

1. Here's what we were looking to find

We wanted to understand how customer service works across Salvation Army Homes, not just in the Customer Service Centre, but in every department residents' interact with. The panel focused on how easy it is for residents to contact us, how well they are listened to, and whether staff are friendly, respectful and able to resolve issues quickly.

We also looked at how well information is recorded and shared, how different teams communicate with each other, and whether the service residents experience reflects the organisation's commitment to putting customers first.

2. Here's the evidence we looked at

To understand the full experience, we looked at:

- Customer Service performance targets and Tenant Satisfaction (TSM) / STAR surveys feedback.
- The Customer Service Promise and examples of recent complaints.
- A presentation from the Customer Service Centre Manager about call volumes, specialist areas and how enquiries are handled.
- Information about the new Rubixx Customer Record system and how information is logged (ensuring we complied with data protection requirements).
- Interviews held during scheme visits to observe staff interacting with residents.
- Mystery shopping exercises carried out with the Customer Service Centre and Rents team.

We also reviewed a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis created from all the observations and feedback gathered during the scrutiny.



3. Here's the outcome

What we found

- The Customer Service Centre is busy and handles a large variety of enquiries, often acting as the first point of contact for everything from repairs to tenancy questions.
- Staff want to provide a good service, but need more support, clearer information and consistent processes.
- Communication across teams is not always joined-up, which can result in delays or mixed messages for residents.
- Residents need clearer information about who does what within the organisation and how decisions are made.
- Mystery shopping showed examples of helpful service but also highlighted gaps in consistency.
- There is an opportunity to build stronger relationships between staff and residents,

4. Our recommendations – in simple terms (topic-specific themes)

1. Stronger Resident Voice and Co-Production

Staff should actively listen to residents and work in partnership with them to improve services.

2. Clear and Consistent Resident Meetings

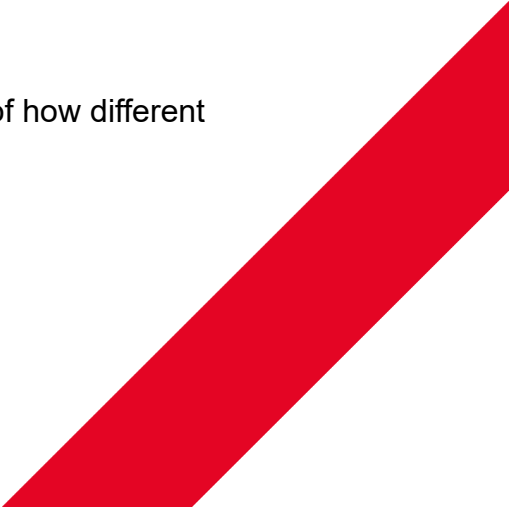
A simple meeting template (agenda, minutes, actions) should be used across all schemes, with information available on the website and portal.

3. Joined Up Communication Between Teams

Information must be shared clearly across departments, so residents receive consistent updates and staff know what others are doing.

4. Better Information for Residents

Residents and staff should have easy access to clear explanations of how different departments work and who is responsible for what.



5. Improved Customer Service Training

Staff should receive training on listening skills, customer care and working with vulnerable residents, including support from external organisations like The Samaritans.

6. Better Use of Systems and Tools

Rubixx should support staff with accurate information, helping them resolve issues 'right first time' and follow up effectively.

7. Staff Support and Recognition

A 'star of the week/month' approach could recognise excellent service and motivate staff.

5. What this means for residents

These changes aim to make customer service easier to access, quicker, more consistent and more caring. Improving communication, training and teamwork will help residents feel listened to and supported at every stage. By strengthening co-production and building better relationships, staff and residents can work together to create a more open, reliable and welcoming service. T4R will continue to follow progress and champion resident voice across the organisation.