



Assessment Report

CUSTOMER SERVICE EXCELLENCE



Soha Housing Ltd

Address:	Royal Scot House, 99 Station Road, Didcot, , OX11 7NN		
Standard(s):	CSE	Accreditation Body(s)	UKAS
Representative:	Maureen Adams		
Site(s) audited:	Royal Scot House, 99 Station Road, Didcot, , OX11 7NN	Date(s) of audit(s):	11/3/2015
Effective No. of Personnel	103	No. of sites:	
Lead auditor:	Tom Banks	Additional team member(s):	N/A
Type of Assessment:	Annual Review		
Certificate Outcome	<input type="checkbox"/> Granted <input type="checkbox"/> Withheld	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Continued <input type="checkbox"/> Suspended	
Certification Claims are accurate and in accordance with SGS guidance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Soha is a registered social landlord operating in South Oxfordshire and surrounding districts. The stock profile is now over 6,000 homes. Soha has 103 staff and a turnover of £44 million. It is led by a Board that includes 5 residents.

Soha operates in urban and rural locations and market towns with a growing stock profile. It provides a range of family housing, accommodation designed for older people and supported housing units. It offers homes to buy or rent including shared ownership units

Following the assessment, Soha Housing Ltd were found to have a deep understanding of, and commitment to, Customer Service Excellence. The commitment was displayed from Senior Management levels through to operations and front line staff.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those people involved in the overall assessment process. It has been a pleasure meeting with your team and having the opportunity to observe your service in action.

During the assessment (no / a number of) (Non) (Partial) compliances with the standard were identified. Details of these can be found in section 5 of this report.

As a result of these findings:

“Award of the **Customer Service Excellence** Standard has been recommended”
Yes No

2. METHOD OF ASSESSMENT

The assessment was undertaken in two stages; the first was a review of your self assessment pack. This review enabled the assessor to gain an understanding of how the organisation had met the requirements of the Customer Service Excellence standard.

The next stage was an on-site assessment. The objective of this part of the assessment was to obtain evidence demonstrating that the applicant was meeting the requirements of the standard, within the area covered by the scope of the application. This evidence was obtained through a documentation review as well as interviews with staff, customers, representatives of partner organisations, and senior management.

During the assessment process the criteria are scored on a four-band scale:

COMPLIANCE PLUS - Behaviours or practices which exceed the requirements of the standard and are viewed as exceptional or as exemplar to others, either within the applicant's organisation or in the wider public service arena.

COMPLIANT - Your organisation has a variety of good quality evidence which demonstrates that you comply fully with this element. The evidence which reflects compliance is consistent throughout and is embedded in the culture of the organisation.

PARTIAL COMPLIANCE - Your organisation has some evidence but there are significant gaps. The gaps could include:

- Parts of the applicant's organisation which are currently not compliant and/or
- Areas where the quality of the evidence is poor or incomplete and/or
- Areas which have begun to be addressed and are subject to significant further development and/or
- Areas where compliance has only been evident for a very short period of time

NON COMPLIANT - Your organisation has little or no evidence of compliance or, what evidence you do have refers solely to a small (minor) part of your organisation.

The current scheme allows applicants a maximum number of partial compliances, equating to a pass mark of 80% for all criteria.

3. OPENING MEETING

The on-site assessment commenced with an opening meeting.

The assessment activity and the partial / non compliances were discussed. The itinerary, which had been forwarded to Soha Housing Ltd in advance, was agreed. The organisation was informed that all information obtained during the assessment would be treated as strictly confidential.

The scope of Assessment was confirmed as: “Soha Housing Ltd”

4. ON-SITE ASSESSMENT

The Assessor was accompanied throughout the assessment by Maureen Adams and other Personnel within the organisation were involved when assessing activities within their responsibility.

The assessment resulted in the raising of no non-/ partial compliances. A number of observations are listed in Section 6 of this report.

Criterion	Number of Elements	Maximum number of Partial compliance	Actual number of non compliance	Actual number of partial compliance
1	11	2	0	0
2	11	2	0	0
3	12	2	0	0
4	13	3	0	0
5	10	2	0	0

5. AREAS OF NON / PARTIAL COMPLIANCE

CRITERION 1

None

CRITERION 2

None

CRITERION 3

None

CRITERION 4

None

CRITERION 5

None

6. OBSERVATIONS

During the site assessment, the following general observations were made. These include: positive areas scored as compliance plus; observations of good practice; opportunities for improvement identified throughout the entire assessment process, as listed below.

Areas for Improvement

4.3.6 Now the revised complaints process has been embedded it would be appropriate to conduct a comprehensive evaluation.

Areas of Good Practice

4.2.2 The strategy of placing the evidence of actual customer interaction at the heart of strategic development through the Voice of the Customer programme is one which ensures an impressive match between organisational aspirations and customer expectations.

4.2.2 The Treat Customer Fairly (TCF) approach will ensure that customers are regarded as individuals by acknowledging issues of diversity.

4.2.2 The emphasis being placed on the importance of safeguarding is an impressive aspect of Soha's constantly developing training programme.

4.2.3 Soha Tenant Representatives have attended 3 major national events over recent months, a measure of the respect in which they are held nationally. This even extends to the way in which event organisers involve the Soha delegates in the design of their own contribution to the proceedings.

- 4.3.4 Soha's extremely successful involvement in various national award schemes within the housing sector offers valuable opportunities to network and share good practice. This goes far beyond normal benchmarking comparison of performance, covering as it does more customer focused areas of delivery.
- 4.3.4 The revised complaints process which was introduced in April 2014 has led to a 50% drop in escalated issues. The approach, which involves senior management calling back aggrieved residents within 48 hours of the issue being raised has also greatly reduced the amount of management time spent dealing with formalised complaints.
- 5.1.1 The use of a sticker array in the HQ foyer to allow visitors to indicate their areas of priority for the revised Customer Charter provides an excellent example of a non-threatening invitation to participate in a consultation on critical issues affecting all residents.

7. ACTION PLANNING

The achievement of Customer Service Excellence is an on-going activity and it is important that Soha Housing Ltd continues to meet the elements of the criteria throughout the three years the Hallmark is awarded for. Efforts must be made by Customer Service Excellence Holders to continually improve their service.

Your next steps:

On-going review

It is a requirement of the Customer Service Excellence scheme that Holders must inform SGS of any major changes in the service provision covered by the scope of the certificate. This includes reorganisation or mergers.

In addition, SGS must be informed should the certified service experience a significant increase in customer complaints or critical press coverage.

If you are in doubt at any stage, we strongly recommend contacting the Customer Service Team for advice on the significance of any service or organisational change, or issues surrounding customer complaints.

SGS will visit within the next 12 months for the Annual Review.

SGS recommends that Soha Housing Ltd retains a copy of this report to aid continuous improvement, and as a reference document for future assessment reviews.