


Response from the Housing Service Manager

No	Recommendation	Reason for recommendation	Comments from management
1.	Staff who carry out Sign Ups specifically mention the Tenancy Sustainment, Intensive Housing management, handyman service and other appropriate services available to customers should they start to struggle with aspects of their tenancy. They may not require or be eligible for any of these services at present but may require them at some stage.	This recommendation has been made following our review of a batch of random surveys which indicated customers were not aware of the other services available to them. At Sign-up customers are focused on getting the keys to the property and not the services we offer. We think there needs to be a mechanism for informing all customers about the services they can access.	Accepted and the sign up checklist has already been amended to reflect this
2.	Starter tenants feel vulnerable and are unwilling to say things are wrong. They are worried about potentially losing their property. We feel some work needs to be carried out to ensure customers understand that we value their opinion and can only improve our services if they inform us.	We felt that customers were reluctant to provide true feedback on their post let survey. Customers should be made aware that this happens in private lettings and all Housing Associations/council properties. It could be explained that 'it is common practice for us to visit at month three to check you are settling in and have no problems'.	I accept that we could do more to emphasise the positive and constructive purpose of the post letting survey. We will strengthen the sign up process to include an explanation of this. In addition the survey form itself – which is handed out to new tenants at sign up – will have a paragraph included explaining what the survey is for and how important it is for improving services
3.	 <p>Derby Homes to provide all customers with a meter box key for easy access to the meter boxes for reading meters.</p>	Further to our Sign Up shadowing and some of our own personal Sign Up experiences, we have noticed that no meter cupboard keys are given to customers. As a company Derby Homes could source some meter cupboard keys	Accepted. We will purchase a supply of these and the T bar keys as well and ensure new tenants are given these

		to give to new customers for ease of access to the meter. We believe that this service is in line with the Customer First Strategy. Not all customers have access to transport to go to a shop to purchase a key.	
4.	If a property has a prepayment meter, Derby Homes to provide customers with the pre-payment card/key to simplify matters.	<p>The recommendation here comes from personal experiences and the Sign-ups we have attended. If a property has a card meter installed, it is very inconvenient for a customer to have to go to the shop twice just to get energy on at the property. If the previous tenant does not leave the current prepayment card/key for the meter then a new customer will have to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Find a suitable outlet - Visit the shop to ask for a prepayment key - They are then advised to take the key and put it in the meter to register it - They are required to go back to the shop to top up the card - They will then put the meter key in the meter box and it will put the credit on the meter 	We accept that this is a problem. We will work with staff in our voids team to improve this process. This relates to our ongoing work around RAM energy. It may not be possible for RAM to supply pre-payment cards. We have already explored this with them. However there may be ways we can improve this.
5.	Post let surveys to be simplified, reworded and carried out over the phone by a staff member who has not carried out the viewing or Sign Up in order to ensure honest feedback. This survey to be incorporated into the online	See appendix 3.	Agreed that the post let survey can be simplified. We will work with the Customer Voice and the Customer Engagement and Community Development team to implement a survey which is in line with Derby

	account for all tenants to complete.		Homes' other surveys. The process of collecting the survey will be discussed and reviewed with the customer voice and will form part of the feedback in 6 months' time.
6.	All staff to have refresher training relating to Sign Up every twelve months to ensure consistency. Emails notifying staff of amendments to procedures and policies should be clearly headed 'amendment'.	After speaking with a Patch Manager about the ongoing training they receive about the processes and procedures that are in place, it was clear that further ongoing support is required. At the moment the teams get an email with heading 'Amendment' but it is not clear what the amendment is without reading the whole document. Housing staff have large workloads and don't have the time to reread a whole policy/procedure. Instead it would be more beneficial for the email to outline the change and also to hold regular refresher training on an annual basis to ensure all staff are following the process and to share good practice.	Accepted however we do carry out refresher training on key procedures. There are many procedures however and these often have to be amended so it is not always possible to provide direct training on all of them. Nevertheless a more thorough training programme is being developed which will track and control what training staff have received
7.	All keys to properties to be labelled. No redundant keys to be supplied.	From personal experience and shadowing that has been carried out, it has been noted that on occasions 'bunch's' of keys are handed to the incoming tenant. These keys have not been checked to ensure they are relevant to the property and are not labelled. I.e. Front door, bin store etc.	Accepted. We have already put in place a process for this
8.	Minimise paperwork provided to the customer at both EV's and Sign Ups.	From personal experience, speaking to staff and shadowing that has been carried	Accepted and our policy is to direct people to the website wherever

	<p>Staff to provide customers with a Tenancy Agreement and Document checklist at an EV and no more.</p> <p>All Sign Up paperwork to be reviewed, and minimised so that less is given to customers at Sign Up.</p>	<p>out, it has been noted on EV's and Sign Up's that customers receive a large amount of paperwork and this can be overwhelming to tenants new to Derby Homes.</p> <p>Feedback from staff was that the paperwork requires at least a day's work to complete, including prior to the appointment, during and follow up. We understand some paperwork is statutory but feel other items should be minimised.</p>	<p>possible and to keep handouts to a minimum. The sign up process is constantly under review and unnecessary steps are removed. I would add though that there is constant pressure to add things into the sign up process so we need to manage this carefully</p>
9.	<p>No Sign Ups on a Friday afternoon unless they were secure transfers. Gas uncapping would not be feasible and paperwork will need to be done.</p>	<p>Following a meeting with a patch manager it was suggested that if Sign Ups were to happen on a Friday it should only happen on a morning and not in the afternoon. There is a lot of paperwork to complete in the office following the sign-up which needs to be completed in one go and not left over the weekend for Monday morning.</p> <p>From personal experience, if a Sign Up happens on a Friday afternoon there is not enough time to get the gas uncapped that day, meaning it is left until Monday and the customer potentially without heating or cooking facilities.</p>	<p>It is accepted that if sign ups have to happen on a Friday then they should normally only be planned for the morning</p>
10.	<p>At an EV or before the viewing is arranged, staff should ensure that customers have been made aware of their options so the expectation is set early on.</p>	<p>On the first Escorted Viewing, we found that the customer had unrealistic expectations based on 'hear say'. He was adamant he could get free white goods, carpets and a furniture pack. He did not understand that as a homeless applicant</p>	<p>Accepted. We will work with staff at the Housing Options Centre to ensure that advice and guidance given to homeless applicants is as good as it can be</p>

		he had one offer only, although the officer told him this three times.	
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