

Insight's summary report

# Caretaker and Communal Clean Service Customer Scrutiny Review

August – November 2021



Insight  
Customer Scrutiny Group



**We met Great Places Board in February to present our review findings and we can confirm all 6 suggestions for improvement were agreed.**

We chose to look at the Caretaker Service because customer feedback tells us that communal spaces are seen as extensions of the home and therefore the quality and upkeep of these spaces is an important service.



## What we looked at:

- Customers' views about the service;
- Service related information published for customers;
- The ways customers can feedback about their experience of the service.



## What we wanted to understand:

- How the service is performing by looking at 'what works well' and 'what doesn't work so well', and identifying 'barriers or gaps' in service;
- What customers' expect of the service;
- The ways customers can help monitor the quality of service and influence improvements

## How we carried out the review

Insight met the Head of Service who explained a service review is planned to ensure a good standard of service is delivered at all properties containing a communal space.

We carried out a desktop exercise that looked at findings of an audit, service and inspection information, customer satisfaction and complaint feedback.

We then heard from the Service Manager and Caretaker Team, who spoke of their responsibilities, their day-to-day duties and how the standard of service is inspected.

Finally, we collected feedback from Neighbourhood Teams and compared other landlords service information from their websites to that of Great Places'.

## The caretaking service is delivered by:

18

Great Places Caretakers

4

Supervisors

141

Blocks serviced by the in-house team

72%

Stock serviced by the in-house team

28%

Stock serviced by external contractors

101

Shared spaces in former Equity regions receive service from external contractors

### Insight's recommendations based on review findings focus on:

To deliver a consistent quality clean in all areas communicating clear and accessible service standards to customers

Provide a service offer that encourages greater customer engagement

Build on the close working relationships of the caretaker and neighbourhood teams to maintain clean and safe communal spaces

### Why are we suggesting this? This is what customers told us...

#### What is most important to them

Delivery of a consistent quality clean in all areas

Communal spaces look clean and tidy

Great Places providing a value for money service

#### Areas for improvement

Be clear on frequency of service

Be clear on the expected standard

Ensure management and quality controls

# Key findings

Great Places has plans to review the service following the partnership with Equity Housing to agree service standards on maintaining safe and clean communal spaces.

An understanding of what tasks, standards and timescales to expect differed between customers.

A Supervisor Team usually carry out inspections and report findings to the Service Manager every month.

The Caretaker Service will aim to better engage with customers and plans to work more closely with them to help monitor and improve the service.

We observed differences in behaviour and culture between services provided by the in-house Caretaker Team and external contractors.

The age and condition of communal spaces impacts the appearance of these areas which in-turn influences customers' perspective of the level of cleanliness.

Service improvements have resulted in reduced travel times for colleagues and a move to the use of eco-friendly products. These have been found to be more effective and better value for money.

The in-house Caretakers work well as a team and have strong support from the Management Team.

Caretaker and Neighbourhood Teams work effectively to quickly reach outcomes and maintain safe and clean communal spaces.



## Key themes from customer feedback

- GP customers were more satisfied overall with the service compared to former Equity region customers
- GP customer comments mainly centred on knowing the frequency of service. In contrast, comments made by former Equity region customers related to service quality and the age and condition of communal spaces.

*“The scrutiny review was a fantastic piece of work carried out by Insight, our customer insight scrutiny group. The group’s findings will really underpin and drive the service review, which has started. Once the review is concluded, we’ll share our findings with Insight to check the new look services answer the points raised in their report.”*

**Paul Sanderson, Head of Facilities and Estates Manager.**

Insight have been encouraged by improvements made in some areas of the service. We also believe our recommendations will help shape the future service.

