

SUMMARY

Following the Cabinet decision in January to review the concierge service, a number of consultation methods have been employed to capture resident's views on a service that has recently received a 92% satisfaction rating (high-rise customer survey 2009).

The following provides a summary of the response from the consultation.

DETAIL

The consultation methodology used has been primarily to hold face to face discussions with customers through a series of organised events at convenient locations, where there has been an opportunity to explain the background to the review, the need for changes and for customers to ask questions and give views.

For the three sites that do not receive, an onsite concierge presence, Elm House, Campbell Court and Walton Court, consultation has been done by letter. The operational impact of the proposed changes will be less significant in these areas.

Following the consultation events, a summary of the resident's preferences for a revised service has been referred back to all customers with a further opportunity to comment.

The consultation events have been attended by Mick McClone, Security Centre Manager and Dave Pickard, Housing Management Director, supported by other Tristar Homes staff.

The feedback from customers in this report is derived from:-

a) Consultation events at:-

- Kennedy Gardens
- Dawson House
- Prior Court
- Melsonby Court
- Anson House
- Hudson House
- Hume House
- Nolan House

A total of 143 residents attended.

b) 1011 consultation summary letters to which 63 responses have been received

c) Tristar Homes High Rise Customer Service Group

The group meets every month with representatives from most of the blocks of flats. It monitors service improvements, contributes to procurement of services and promotes residents views and preferences

Resident Views

In broad terms the main issues for customers are:

- The concierge service is well liked and will now change
- Need to protect the blocks, as nice places to live
- If they are not on site will unwelcome visitors be able to get in?
- How will we contact concierge officers if they are not here on site?
- If there is more than 1 incident, how will 1 officer be able to help?
- Costs of the service are an issue for residents.

In proposing a service based on the initial concierge report to cabinet, residents expressed a strong preference for a presence on a night, with mobile support during the day. This preference being based on the feeling of safety that is given by having someone there on site

The proposal to have concierge based at the blocks on a night, came out strongly at the first meeting with the high-rise group, and therefore were able to discuss this proposal in detail at the other consultation events.

As a result of this preference we summarised the consultation events and proposed a revised service back to residents for final comment.

The New Proposed Concierge Service

Daytime 6am- 6pm

- Four concierge officers will commence duty at the CCTV Centre.
- Two concierge officers will remain in the Control Room monitoring CCTV, access control and multiple alarm systems.
- The third and fourth concierge officers will be mobile. The third officer will be tasked to cover the Billingham locations (Kennedy Gardens, Dawson House – Melsonby / Prior Court). The

remaining fourth officer will carry out patrols at Nolan / Hume – Hudson/Anson House.

- Whilst the third and fourth officers are on site and not carrying out any patrols or individual tasks they will man the concierge console carrying monitoring, access control and will be available to respond to residents requests for assistance.

Nighttime 6pm- 6am

- One concierge officer will commence duty at 18.00hours at the following locations:
 1. Prior and Melsonby Court
 2. Kennedy and Dawson House
 3. Hume and Nolan House
 4. Anson and Hudson House
- The ‘on site’ officers undertaking patrols of the blocks and responding to resident’s requests.
- The static officers will be supported by a mobile concierge officer as and when required.
- Two concierge officers will be based at the Surveillance Centre who will support the ‘on site’ teams and will take over control of the blocks as required.

A total of 63 responses have been received from this final opportunity to comment. A number of residents still feel anxious about the changes, but there is a clear preference and support for the proposal to have the concierge team on site during the night, with reduced numbers of officers during the day who can respond to residents requests for assistance.

Next steps

Members update: The results of the consultation events and feedback mechanisms have been fed back to members representing the area of high-rise blocks, together with an opportunity for further input and comment.

Resident feedback: A summary of the consultation will be fed back through to the residents and a commitment has also been given to update them after the cabinet’s decision in April. The concierge review will continue to be discussed on the agenda at the high-rise residents group that meets with Tristar Homes and concierge officers on a monthly basis.

Conclusion

Residents value and appreciate the concierge service and the contribution that it makes to the feeling of safety and security in the high-rise blocks. The preference to keep the level of service has been made by some, but many residents appreciate the need for change and how the new technologies introduced allow off site maintaining to be achieved.

The cost of the service is an important factor for a lot of residents with any increases leading to potential financial hardship. Residents are concerned at the service changes proposed but day to day some blocks are affected more than others dependant on whether they currently have an 'on site' concierge presence at the moment.

For many residents the review announcement was not a surprise given the reductions in staff numbers that had previously been made and the investment last year in the new technology to allow "off site monitoring"

The consultation commenced with one view as to how the new service should look, but this has now changed as a result of residents comments. They were pleased to note that their views had been taken into account.

A number of other service improvements have been recommended as a result of the consultation which will be used to modify and improve existing services.