

Ealing Homes

Report on inspections carried out in July 2008



1. Introduction

11 Resident Inspectors completed the programme of inspections and returned their findings by the deadline.

Method of inspection	Tasks completed
Telephone enquiries	9
Email enquiries	5
Reception enquiries	9
Speed and greet calls	47
Estate inspections	18

Results of the inspection can be found in the appendices:

Phone enquiries appendices one
 Email enquiries appendices two
 Reception enquiry appendices three
 Speed and greet appendices four
 Estate inspections appendices five

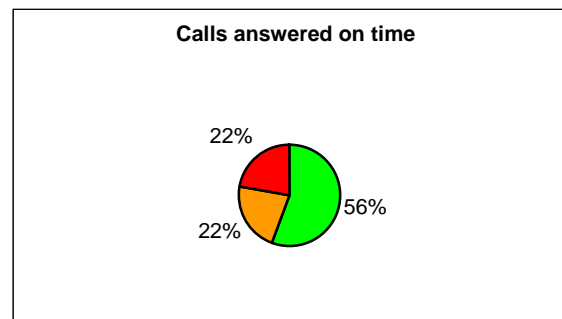
No reception checks were carried out during this programme. Inspectors were asked to complete an additional estate inspection instead.

2. Summary of Results and Recommendations

2.1 Phone enquiries

Speed of answer: of the 9 calls made five were answered within the service standard, 2 were borderline and two in excess of two minutes.

As a percentage, compared with the June programme, slightly fewer calls, 56% compared to 60%, were answered on time.



Greeting: In only three cases was the call answered with a correct greeting with the member of staff saying hello (or similar), giving their name, the name of their organisation or section and an offer to help.

Greeting	Number of instances
Failure to say hello (or similar)	2
Did not give organisation name	2
Did not give own name	2
Did not offer to help	2

Although there was an improvement in staff giving their names, overall there was a drop in performance when answering the phone with only 33% being answered correctly compared to just over 50% in June

Answering the question: Only on two occasions did the Resident Inspector feel that the query had not been dealt with satisfactorily. This is similar to the result in June.

Overall impression: 7 of the Resident Inspectors felt that the member of staff had tried their best to answer the enquiry. One reported that they felt the member of staff to be less than polite.

Use of jargon: There were no reports of jargon being used.

Rating: The Inspectors rated the calls from 1 to 5 with one being excellent and five being poor. The following scores were achieved:

Rating	1	2	3	4	5
Number	2	1		5	1

Recommendations

Although fewer inspections were carried out in July compared to June there appears to be a decline in the standard of answering enquiries over the phone due mainly to the standard of greeting. It is recommended that:

1. Managers to remind all staff of the need to give the correct greeting when answering the phone.
2. When answering queries offer to send information or direct caller to the appropriate section of the website.

2.2 Email enquiries

Five email inspections were carried out in July compared to six in June. All received a reply within one day compared to only 4 receiving a reply in June. In only one case did the Inspector feel that their enquiry had not been answered satisfactorily.

Rating: The Inspectors rated the email replies from 1 to 5 with one being excellent and five being poor. The following scores were achieved:

Rating	1	2	3	4	5
Number	2	2			1

To help understand the reasons for the ratings, Inspectors have been asked to return a copy of the reply they receive. This will start from the August programme.

Recommendations

1. Teams with email contact addresses should carry out weekly checks to ensure they are working correctly.
2. All email addresses should automatically generate a response acknowledging receipt of enquiry and giving details of reply deadlines.
3. Managers to check standard of replies.

2.3 Reception enquiries

Time to be seen: In most cases the Resident Inspector was seen within 5 minutes of arriving at the area office. However, in one case they had to wait 15mins mainly because somebody jumped the queue.

Time waiting	< 3 mins	3 – 6 mins	7 – 10 mins	> 10 mins
Number	5	3	0	1

Greeting: There were no occasions when the member of staff did not greet the caller correctly but on three occasions no name badge was being worn or was visible.

Answering the question: Only one Inspector reported that the question had not been answered but two reported that they felt the member of staff was not trying their best. There was also one case where the use of jargon was used.

Rating: The Inspectors rated their visit from 1 to 5 with one being excellent and five being poor. The following scores were achieved:

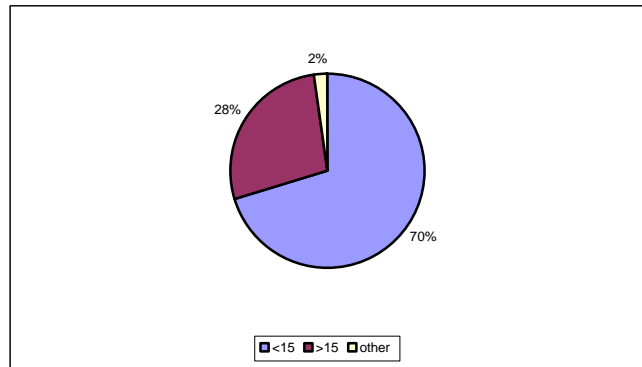
Rating	1	2	3	4	5
Number	5	1	3	0	0

Recommendations

1. There is still a need to remind staff of the need to wear name badges that are visible.

2.4 Speed and greet

Speed of answer: A total of 47 random calls were made to area offices and teams based at Westgate House. 33 (70%) were answered within the service standard of 15 seconds. 13 (28%) were answered outside the service standard. One was a recorded message.



This does not compare well with June when 81% of calls were answered within the service standard time.

Greeting: In most cases the correct greeting was given although some Inspectors reported that no name was given or there was no offer of assistance. There were also cases where the Inspector reported that the member of staff spoke too quickly and they could not understand what they were saying.

Rating: The Inspectors rated their visit from 1 to 5 with one being excellent and five being poor. The following scores were achieved:

Rating	1	2	3	4	5
Number	16	6	12	6	5

Recommendations

1. All staff to be reminded of the need to answer the phone within the service standard of 15 seconds.
2. All staff to be reminded to speak clearly and slowly when answering the phone and to give their name.

2.5 Estate inspections

These inspections were carried out without knowledge of the new estate grading scheme. A total of 18 inspections were completed.

Graffiti: Three inspectors reported seeing graffiti.

Abandoned vehicles: One inspector reported an abandoned vehicle at Gurnell Grove.

Grass cutting: 4 Inspectors reported estates where the grassed did not appear to have been cut recently.

Signs: Three Inspectors reported estates where signs were not visible.

Litter and fly tipping: Nearly half (8) inspectors reported this to be a problem on the estates they visited.

Clean and tidy: 3 inspectors reported that overall they did not feel that the estate they were inspecting was clean and tidy. The estates are:

- Walpole Close
- Steyne House
- Gurnell Grove

Estate notice boards: Estate notice boards were not in evidence on 8 of the estates inspected. However, as the inspectors only visit the exterior of the estate, notice boards may be present inside blocks.

Recommendations

1. Senior caretakers to be made aware of the inspectors findings.
2. The relevant sections of Ealing Council are made aware of the fly tipping and grass cutting issues.

3 Conclusion

There seems to have been little if any improvement on the results from the June inspections. In many cases the performance has got worse. Time taken to answer the phone for example.

Further improvements to the way inspections are carried out and recorded will continue to be made. For example getting the Inspectors to return the email reply they receive. Also by working more closely with managers specific areas of the service will be targeted.

Michael Wheatley
Strategic Involvement Team

11th August 2008