Plans

Team Improvement Plans set out how individual teams will improve services over the forthcoming period. This links to the organisations aims and objectives.

E103: Policies and Procedures - website

Link to staff Intranet where all Policies and Procedures are held and staff can access.

E54: Appraisals

Competency based appraisal scheme for all Northwards employees.

E139: Employee Groups

These groups enable staff to actively promote and participate in the running of the organisation.

2.2: Staff Professionalism and Attitude

2.2.1: We can demonstrate our commitment to developing and delivering customer focused services through our recruitment, training and development policies for staff.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E54: Appraisals

Competency based appraisal scheme for Northwards employees.

E50: Training available - Intranet

Link to the staff Intranet on Training that is available to all staff of Northwards.

E56: Recruitment Procedures

Job specifications include commitment to customer care. Recruitment procedures are currently being reviewed and consultation is being carried out.

E140: Training

There is a variety of training that has been delivered to new starters and existing staff. This includes disability awareness, mental health, induction and cultural awareness training.

2.2.2: Our staff are polite and friendly to customers and have an understanding of customer needs.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E59: On Call Quality Checks

Copies of forms completed at monthly monitoring visits to On Call.

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

E24: Mystery Shoppers

An initiative using a register of customers to assist with monitoring the quality of the service.

E44: Customer Care Standards Leaflet

The customer care standards adhered to by all Northwards staff. Set minimum standards for responding to customers.

E104: Surveys

Home Improvement Satisfaction Survey which all residents, who have had decent homes work completed on their property, receive.

E62: Contact Manager

On line IT system, all Northwards Staff have access to this and are able to update and view information relating to an individual property on tenant. Guidance notes have been produced for all staff. This document available on the Intranet.

2.2.3: We prioritise customer focus at all levels of our organisation and evaluate individual and team commitment through the performance management system.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E54: Appraisals

Competency based appraisal scheme for Northwards employees.

E25: 1/4ly Performance Report

Quarterly Performance Management Report Jan-March 09.

E47: Cascade Briefings

Staff Briefings are held every 3 months; with approx 150 staff attending each briefing. It is a useful way of informing everyone of any major news, developments taking place within the company.

E52: Leadership Training

Northwards ran a bespoke Leadership Development Programme for 48 Directors, Heads of Service, Managers and Deputies on building a high performance team, creative problem solving, managing change and leading and developing people. 360° feedback has been carried out with managers and Board members.

E111: Covalent

This new performance management software enables us to monitor performance and identify trends. The system also holds all teams improvement plans and the status of them at any given time.

E63: Reward and Recognition

To recognise and reward staff that go “that extra mile” in their daily duties and provide an above excellent service for the community of North Manchester. A full Reward and Recognition Policy for staff is now available.

2.2.4: We can demonstrate how customer-facing staffs' insight and experience is incorporated into internal processes, policy development and service planning.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E61: Rent Review

Review of the Rent Recovery Team which was undertaken with input from all the team.

E62: Contact Manager

On line IT system, all Northwards Staff have access to this and are able to update and view information relating to an individual property on tenant. Guidance notes have been produced for all staff. This document available on the Intranet.

E15: Staff Suggestion Scheme

We run two Reward schemes (staff suggestions and Value for Money Suggestions) to motivate staff and improve productivity, efficiency and service delivery.

E19: Voids Review

Consultants commissioned by Northwards to carry out a review on the voids management process. Focus groups held with tenants and staff to obtain feedback. The aim of the review was to reduce relet times. Further consultation with residents looking at void standards is currently being carried out.

E118: PDA Handheld Technology

The PDA system is currently being implemented in partnership with MWL. This will help to improve communication with residents and make sure that any special requirements are known and addressed before the repair visit.

E22: Performance Improvement Group (PIG)

Group of Northwards staff and partners which looks at Performance of the organisation and makes suggestions for improvement.

2.2.5: We value the contribution our staff make to delivering customer focused services, and leaders, managers and staff demonstrate these behaviours.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E63: Reward and Recognition

To recognise and reward staff that go “that extra mile” in their daily duties and provide an above excellent service for the community of North Manchester. A full Reward and Recognition Policy for staff is now available.

E64: Team Away Days

As a recognition of the hard work by staff Northwards have awarded all Teams in the organisation to have an away day each financial year.

E66: Extra Days Holiday

This was a reward given to all staff at Northwards Housing for their contribution to the Audit Commission score. It enables all staff to have their birthday off. In light of the recent Inspection score of three stars all staff were given a further extra day for one year only.

E51: Green Hats Training

External Customer Care Training delivered to front line staff. Also to be rolled out to our partners.

E52: Leadership Training

Northwards ran a bespoke Leadership Development Programme for 48 Directors, Heads of Service, Managers and Deputies on building a high performance team, creative problem solving, managing change and leading and developing people. 360° feedback has been carried out with managers and Board members.

E119: Operation COL

Operation COL was an 3 month initiative introduced into the Rents Team to increase rent collection targets.

3: Information and Access

3.1: Range of Information

3.1.1: We make information about the full range of services we provide available to our customers and potential customers, including how and when people can contact us, how our services are run and who is in charge.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E13: Tenants Handbook DVD

Information provided to all new tenants and leaseholders on standards and services that are available and how to access them.

E16: Northwards Website

Provides information and interactive access to all services.

Active Evidence

N046: Tenants Newsletters

The tenant's newsletter (Northwards Natter) is sent to all our customers four times a year. It's packed full of information, advice, competitions and features from Northwards Housing and local community groups and partnerships. This information is also provided in CD format.

N048: Various Posters

All three public offices display a range of leaflets and information on services available.

N077: Various Languages/Formats

Information for customers produced in nine languages, large print for customers with special needs, tape and Braille on request.

3.1.2: Where there is a charge for services, we tell our customers how much they will have to pay.

Applicant Self Assessment: Insufficient

New Evidence

E120: Website - Link to Payment Details

Link to external website which informs customers on the variety of methods that rent can be paid.

E121: Payment Leaflets

Various leaflets are available for customers regarding money and payments.

Active Evidence

N184: Leaseholder Service Charge

Break down of estimated service charge and for a Leaseholder.

N185: Tenancy Agreement

Front cover of a standard tenancy agreement which informs the tenant of the weekly rent payable.

N186: Rechargeable Repair Letter

Example of a standard letter sent to a tenant informing them of the cost of a rechargeable repair carried out on their property.

N034: Benchmarking/Housemark Reports

A breakdown of the costs and resources involved in managing the housing management and maintenance functions.

3.2: Quality of Information

3.2.1: We provide our customers with the information they need in ways which meet their needs and preferences, using a variety of appropriate channels.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong

New Evidence

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

E24: Mystery Shoppers

An initiative using a register of customers to assist with monitoring the quality of the service.

E122: Communication Tools for Staff

Various tools are available for staff - Communications Handbook, Communications Toolkit, BSL Interpreters, Foldilocks and the Big Word.

Active Evidence

N077: Various Languages/Formats

Information for customers produced in nine languages, large print for customers with special needs, tape and Braille available on request. Guidance is provided to staff in the Translations Policy

N078: Extra Services for Customers Leaflet

Informs customers of the various formats that information is available in, and how to obtain it.
Leaflet

3.2.2: We take reasonable steps to make sure our customers have received and understood the information we provide.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E62: Contact Manager

On line IT system, all Northwards Staff have access to this and are able to update and view information relating to an individual property on tenant. Guidance notes have been produced for all staff. This document available on the Intranet.

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

E105: Customer Profiling Data - How it has been used

The report highlights how we have used the data collected to improve the services we deliver and we plan to use the data for further improvements.

Active Evidence

N046: Tenants Newsletters

The tenant's newsletter (Northwards Natter) is sent to all our customers four times a year. It's packed full of information, advice, competitions and features from Northwards Housing and local community groups and partnerships. This information is also provided in CD format.

3.2.3: We have improved the range, content and quality of verbal, published and web based information we provide to ensure it is relevant and meets the needs of customers.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E108: Access to Services Strategy

This strategy was produced following a review in consultation with tenants It shows how we deliver our services and what improvements we plan to make.

E13: Tenants Handbook DVD

Information provided to all new tenants and leaseholders on standards and services that are available and how to access them.

E28: Northwards Natter

The tenant's newsletter (Northwards Natter) is sent to all our customers four times a year. It's packed full of information, advice, competitions and features from Northwards Housing and local community groups and partnerships. This information is also provided in CD format and large print.

E123: Equality Impact Assessments Timetable

Equality Impact Assessments for 2009/10 timetabled all new policies and procedures are added into the policies and procedures timetable.

E124: Review of Policies and Procedures Timetable

All policy and procedures have been timetabled in for a review.

E105: Customer Profiling Data - How it has been used

The report highlights how we have used the data collected to improve the services we deliver and we plan to use the data for further improvements.

3.2.4: We can demonstrate that information we provide to our customers is accurate and complete, and that when this is not the case we advise customers when they will receive the information they requested.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E44: Customer Care Standards Leaflet

The customer care standards adhered to by all Northwards staff. Set minimum standards for responding to customers.

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

E24: Mystery Shoppers

An initiative using a register of customers to assist with monitoring the quality of the service.

E125: Tenant Reply Form and Procedures

Tenant Reply Form are received from customers who have had a repair carried out to their property. The guidelines are how responses from dis-satisfied customers are dealt with.

E03: Post Let Survey

This survey is given at sign up procedure to all new tenants asking them how satisfied they were with their property and the process.

E126: Examples of how wrong information was rectified

Examples of how wrong information was rectified.

3.3: Access

3.3.1: We make our services easily accessible to all customers through provision of a range of alternative channels.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong

New Evidence

E108: Access to Services Strategy

This strategy was produced following a review in consultation with tenants It shows how we deliver our services and what improvements we plan to make.

E106: Forums

There are a number of Forums across the organisation which focus on a particular service area and are a valuable tool in gaining customers feedback to assist us to improve services.

E07: Equality Impact Assessments

EIAs carried out to improve the services provided by Northwards Housing by ensuring it does not discriminate against, BME, disabled, age, sexuality, gender and race. There are examples of completed EIAs and actions taken to avoid discrimination.

Active Evidence

N104: Website Homepage

Provides information and interactive access to services. - Provides information and interactive access to services in large text format and browse aloud facility.

N112: Translation/Interpretation Policy

A policy for Northwards Housing to make information , communications accessible to the diverse communities of North Manchester - A policy for Northwards Housing to make information , communications accessible to the diverse communities of North Manchester

N174: Communication Toolkit

Various tools are available for staff - Communications Handbook, Communications Toolkit, Foldilocks and the Big Word. Also information is available for customers in various formats.

3.3.2: We evaluate how customers interact with the organisation through access channels and we use this information to identify possible service improvements, and offer better choices

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

E73: On Call Review

Review of On Call has been carried out by consultants in partnership with other organisations that use the facility.

E37: Internet Kiosks

This new performance management software enables us to monitor performance and identify trends. The system also holds all teams improvement plans and the status of them at any given time.

E108: Access to Services Strategy

This strategy was produced following a review in consultation with tenants It shows how we deliver our services and what improvements we plan to make.

E105: Customer Profiling Data - How it has been used

The report highlights how we have used the data collected to improve the services we deliver and we plan to use the data for further improvements.

Active Evidence

N045: At Your service Leaflet

Information for customers detailing how we respond to customers by telephone, in writing, face to face and dealing with complaints.

3.3.3: We ensure that where customers can visit our premises in person facilities are as clean and comfortable as possible.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E74: DDA Compliant Certificates

DDA Certificates to certify Northwards public and non public offices are DDA compliant.

E24: Mystery Shoppers

An initiative using a register of customers to assist with monitoring the quality of the service.

E21: Tenant Inspectors Scheme

Tenant Inspectors Scheme is a method of engaging with tenants, acting on direct feedback from them and involving tenants in the improvement of front line services.

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

3.4: Co-operative working with other providers, partners and communities

3.4.1: We have made arrangements with other providers and partners to offer and supply co-ordinated services, and these arrangements have demonstrable benefits for our customers

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong

New Evidence

E127: Good Practice Guides

Good Practice Guides for Northwards Home Improvement Teams and its contractors.

E19: Voids Review

Consultants commissioned by Northwards to carry out a review on the voids management process. Focus groups held with tenants and staff to obtain feedback. The aim of the review was to reduce relet times. Further consultation with residents looking at void standards is currently being carried out.

E128: Positive Practice Examples

Examples of Positive Practice carried out by Northwards Housing.

E29: Satisfaction Reports to Sub Committee

Home Improvement report to Sub Committee highlights levels of satisfaction across all Home Improvement Works and is broken down to individual partners.

Active Evidence

N026: SLA Review

An approved timetable of SLA's with MCC and time scales of when a review is to be carried out

N032: Audit Commission Report

Audit Commission Report from November 2008 inspection Identifies and summarises areas of good practice in Northwards Housing. The Audit Commission awarded Northwards Housing 3 Stars and excellent prospects for improvement.

3.4.2: We have developed co-ordinated working arrangements with our partners that ensure customers have clear lines of accountability for quality of service.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E76: Impact Manchester Agreement

Report of the success of Impact Manchester and of how Impact Manchester will progress and be funded in the future.

E77: Home Improvements Intro Leaflet

This leaflets sets out our commitment to the tenant and the improvement works that are to be carried out on their homes. All guidelines have been agreed in conjunction with contractors.

E40: Community Regeneration Strategy and Improvement Plan

Northwards Housing is committed to helping create successful sustainable communities, including addressing inequalities that exist between areas of North and East Manchester and the rest of the City.

E78: Website- Home Improvement Schemes in Progress

This link to the website enables On Call staff to view contacts of schemes. It also has a screen for the contractors to view and update progress.

E79: Home Improvement Pack

This pack is given to all tenants prior to any home improvement works commencing.

E33: KPI Targets

Key set of Performance Indicators to ensure consistent monitoring of the capital programme across the framework of contractors.

3.4.3: We interact within wider communities and we can demonstrate the ways in which we support those communities.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E14: Resident Involvement Agreement

Resident involvement Agreement developed in consultation with customers and residents and monitored by the Resident Involvement Task Group. The Revolve newsletter is produced by the Resident Involvement Team and is sent out monthly to all involved tenants.

E128: Positive Practice Examples

Examples of Positive Practice carried out by Northwards Housing.

E130: NorthAwards

Local people who make a real difference to the quality of life in their community were recognised at our special 'NorthAwards' event in October 08 and this will be a yearly event.

E40: Community Regeneration Strategy and Improvement Plan

Northwards Housing is committed to helping create successful sustainable communities, including addressing inequalities that exist between areas of North and East Manchester and the rest of the City.

Active Evidence

N200: Various evaluation of events

Information and evaluation reports of events that Northwards Housing have held

N033: Neighbourhood Wardens

The Neighbour Warden Services is now run by Northwards Housing and the wardens cover the whole of the Northwards area. Our wardens are out and about, six days a week, from eight in the morning, 'til nine at night. In their distinctive uniform, they patrol the streets - on foot, on scooters, by bike

4: Delivery

4.1: Delivery standards

4.1.1: We have challenging standards for our main services, which take account of our responsibility for delivering national and statutory standards and targets.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong

New Evidence

E111: Covalent

This new performance management software enables us to monitor performance and identify trends. The system also holds all teams improvement plans and the status of them at any given time.

E13: Tenants Handbook DVD

Information provided to all new tenants and leaseholders on standards and services that are available and how to access them.

E131: Sub Committee Target Reports

Sub Committee reports setting targets for the organisation.

Active Evidence

N014: Business Plan

Is a programme of objectives and targets which address the Mission and Values of Northwards Housing, within the constraints of available resources, both staff and finance

4.1.2: We monitor and meet our standards, key departmental and performance targets, and we tell our customers about our performance.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong

New Evidence

E132: Digital Signage

Digital Signage is displayed in all our public offices. The system is updated regularly with information.

E111: Covalent

This new performance management software enables us to monitor performance and identify trends. The system also holds all teams improvement plans and the status of them at any given time.

N28: Northwards Natter

Regular publications informing people of how we are performing against our standards.

Active Evidence

N022: Website - Performance Information

Website service offering results of monthly and quarterly performance indicators and surveys.

N032: Audit Commission Report

Audit Commission Report from November 2008 inspection Identifies and summarises areas of good practice in Northwards Housing. The Audit Commission awarded Northwards Housing 3 Stars and excellent prospects for improvement.

N035: Sub Committee Report - Benchmarking

A breakdown of the costs and resources involved in managing the housing management and maintenance functions

4.1.3: We consult and involve customers, citizens, partners and staff on the setting, reviewing and raising of our local standards.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong

New Evidence

E19: Voids Review

Consultants commissioned by Northwards to carry out a review on the voids management process. Focus groups held with tenants and staff to obtain feedback. The aim of the review was to reduce relet times. Further consultation with residents looking at void standards is currently being carried out.

E108: Access to Services Strategy

This strategy was produced following a review in consultation with tenants It shows how we deliver our services and what improvements we plan to make.

E90: Complaints Review

A Review of the Complaints Policy took place with Tenants and staff. This led to the policy being revised with the main point being that customers are contacted personally to discuss their complaint.

E111: Covalent

This new performance management software enables us to monitor performance and identify trends. The system also holds all teams improvement plans and the status of them at any given time.

E104: Surveys

Customer Satisfaction Survey, Post Let Survey and Fair and Equal Survey.

E141: Corporate Scorecard

Board report highlighting current performance this is presented by way of corporate scorecard.

4.2: Achieved Delivery and Outcomes

4.2.1: We agree with our customers at the outset what they can expect from the service we provide.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E100: Extra Services Leaflet

Informs customers of the various formats that information is available in, and how to obtain it.

E81: Website - Your Northwards

This page on the website highlights Northwards promises, aims and commitments to each tenant.

E12: Home Improvement DVD

This DVD informs Tenants of Home Improvements Works the process and the choiced available. Also available in various languages and with subtitles.

E13: Tenants Handbook DVD

Information provided to all new tenants and leaseholders on standards and services that are available and how to access them.

E79: Home Improvement Pack

This pack is given to all tenants prior to any home improvement works commencing.

E133: Welcome to Northwards Pack

This pack is given to all new tenants who sign up to a Northwards property

4.2.2: We can demonstrate that we deliver the service we promised to individual customers and that outcomes are positive for the majority of our customers.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

E25: 1/4ly Performance Report

Quarterly Performance Management Report Jan-March 09.

E33: KPI Targets

Key set of Performance Indicators to ensure consistent monitoring of the capital programme across the framework of contractors.

E82: Praise Boards

These boards are in the contractors offices showing all letters and cards of thanks recieved from tenants.

E29: Satisfaction Reports to Sub Committee

Various reports to Sub Committees highlighting levels of satisfaction across the organisation.

4.2.3: We can demonstrate that we benchmark our performance against that of similar or complementary organisations and have used that information to improve our service.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E84: E & D Practitioners Group

Group of Equality and Diversity officers meet regularly to share best practice and information on improving services.

E25: 1/4ly Performance Report

Quarterly Performance Management Report Jan-March 09.

E83: Housemark

Reports comparing performance against similar organisations.

E33: KPI Targets

Key set of Performance Indicators to ensure consistent monitoring of the capital programme across the framework of contractors.

E134: Customer Profiling Comparison Report

Report comparing Northwards housing to similar organisations about the collection of Customer Profiling Data.

Active Evidence

N178: AC Inspections comparison to Other ALMOs

Table showing comparison of other ALMOs Audit Commission Inspection scores

4.2.4: We have developed and learned from best practice identified within and outside our organisation, and we publish our examples externally where appropriate.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E87: Audit Commission Report

Audit Commission Report from November 2008 inspection Identifies and summarises areas of good practice in Northwards Housing. The Audit Commission awarded Northwards Housing 3 Stars and excellent prospects for improvement.

E88: Charter Mark Assessment Report

Charter Mark achieved in May 2007 and retained in 2008, assessment and evaluation report, highlighting areas of best practice.

E89: Covalent

This new performance management software enables us to monitor performance and identify trends. The system also holds all teams improvement plans and the status of them at any given time.

E23: Older Persons Park

Northwards funded and over 60's park in Damhead. This is the first in the UK and has been advertised globally.

E37: Internet Kiosks

This new performance management software enables us to monitor performance and identify trends. The system also holds all teams improvement plans and the status of them at any given time.

E128: Positive Practice Examples

Examples of Positive Practice carried out by Northwards Housing. Recently Northwards Housing held an Discovering Excellence Event sharing with other organisations how we achieved 3 stars with excellent prospects for improvement.

4.3: Deal effectively with problems

4.3.1: We identify any dips in performance against our standards and explain these to customers, together with action we are taking to put things right and prevent further recurrence.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong

New Evidence

E111: Covalent

This new performance management software enables us to monitor performance and identify trends. The system also holds all teams improvement plans and the status of them at any given time.

E07: Equality Impact Assessments

EIAs carried out to improve the services provided by Northwards Housing by ensuring it does not discriminate against, BME, disabled, age, sexuality, gender and race. There are examples of completed EIAs and actions taken to avoid discrimination.

E132: Digital Signage

Digital Signage is displayed in all our public offices. The system is updated regularly with information. This facility is also available in the back office for the rents team which highlights individual performance and targets.

E90: Complaints Review

A Review of the Complaints Policy took place with Tenants and staff. This led to the policy being revised with the main point being that customers are contacted personally to discuss their complaint.

E35: Annual Report

The Annual Report highlights customer satisfaction and what we are going to do to improve.

Active Evidence

N022: Website - Performance Information

Quarterly returns detailing performance against standards in all key service areas and identifying areas of improvement

4.3.2: We have an easy to use complaints procedure, which includes a commitment to deal with problems fully and solve them wherever possible within a reasonable time limit.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E71: Complaints Panel

Complaints Panel set up to assess activity from complaints, performance and carry out quality control checks on responses.

E70: Complaints Policy and Procedure

A three stage complaints procedure for resolving complaints.

Active Evidence

N144: On-line Complaints

Easily accessible way for customers to make a complaint or give praise using the internet

N020: Complaints Monitoring

Reports on complaints activity in quarter 2 highlighting areas of concern

N045: At Your service Leaflet

Information for customers produced in nine languages, detailing how we respond to customers by telephone, in writing, face to face and dealing with complaints.

4.3.3: We give staff training and guidance to handle complaints and to investigate them objectively, and we can demonstrate that we empower staff to put things right.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E71: Complaints Panel

Complaints Panel set up to assess activity from complaints, performance and carry out quality control checks on responses.

E91: Complaints Checklist

A complaints checklist is followed by the Complaints Panel, when checking samples of responses by managers in the organisation. Following this feedback is given to the relevant manager.

E70: Complaints Policy and Procedure

A three stage complaints procedure for resolving complaints

E135: Complaints Panel E-Bulletin

Following every Complaints Panel meeting an E-Bulletin is sent to all staff who respond to complaints.

E136: Complaints Training

Training carried out following the implementation of the new Policy and Procedure.

E94: 1/4ly Complaints Report

Reports on complaints activity highlighting areas of concern and also the number of letters of praise recieved.

4.3.4: We learn from any mistakes we make by identifying patterns in formal and informal complaints and comments from customers and use this information to improve services and publicise action taken.

Applicant Self Assessment: Insufficient

New Evidence

E132: Digital Signage

Digital Signage is displayed in all our public offices. The system is updated regularly with information.

E28: Northwards Natter

Northwards Natter Autumn 08 which has information on improvements we have made following on from complaints and suggestions made by residents.

Active Evidence

N196: Correspondance Log Reports

Quarterly and Monthly Reports on Correspondance, Praise and Complaints received.

N020: Complaints Monitoring

A statistical analysis of complaints and praise received, including learning points and how these are to be taken forward. - The HIP Team have a lessons learnt log which is completed after each scheme has finished.

N023: Tenant Reply Forms

Tenant Reply Forms are received from customers who have had a repair carried out to their property. As a result of complaints received regarding responsive repairs Northwards are working in partnership with Manchester Working and introducing handheld technology.

4.3.5: We regularly review and improve our complaints procedure, taking account of the views of customers, complainants and staff.

Applicant Self Assessment: Weak

New Evidence

E71: Complaints Panel

Complaints Panel set up to assess activity from complaints, performance and carry out quality control checks on responses.

E90: Complaints Review

A Review of the Complaints Policy took place with Tenants and Staff. This led to the policy being revised with the main point being that customers are contacted personally to discuss their complaint.

Active Evidence

N111: Customer Care Action Plan

Overall Plan to ensure services are effectively delivered.

N054: Complaints Procedure

A three stage complaints procedure for resolving complaints.

4.3.6: We ensure that the outcome of the complaint process for customers (whose complaint is upheld) is satisfactory for them.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E95: Compensation policy

Compensation Policy for Personal Distress and Financial Loss. There is a separate policy for disrepair and personal injury.

E70: Complaints Policy and Procedure

A three stage complaints procedure for resolving complaints.

E91: Complaints Checklist

A complaints checklist is followed by the Complaints Panel, when checking samples of responses by managers in the organisation. Following this feedback is given to the relevant manager.

E125: Tenant Reply Form and Procedures

Tenant Reply Form are received from customers who have had a repair carried out to their property. The guidelines are how responses from dis-satisfied customers are dealt with.

E30: Complaints Handling Survey

This survey is sent to all tenants who have sent a complaint to Northwards Housing. The survey is completed monthly and monitor satisfaction of the process.

5: Timeliness and Quality of Service

5.1: Standards for Timeliness and Quality

5.1.1: We set appropriate and measurable standards for the timeliness of response for all forms of customer contact including phone calls, letters, e-communications and personal callers.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong

New Evidence

E108: Access to Services Strategy

This strategy was produced following a review in consultation with tenants It shows how we deliver our services and what improvements we plan to make.

E13: Tenants Handbook DVD

Information provided to all new tenants and leaseholders on standards and services that are available and how to access them.

Active Evidence

N045: At Your service Leaflet

Information for customers produced in nine languages, detailing how we respond to customers by telephone, in writing, face to face and dealing with complaints.

5.1.2: We set comprehensive standards for all aspects of the quality of customer service to be expected in all dealings with our organisation.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong

New Evidence

E59: On Call Quality Checks

Copies of forms completed at monthly monitoring visits to On Call.

Active Evidence

N018: Mystery Shoppers

An initiative using a register of customers to assist with monitoring the quality of the service.

N020: Complaints Monitoring

A statistical analysis of complaints and praise received, including learning points and how these are to be taken forward. - A statistical analysis of complaints and praise received, including learning points and how these are to be taken forward.

N021: Customer Services KPIs

Quarterly returns detailing performance against Customer Care service standards

N022: Website - Performance Information

Website service offering results of monthly and quarterly performance indicators.

N023: Tenant Reply Forms

Tenant Reply Forms are received from customers who have had a repair carried out to their property. As a result of complaints received regarding responsive repairs Northwards are working in partnership with Manchester Working and introducing handheld technology.

5.2: Timely Outcomes

5.2.1: We advise our customers and potential customers about our promises on timeliness and quality of customer service.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong

New Evidence

E13: Tenants Handbook DVD

Information provided to all new tenants and leaseholders on standards and services that are available and how to access them.

E28: Northwards Natter

The tenant's newsletter (Northwards Natter) is sent to all our customers four times a year. It's packed full of information, advice, competitions and features from Northwards Housing and local community groups and partnerships. This information is also provided in CD format.

E131: Sub Committee Target Reports

Sub Committee reports setting targets for the organisation.

Active Evidence

N045: At Your service Leaflet

Information for customers produced in nine languages, detailing how we respond to customers by telephone, in writing, face to face and dealing with complaints

N047: At Your Service - Website

Website service offering information to customers on all aspects of the housing service, how to access, and what standards to expect

N048: Various Posters

Posters displayed in all three public offices and informing them of the organisations service standards

5.2.2: We identify individual customer needs at the first point of contact with us and ensure that an appropriate person who can address the reason for contact deals with the customer.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

E01: Customer Profiling Results

Fair and Equal Survey is in the process of being carried out to help identify the make up of our tenants and any individual communication needs that will assist Northwards in delivering services.

E62: Contact Manager

On line IT system, all Northwards Staff have access to this and are able to update and view information relating to an individual property on tenant.

E06: Partnering Contractors Pre Entry Survey

These surveys are carried out by contractors before any improvement works start. The information is used by the contractors to ensure there is little disruption and aware of any individual needs whilst they are on site.

E133: Welcome to Northwards Pack

This pack is given to all new tenants who sign up to a Northwards property.

E137: On Call Scripts

Script that On Call use when a customer makes contact with Northwards.

5.2.3: We promptly share customer information with colleagues and partners within our organisation whenever appropriate and can demonstrate how this has reduced unnecessary contact for customers.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E62: Contact Manager

On line IT system, all Northwards Staff have access to this and are able to update and view information relating to an individual property on tenant.

E98: Hate Crime Reporting

On Line - Hate Reporting database shared with MCC and the Police. This database is online and only accessible to certain officers.

E97: Local Tasking Meetings

Partnership working with agencies to work together and make the neighbourhood safer to live in.

E68: Home Improvement website search

Links to search engines on Intranet and Internet which enables tenants/staff to see when works are programmed for any Northwards address. This was designed following customer queries and consultation.

E118: PDA Handheld Technology

The PDA system is currently being implemented in partnership with MWL. This will help to improve communication with residents and make sure that any special requirements are known and addressed before the repair visit.

E138: Repeat Call Statistics

Statistics showing the breakdown of repeat calls to On Call.

5.2.4: Where service is not completed at the first point of contact we discuss with the customer the next steps and indicate the likely overall time to achieve outcomes.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E11: Access Review

An Access Review carried out with staff and tenants to ensure all services are accessible to all our customers.

E99: Interim Letters

Template letter within the Correspondence log, for staff to utilise when there is a delay in responding to a customers complaint and also examples of letters sent to tenants informing them of new timescales from the Rehousing and Home Improvement Teams.

E100: Extra Services Leaflet

Informs customers of the various formats that information is available in, and how to obtain it.

E32: Decent Homes Improvement Survey

Satisfaction Survey sent to all tenants following Decent Homes Work. In the survey they are asked if they are satisfied with how their individual needs were met.

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

E90: Complaints Review

A Review of the Complaints Policy took place with Tenants and Staff. This led to the policy being revised with the main point being that customers are contacted personally to discuss their complaint.

5.2.5: We respond to initial enquiries promptly, if there is a delay we advise the customer and take action to rectify the problem.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E70: Complaints Policy and Procedure

A three stage complaints procedure for resolving complaints.

E99: Interim Letters

Template letter within the Correspondence log, for staff to utilise when there is a delay in responding to a customers complaint and also examples of letters sent to tenants informing them of new timescales from the Rehousing and Home Improvement Teams.

E44: Customer Care Standards Leaflet

The customer care standards adhered to by all Northwards staff. Set minimum standards for responding to customers.

5.3: Achieved Timely Delivery

5.3.1: We monitor our performance against standards for timeliness and quality of customer service and we take action if problems are identified.

Applicant Self Assessment: Strong

New Evidence

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

Active Evidence

N022: Website - Performance Information

Quarterly returns detailing performance against standards in all key service areas and identifying areas of improvement

N027: Monthly Performance Management Report

Monthly returns detailing performance against standards in all key service areas

N028: 1/4ly Performance Management Report

Quarterly returns detailing performance against standards in all key service areas

5.3.2: We are meeting our current standards for timeliness and quality of customer service and we publicise our performance against these standards.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

New Evidence

E111: Covalent

This new performance management software enables us to monitor performance and identify trends. The system also holds all teams improvement plans and the status of them at any given time.

E132: Digital Signage

Digital Signage is displayed in all our public offices. The system is updated regularly with information.

E02: Customer Satisfaction Survey and Report

Customer Satisfaction Survey (2008) sent to all tenants and leaseholders to assess levels of satisfaction. Research report on findings from the survey 2008.

E24: Mystery Shoppers

An initiative using a register of customers to assist with monitoring the quality of the service.

Active Evidence

N022: Website - Performance Information

Website service offering results of monthly and quarterly performance indicators and surveys.

N032: Audit Commission Report

Audit Commission Report from November 2008 inspection Identifies and summarises areas of good practice in Northwards Housing. The Audit Commission awarded Northwards Housing 3 Stars and excellent prospects for improvement.

5.3.3: Our performance in relation to timeliness and quality of service compares well with that of similar organisations.

Applicant Self Assessment: Satisfactory

Active Evidence

N177: Northwards Natter Newsletter Spring 07

Newsletter containing article informing people of how we are rated against other Local Offices in Manchester by MRA

N178: AC Inspections comparison to Other ALMOs

Table showing comparison of other ALMOs Audit Commission Inspection scores

N032: Audit Commission Report

Audit Commission Report from November 2008 inspection Identifies and summarises areas of good practice in Northwards Housing. The Audit Commission awarded Northwards Housing 3 Stars and excellent prospects for improvement.

N034: Benchmarking/Housemark Reports

A breakdown of the costs and resources involved in managing the housing management and maintenance functions

N035: Sub Committee Report - Benchmarking

Benchmarking report for the Quality & Performance Sub Committee, using the criteria of an independent benchmarking body, Housemark