

Sustainability Review

How can we support our tenants and customers to stay in their homes for longer?



November 2017

Why did we need feedback from our tenants and customers?

Every year Plus Dane looks at all the tenancies which have ended within the first 12 months and tries to understand why some tenants terminated their tenancies within a short space of time. The purpose of this consultation was to hear from those tenants who have left within their first year of tenancy to see if more support could have been offered both at the beginning and during their tenancy to help them stay in their homes.

How did we get the feedback from our tenants and customers?

We looked at all the tenancies that ended within the first 12 months - during the period April 2017 to October 2017 and contacted tenants and customers to ask them to complete a short telephone survey to help identify if there were any common reasons for ending a tenancy early. We also wanted to find out if there was any support/improvements Plus Dane could consider putting in place to help them stay in their homes. .

We tried to reach 32 former tenants however only 6 provided feedback.

Feedback from our tenants and customers?

- *Tenants and customers provided a wide variety of reasons for ending their tenancy within the first 12 months.*
- *The property size/condition, neighbourhood, need to move closer to family for support and work were some of the reasons given*
- *Following an in-depth look at the reasons it was clear that affordability played an important factor. This was further supported by the number of abandoned homes which is an indication that tenants are struggling financially to pay the rent. 3 of the 6 participants mentioned that financial advice and support would have helped them sustain their homes.*
- *Analysis of our own statistical figures from the business showed that there is a high percentage of 1 bedroom flats becoming vacant within the first 12 months in Merseyside. This was surprising considering the perceived high demand for this type of property due to the under occupancy charge. In Cheshire most of the tenancies which end within 12 months were 2 bedroomed flats.*
- *30% of tenancies which ended within the first 12 months had a tenant aged 25 or under. This number increased substantially to 53% when the age of the tenant increased to 35 and amounted to half of the failing tenancies.*

What is Plus Dane going to do with the tenant and customer feedback?

1. *We are going to engage with tenants as soon as they tell us they want to terminate their tenancy to discuss the reasons why they wish to leave and to offer the relevant support to keep them in their homes.*
2. *We will review the New Tenant Visit Forms and review our procedures to help identify and address issues that new tenants experience when they move into their home.*
3. *We will review the sustainment information we use at pre-allocation stage to ensure that we capture all vulnerabilities including age as possible criteria to highlight potential issues..*
4. *We have used the feedback we have received to write a report to our Board on how we can support tenants and customers to stay in their homes – the above are some of the recommendations we have put into that report.*