



Customer Scrutiny Group

Community Safety Service

1. Foreword

'insight' has found this review particularly interesting and we were staggered by the work the CST undertakes. As customers, we feel reassured with the presence of this service. Overall, 'insight' believes the service delivered to customers meets the promises outlined in the ASB policy, which reflects the recommended requirements within the Legal Framework for social housing. GPHG's procedure is a comprehensive document, which provides clear guidance enabling staff to deal effectively with reports of nuisance, harassment and anti-social behaviour. After completing spot checks of case files, 'insight' identified the CST followed procedure of the cases, which were checked.

We have been surprised by the diversity of the specialist knowledge demonstrated by the team when executing their role. We would specifically like to highlight how impressed we are with the loyalty, dedication and enthusiasm of the CST when resolving incidents of nuisance, harassment and anti-social behaviour reported by GPHG customers. Given some of the restrictions, highlighted within the report, 'insight' acknowledges the CST delivers a good standard of service to customers exhibiting both dedication and diligence.

'insight' has developed a scoring matrix, using the Audit Commission's rating system for guidance, to help illustrate our judgement of the overall Community Safety Service. To allow us to provide a star rating, we firstly scored each of the six criteria below as a strength or weakness based upon our findings from the review.

We can conclude, 'insight' scored the overall Community Safety Service as a:

- *2 star service, with promising prospects for improvement.*

Measure	Rating
Customer Satisfaction	weakness
Customer Service	strength
Policy & Procedure	strength
Training	strength
Business IT Systems	weakness
Value for Money	strength
Star Rating	Key
3 stars = excellent	strengths consistently outweigh weaknesses
2 stars = good	strengths outweigh weaknesses
1 star = fair	strengths and weaknesses are in balance
0 stars = poor	weaknesses outweigh strengths

1.1 Overview of the Review

Our second scrutiny review looked at the Community Safety Service, focussing predominantly on cases managed by the Community Safety Team, (CST) categorised by GPHG as 'a' and 'b' cases. We agreed as a group to consider category 'c' low level cases, which are managed by Neighbourhood Teams to gain appreciation of the impact these cases have on Community Safety in local neighbourhoods. Great Places Housing Group's (GPHG), Quality & Performance Team, (Q&P) survey customers who have experienced one of the three category cases, so in order to be consistent 'insight' included category 'c' cases as well as category 'a' and 'b' cases when surveying customers and gathering feedback.

In consultation with GPHG customers, the CST, neighbourhood staff and the Customer Access Team, (CST); 'insight' has identified recommendations for improvement, which are outlined in the report and the accompanying Scrutiny Action Plan, (SAP) for consideration and agreement by Board. 'insight' is confident that when implemented, these recommendations will enhance the service offered to customers and improve customer satisfaction.

We contacted more customers during this scrutiny review (a total of 65 customers) and found their comments invaluable guiding us to ask specific questions and look deeper at particular issues.

The key themes raised by customers were that they would like GPHG;

- a) to communicate effectively with customers by being responsive, supportive, clear and reliable
- b) agree suitable actions to deal with the case and manage customers' expectations of the service
- c) to confirm in writing the agreed actions and the support offered to the customer
- d) to keep the customer informed of progress throughout the duration of the case

2. 'insight' - who we are

We are a committed group of volunteer GPHG customers acting as a critical friend, who would like to make a difference to services delivered to customers. This is our second scrutiny review, which we carried out between March and June 2015. We feel we have developed and matured as a scrutiny group during this review. We are more confident in our role and we have continued to enjoy great support provided by our Customer Involvement Coordinator. We have benefited from new and existing members who have volunteered during this scrutiny. There has been some loss of membership presence at meetings due to changes in circumstances. However, there has been a strong core group of three members who have met weekly, whilst other members have contributed to support the review when time permits.

We have seen 'insights' membership increase to nine members, with three new members joining the group. One new member is self-employed and has been able to attend meetings since joining the group. The other two new members are employed full time therefore have mainly worked from home; analysing data, devising questions for interviews and forwarding comments. They have been able to contribute by attending a number of meetings and interviews.

Some of the reasons the new members got involved include:

- ✓ would like to have a say in the neighbourhoods in which they live,
- ✓ life changes have driven them to be involved to contribute to improvement,
- ✓ scrutiny helps you to question and challenge the service,
- ✓ my contribution will help GPHG to appreciate the customer perspective,
- ✓ to understand how GPHG operates as a landlord within regulations,
- ✓ develop personal skills in an area, which is new to me

We would welcome more people joining 'insight'. We can always find tasks for customers of GPHG to help with the review or to join the group full or part time.

2.1 Why we are involved in scrutiny

We are generally happy as customers but realise there is always room for improvement, which could enhance services and neighbourhoods. We want to make a difference, which will assist to improve services for GPHG customers.

2.2 The value of scrutiny

- ✓ this 2nd review has taken 21 weeks to complete
- ✓ members have attended on average 5 hours per week
- ✓ equating to 350 hours excluding work from home

We will share our report with the Board and the Community Safety Manager, (CSM) for agreement of the key recommendations and the Scrutiny Action Plan, devised by the CSM. We ask that the Customer Service Voice, (CSV) monitor progress of agreed actions.

3. Why we chose the Community Safety Service

We identified this service for review because we know Community Safety is an extremely important service to customers, because of the negative impact it has on customers' quality of life. In addition, this service has undergone considerable change over the past two years; commencing with a service review, appointment of a Community Safety Manager, (CSM) and the introduction of new policy and procedure, which we want to test to check how it is working and explore whether further improvements could be made.

3.1 Our aim and agreed scope was to find out:

- ✓ **Does the procedure work in practice to deliver agreed standards?**

We reviewed case files to check the relevant policy and procedure was working in practice to deliver the service

- ✓ **Is the procedure adhered to consistently?**

We looked at the promises made to customers in the policy, tested the procedure and considered the Service Improvement Plan, we checked case files and listened to customers who had used the service

✓ **Does the service meet customers' expectations?**

We spoke to customers who had used the service to find out the reality of service delivery. This was supported by feedback from customers who hadn't used the service, to find out if they were aware of the dedicated service and to understand their expectations. We commissioned a survey to be sent to 250 customers and we collected feedback from a total of 65 customers.

✓ **What are the barriers for staff to be excellent?**

We commissioned a survey to GPHG staff and we identified through discussion with staff that business IT systems, geography, caseload, team capacity and partnership working with external agencies obstruct excellence.

✓ **Are services working well?**

We sought to understand the views and pick up on ideas from staff for service improvement.

✓ **If efficiencies are maximised can GPHG provide better VFM?**

We sought to understand the set-up of the specialist CST, what it had saved on legal advice and how a new centralised service has contributed to service improvement. We sought out information of cases of staffs' workload and how this compared with other registered providers.

✓ **If improvements have been made?**

We sought to understand the journey; GPHG had made in appointing a specialist CSM and how that success had been measured.

✓ **What would make a difference to customers?**

We listened to customers through surveys, phone calls, complaints and reviewing case files to find out what their expectations were of the service and their view of an ideal Community Safety Service.

✓ **What would make a difference to GPHG services and staff?**

We listened to staff in the CST, Neighbourhood Teams and other front-line services such as CAT.

✓ **What's 'in' and what's 'out' of the scope**

The group decided to focus predominantly on the work of the CST, however, it was agreed that we would exclude Domestic Violence due to the sensitive and complex nature of these cases. The group did agree the scope would include 'category c' low level nuisance cases; which are dealt with by Neighbourhood Teams to consider the impact of these cases in relation to Community Safety.

3.2 Our Approach - what we did

- ✓ read GPHG's policy relating to anti-social behaviour, harassment, starter tenancies, safeguarding and protection from abuse and lone working
- ✓ read the nuisance, harassment and ASB procedure

- ✓ looked at performance data; i.e.) the number of case types per region including dates when cases were opened and closed
- ✓ completed spot checks of random selected cases
- ✓ looked at customer complaints in relation to the Community Safety Service
- ✓ analysed Housemark benchmarking information from 2013-2014
- ✓ gathered feedback from customers
- ✓ shadowed a duty officer, triaging new cases
- ✓ interviewed staff who work in the CST, Neighbourhood Teams and other front-line service staff such as CAT
- ✓ researched websites of other landlords' to compare their offers of service

4 Key Recommendations

Customers told 'insight' they would like GPHG to take a tough stance on Community Safety and provide a service, which responds quickly, professionally whilst managing their expectations of the service. 'insight' has listed key recommendations, which is based on the evidence gathered during the review and outlined in section 7 of this report. We realise a number of the recommendations will call for extra capacity or redistribution of resources. We suggest this provision is held within the CST because of the specialist knowledge and skills required to manage cases, which could potentially involve risk to customers.

Upon completion of the review 'insight' met with the CSM to discuss our suggested key recommendations. Eighteen of all twenty-one key recommendations were agreed with the CSM, who explained the reasons for not agreeing the remaining three recommendations, which was agreeable with 'insight'. The CSM has developed a Scrutiny Action Plan, which will allow the implementation of the key recommendations to be monitored by Customer Services Voice, (CSV). All twenty-one recommendations have been listed below;

4.1 Improving service value for Customers

- a) 'insight' believes the Duty Officer should be available during the same time as the Customer Access Team and not just 10.00 – 4.00 pm, as presently available.
- b) Customers wanted to know exactly what action will be taken as a result of their call. 'insight' recommends the action, which is agreed, will happen as a result of a call should, be detailed for the individual complainant in writing.
- c) 'insight' would like to see more promotion of successful action taken by GPHG and service outcomes; for example articles in the press, MGP, local publications, on GPHG website and leaflets.
- d) 'insight' suggests GPHG raise awareness of the Community Safety Service in neighbourhoods to encourage reporting and guide communities to support others who suffer from nuisance.
- e) GPHG could make it easier for customers to report ASB by providing one dedicated 0300 number to call, available 24 hours, and 7 days per week.
- f) GPHG's website to include other relevant numbers for support such as crime stoppers, police and partners to offer alternatives sources of help, see section 8.

4.2 Improving the effectiveness of GPHG

- a) 'insight' recommends resources to manage community safety are reviewed by the senior management team, to reduce the caseload, permanently and to a more manageable number. It was found from benchmarking information that GPHG's individual caseloads were considerably higher, when compared to other registered providers.
- b) 'insight' supports the need for more resources and any discussion with the CSM on how this can be achieved to continue the expertise built within the team since the appointment of the CSM.
- c) Enhance multi-agency partnership relationships by Neighbourhood Managers, continuing to build relationships with local police and social services.
- d) 'insight' recommends multi-agency training from GPHG to dispel the myths of GPHG responsibilities and information sharing between agencies.
- e) 'insight' suggests better access to business IT systems for the CST to enable electronic performance management and monitoring of cases in Community Safety and Neighbourhood Teams.
- f) 'insight' suggests training for Neighbourhood Teams by the CSM to encourage a more common understanding of each others activities in neighbourhoods.
- g) GPHG to consider whether there is a role for Resident Groups with training to support GPHG with low level nuisance through evidence gathering, support for the complainant and witnesses.
- h) GPHG to ensure information relating to the CST is clearly explained during the sign-up of new customers and especially low level nuisance.

4.3 Improving efficiencies through systems and processes

- a) Agree and train the Customer Access Team (CAT) who are willing to do more to support customers on Community Safety, as the first point of contact
- b) GPHG would benefit by enabling access to case manager across relevant teams
- c) 'insight' suggests training for Neighbourhood Teams and CAT to ensure they are confident about what can be done to address community safety, i.e.) guidance to be developed for managing low level category 'c' cases.
- d) 'insight' recommends Neighbourhood Teams support the Community Safety Coordinators, (CSC) by gathering supporting data, when the CSC has to travel some distance from their normal working base.
- e) "insight" would like to see front-line staff receive training, so they are aware what specific information is required, which will form supportive evidence during an investigation and allow quicker diagnosis.
- f) 'insight' recommends providing additional training for 'Orbis' staff, (the company who provide the 'out of hours' service) so they can confidently provide basic advice to support the customer, signpost and gather relevant evidence, to enhance customers' experience when using this service
- g) 'insight' recommends a new customer satisfaction survey is devised, which asks more than the current two questions. This will allow customers to provide greater detail, which will help GPHG to learn from closed cases.

5 What is Anti-Social Behaviour, ASB?

The term anti-social behaviour can mean different things to different people. GPHG considers anti-social behaviour to be:

“Anti-social behaviour can be a wide range of unacceptable activity that can negatively impact the lives of many people, often on a daily basis. It can leave those affected feeling helpless, desperate and with a seriously reduced quality of life.”

5.1 Regulatory Framework – Neighbourhood and Community standard

In the Neighbourhood and Community standard registered providers are expected to publish a policy on how they work with relevant partners to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour, (ASB) in areas they own properties. Furthermore, registered providers shall demonstrate in their work to prevent and address ASB, the following:

- ✓ that tenants are made aware of their responsibilities and rights in relation to ASB
- ✓ strong leadership, commitment and accountability on preventing and tackling ASB that reflects shared understanding of responsibilities with local agencies
- ✓ a strong focus exists on preventative measures tailored towards the needs of tenants and their families
- ✓ prompt, appropriate and decisive action is taken to deal with ASB before it escalates, which focuses on resolving the problem having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available
- ✓ i) all tenants and residents can easily report ASB, ii) are kept informed about the status of their case where responsibility rests with the organisation, and iii) are appropriately signposted where it does not
- ✓ provision of support to victims and witnesses

5.2 The Legal Framework

GPHG has a duty of care to victims of nuisance, harassment and ASB. The main pieces of legislation, which provide registered providers with powers to deal with Community Safety issues, are listed below. See appendix A for a more extensive list

- ✓ Housing Act 1988, 1996 and 2004
- ✓ Anti-social behaviour act 2003 up dated with
- ✓ Anti-social behaviour, crime and policing act 2014

5.3 An update - new Legal Powers

New legislation introduced in 2014 has enhanced the powers available to registered providers. Some aspects of the new legislation are still to be tried through the legal system and once tested this will determine how these powers can be applied as interventions according to the judicial precedent, including i) positive requirements and ii) the expanded circumstances around Mandatory Grounds for possession.

Under the new legislation registered providers can take action against young people from the age of 10 years through the youth courts for serious ASB. GPHG are undertaking research work around various interventions for youths to ensure our approach for adopting the new powers is both effective and informed.

5.4 GPHG’s current position

- ✓ Since January 2015, GPHG has made seven applications for injunctions under the new powers.

- ✓ The Community Safety framework has scope to utilise all enforcement tools.
- ✓ The Service Development Plan has capacity to assess the effectiveness of introducing wider intervention tools through 2015-16, such as Restorative Justice Schemes and Perpetrator Rehabilitation Schemes.
- ✓ The budget for Community Safety enforcement is forecast by the CSM, which to date has been fully supported by GPHG.
- ✓ GPHG has made good use of section 21 notices, to help address ASB of new customers within the first 12 months of their tenancy. Serving a section 21 notice allows the registered provider to extend tenancies or gain possession.

6. Performance Information

The following table shows cases reported by category and type in 2014-15

Category 'a' cases	285
Alcohol related	1
Criminal behaviour/crime	28
Domestic abuse	71
Drugs, drug dealing or substance misuse	66
Hate crime (not racial)	3
Misuse of a communal, public area or loitering	1
Noise or nuisance	2
Physical violence	28
Prostitution or sexual acts	1
Racial	14
Vandalism or damage to property	7
Verbal abuse, intimidation, threatening behaviour or harassment	63

Category 'b' cases	380
Alcohol related	9
Criminal behaviour or crime	11
Drugs, drug dealing or substance misuse	34
Garden nuisance	1
Litter, rubbish or fly tipping	1
Misuse of communal, public area or loitering	15
Noise or nuisance	181
Physical violence	1
Vandalism or damage to property	14
Vehicle nuisance	5
Verb abusive, intimidation, threatening behaviour or harassment	108

Category 'c' cases	316
Alcohol related	2
Criminal behaviour or crime	1
Drugs, drug dealing or substance misuse	4
Garden nuisance	7
Litter, rubbish or fly tipping	13

Category 'c' cases	316
Misuse of communal / public area or loitering	82
Noise or nuisance	120
Pet or animal nuisance	27
Physical violence	1
Vandalism or damage to property	15
Vehicle nuisance	4
Verbal abuse, intimidation, threatening behaviour or harassment	40

Garden Nuisance	27
Safeguarding	2
Grand Total	1010

After scoping the review 'insight' requested performance information to analyse to get a better understanding of the demands and the standard of service delivered to customers. We were informed this detail wasn't readily available and that a manual exercise had to be completed to compile the information. When 'insight' received the information, we found it lacked enough detail to allow us to shape informed views about the service. We were provided with a spreadsheet, which listed cases by their type and region, highlighting a date when each case had been opened and closed. Therefore, we agreed to complete a selection of spot checks of case files to test performance against the procedure.

Benchmarking Information

'insight' understands GPHG are members of 'House mark' subscribing to this service to benchmark performance against other registered providers. We know this information is compiled on an annual basis. The detail we were given was for the period 2013 / 2014, which was prior to changes in the service.

We were informed in staff interviews there is scope for GPHG to gain greater intelligence from this information, however this would need to be considered and development. We were also advised of services offered by the Social Landlord's Crime and Nuisance group, who are a member-led organisation supporting those involved in tackling anti-social behaviour throughout the UK.

Customer Satisfaction Information

Currently, the calls to capture customer satisfaction are carried out by Q&P, who also carry out surveys for a number of other key service areas across the group. The table below shows satisfaction figures for a twelve month rolling period taken from GPHG's Scorecard.

The Q&P team use a five point scale, offering the choice to customers to select from very satisfied, fairly satisfied, neither, fairly dissatisfied and dissatisfied, in-line with House mark's formulae, to allow benchmarking with other registered providers.

	2013 / 14	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Responses over a 12 month period	135	142	147	168	184	178	166	165	170	173	157	153	134
% satisfaction, how case was dealt with	88.1	88.0	87.8	89.3	88.0	88.4	89.8	89.7	89.4	91.3	90.4	90.2	90.3
% satisfaction of case outcome	85.8	86.0	86.5	87.0	86.5	88.5	88.0	89.7	90.0	90.8	89.8	89.5	89.6

We compared satisfaction figures of customers returning our survey to those collected by the Q&P team. We identified significant differences in the two sets of figures. Some of this variation could be attributed to the different methodologies adopted by 'insight' and Q&P when collecting data.

Our survey asked more questions to gain a greater understanding of the reasons customers were dissatisfied with the service. 'insight' questions whether asking two questions to measure customer satisfaction provides an accurate account of customers' experience or provide sufficient opportunity to reflect.

7. What we found during the Scrutiny Review

The policy and procedure have clear customer focus. We saw evidence of this whilst shadowing a Duty Officer, (DO) triaging new cases. The DO contacts customers to acknowledge their report, triages the case allocating a category based on the nature of the nuisance, harassment or ASB, whilst making an assessment of the support required by each individual involved in the case. We also found after carrying out spot checks of a random selection of cases the procedure works well and we saw evidence the CST follows procedure.

'insight' commissioned a survey, which was sent to 250 customers, who had reported category 'a', 'b' or 'c' cases, this reflects the current practice of the Q&P team. The survey was designed to allow customers to respond anonymously and encourage a healthy response rate. However, as a consequence, we are unable to filter comments to differentiate those made about cases handled by the CST 'a' and 'b' category cases and comments relating to cases dealt with by Neighbourhood Teams. We have identified this as an area of improvement, which we will take forward to our next review.

Feedback indicates customers experienced some inconsistency in service delivery, specifically when;

- i) agreeing action plans,
- ii) managing their expectations, and
- iii) being kept informed of action taken in relation to a case

Customers told us they want the service to respond quickly to reports of ASB, that GPHG assesses the seriousness of the issue, categorise the problem, explain options of what can be done in an empathetic way and agree an action plan, which is acknowledged by the complainant. Customers want GPHG to take a tough stance on Community Safety and to promote this widely and consistently to all customers.

'insight' found although barriers currently exist in business systems, high case loads, geography and resources; the CST manage to deliver a good standard of service to customers. We have detailed below key strengths and weaknesses identified during the review, which formed the basis of the key recommendations.

7.1 Improving service value for the customers

- a) 'insight' believes that the Community Safety Duty Officer should be available during the same time as the Customer Access Team and not just 10-4pm is as presently available. The extended hours for the service will enable more capacity for the DO to call back cases.

- b) Customers wanted to know exactly what would happen as a result of their call. Due to the stressful issues they were facing, customers may often fail to understand everything they were told about what would happen next. Many customers indicated that they were not informed about action plans as a result of their call. However, it was apparent when 'insight' asked questions about their experience that actions had been discussed though the customer didn't recognise this as an action plan.

'insight' believes that each case reported and the agreed actions should be detailed for the customer in writing, to allow time for information to be absorbed.
- c) 'insight' received feedback some customers were unaware of the dedicated service. Therefore, we would like to see a Community Safety Communications Strategy which promotes the success the service has had in dealing with anti-social behaviour; e.g.) in the press, in My Great Place, on the website or local publications, including new leaflets and the use of video clips. We believe this may deter some types of unacceptable behaviour whilst at the same time giving confidence to customers to report issues. It would promote GPHG' good reputation to follow up and take appropriate action and project a positive image to potential new customers.
- d) 'insight' suggest that awareness of Community Safety actions which GPHG can take and have taken could be promoted more through neighbourhood, residents and community meetings encouraging reporting.
- e) GPHG should ensure that it is easy for customers to report new cases at any time. Customers told 'insight' they found it expensive to report issues of ASB outside of the normal working hours. 'insight' suggests GPHG offer a more affordable option, perhaps a 0300 number to report all incidents.
- f) We researched other registered providers offers of service, which is outlined in more detail in section 8. 'insight' liked the facility of a panic button offered by some landlords. A panic button allows the user to quickly leave the webpage they are viewing automatically navigating to a non-related web page.

7.2 Improving the effectiveness of GPHG

- a) 'insight' was informed best practice caseloads would be maximum 25 cases per individual at any time. At the time of review, we understood most CSCs has caseloads of over 25 cases. 'insight' recommends resources required to manage the Community Safety Service is reviewed by the senior team to reduce caseloads to manageable numbers to improve effectiveness of service delivery.
- b) 'insight' heard that the appointment of the CSM has been highly successful, bringing skills and expertise along with a reduced reliance on legal advice. Staff told us this had increased skills transference and quality of training within the CST. The service has developed immeasurably, but 'insight' identified the CSM is overstretched taking responsibility to strategically develop the service and directly manage operational duties of the CST and their caseloads. 'insight' is aware GPHG are looking at resources. 'insight' supports the need for more resources and any discussion with the CSM on how this might be best achieved.
- c) External partnerships work in various degrees and appear to work when relationships have been developed locally. 'insight' believes more could be done to manage these stakeholder relationships with Police and other local agencies, also involved in addressing issues of community safety. Often it appears relationships are built once a case comes to light. However, multi-agency working takes time to develop mutual understanding and boundaries.

'insight' feels these essential relationships can be reinforced by involving multi agencies in GPHG staff training on community safety. This could be developed in regions by local neighbourhood managers building on relationships in such a way that the CST can make good use of these relationships, as and when required.

- d) Staff told us some partner agencies appear to hide behind Data Protection when it comes to sharing data to support action to be taken. We were told in Bolton good multi-agency work takes place by the networking group, Bolton Community Homes. 'insight' recommends multi-agency training from GPHG to also dispel myths between agencies to support local agreements for information sharing at all operating levels.
- e) We understand it wasn't possible to analyse case management information to monitor performance because the current IT system does not record this level of detail. Therefore, the information isn't available to run reports of performance, check on progress or to manage the case. The CSM monitors cases in detail verbally with each CSC during review meetings. Whilst some spot checking is useful and supportive, 'insight' feels support for the CSM to manage these cases electronically with trigger points and timescales for actions needs developing.
- f) We heard during interviews of examples when CST and Neighbourhood Teams have worked well together. 'insight' would like to see these relationships fostered and recommend training be delivered to Neighbourhood Teams by the CSM and CST to help break down any perceived barriers encouraging joint working to attain common goals.
- g) We understand successful intervention work has been undertaken by Neighbourhood Teams using mediation services delivered by an external agency. This service could be promoted more to show that mediation works. Would GPHG consider a role for Resident Groups to support local officers with low level nuisance by gathering evidence and in providing support for complainants and witnesses?
- h) We heard the impact the tenancy sign-up process has and how this is an opportunity to ensure new customers are aware of both landlord and customer responsibilities in relation to nuisance. 'insight' recommends GPHG ensure information relating to the CST is clearly explained during sign-up of new customers, especially the impact of low level nuisance.

7.3 Improving efficiencies through systems and processes

- a) During staff interviews 'insight' were advised CAT don't have access to Case Manager, the business IT system used by the CST. When the DO isn't available, customers will call CAT to get an update on progress. We were told CAT is keen and willing to do more to support the CST and customers in this area. 'insight' recommends GPHG provide CAT with access to basic information so they are able to update customers.
- b) Currently, there are three business IT systems used by front-line teams and we were informed the systems are not integrated and don't talk to one another. As well as AXIS, the group CRM system, teams use IBS to record details relating to tenancies managed in neighbourhoods and Case Manager mainly used by the CST to log information relating to ASB cases. We were told that working between the three systems can make work cumbersome and time consuming. This occurs when staff are searching for records by moving between the different screens and often having to duplicate information.

Whilst changes to the business IT systems can take time and is costly 'insight' would like GPHG to consider a longer term investment in IT systems whether this either takes the form of training and sharing current data systems, integrating current systems or replacing the current IT with one system used and accessed by staff who are able to improve the customer experience.

- c) The categorisation of cases 'a' and 'b' dealt with by the CST and category 'c' cases by the Neighbourhood Teams is straight forward and easy to understand.

However, 'insight' heard Neighbourhood Teams occasionally experienced difficulties resolving low level cases within a reasonable timeframe because of the nature of the nuisance.

'insight' would like to see neighbourhood staff and CAT receiving training on the powers, tools and techniques available to the CST to broaden their knowledge and understanding of the actions; which can be taken to deal with anti-social behaviour. 'insight' suggests a procedure / guidance should be developed to assist teams to manage category c cases, to build confidence of officers in neighbourhood teams.

- d) 'insight' considered the geography of stock owned by GPHG and the impact this has on the management of Community Safety. We found CSCs each champion a region and cases allocated within regions. Once regional caseloads reach a limit an alternative CSC, who has capacity will investigate the case. This offers flexibility but can involve considerable time for CSCs travelling between regions.

We were informed of CSCs travelling up to 3 hours to attend an interview, which was outside the region they champion. We also heard examples when local ground work had been undertaken by local Neighbourhood Teams to support the CSC by gathering supporting data. 'insight' believe Neighbourhood Teams are in a position to provide support to the CST, which will develop their skills and in turn, could help them to manage category 'c' cases more confidently.

- e) Some staff said the the quality of notes taken during contact with customers were adequate, which must be comprehensive enough to enable categorisation and the right action to be taken and followed up with perpetrators. Additionally, this may allow some cases to be "nipped in the bud". 'insight' believes all front line staff would benefit from training to understand what information is useful to the investigation. Notes are used as supporting evidence therefore case studies can be used to gain an understanding of how important notes are for legal and other action; but also to define risks of poor notes.

- f) Community Safety issues are often raised outside of GPHG normal working hours. Whilst there are opportunities to report these issues to Orbis (OOH); our research suggests the service offered by Orbis staff could be improved. Training to collect evidence especially relating to Community Safety. Currently, calls are logged for a call back the following day by the CST. 'insight' believes training for GPHG front line staff on Community Safety could also be offered to Orbis staff to enhance the customer experience out of hours with basic advice, signposting and to support evidence gathering.

'insight' undertook a Mystery Shop of the service offered by Orbis by calling the out of hour's service with a simple ASB case. They found Orbis were helpful. The complaint was logged and the shopper was led through what could happen and was also advised to contact the police. The shopper, before ending the call, advised they were a mystery shopper and asked for the call to be removed from the log book.

- g) 'insight' recommends a review of the current methodology of collecting customer satisfaction feedback. This could include increasing the current two questions survey asked to a more in depth questionnaire to enable better customer reflection. This will assist GPHG in learning from closed cases. 'insight' is pleased work has commenced on this ahead of 'insight' concluding this report. 'insight' undertook a postal survey to 250 customers and telephone follow ups on customer satisfaction, receiving feedback from 65 customers. The results were considerably different from the survey carried out by the GPHG Quality team.

GPHG satisfaction showed 91.3% of customers surveyed were satisfied with the way the case was dealt with and 90.8% were satisfied with the outcome of the case. We understand the Q&P team contact customers by phone within four weeks of the case being closed and use a five point scale of very satisfied, fairly satisfied, neither, fairly dissatisfied and dissatisfied. Satisfaction performance is measured using the fairly satisfied and satisfied feedback.

'insights' survey found customer satisfaction was much lower at 50% and 56.5% respectively. 'insight' used a 10 point scale of satisfaction with 7, 8, 9 and 10 being used to collect satisfaction, which correlates with Q&Ps 5 point scale.

7.4 What customers told 'insight'

Below are key points summarised from the feedback provided by 46 customers, who had experience of the service from the 65 customers surveyed

- ✓ Customers fed back that staff are friendly, empathetic and reassuring.
- ✓ Reporting by phone and e-mail were popular methods to report new cases.
- ✓ Noise nuisance is one of the key reasons customers contact the CST.
- ✓ Strong theme of dissatisfaction built on a perception GPHG had not taken action.
- ✓ Perception GPHG allow 'problem' customers to move into properties, without consideration to the rest of the neighbourhood.
- ✓ Customers were dissatisfied with the time taken to resolve their case (36%).
- ✓ Action plans do not appear to be completed and agreed consistently (39%)
- ✓ Action plans do not meet customer expectations (52%)
- ✓ Customers are not kept informed throughout their case (43%)
- ✓ Customers do not feel supported throughout their case (42%)

8. Research of other Registered Providers offers via websites

We reviewed information on the GPHG website comparing this to other registered providers offers of service on their websites. We have listed strengths and weaknesses as well as features 'insight' suggests may improve the GP web page.

The GPHG website on Community Safety

- ✓ We liked the customer fact sheets.
- ✓ The CST front page was easy to find on the website and included a video.
- ✓ The website encouraged customers to report Community Safety incidents and explained how they would be categorized into case types of ASB.
- ✓ Early intervention and prevention were discussed
- ✓ Interpreters were offered
- ✓ Information about Community Trigger Procedure on the front page
- ✓ '0845' telephone number to report new cases 'out of hours' is expensive since many customers have mobile phone and no home phone line

What we liked about other registered providers websites

'insight' viewed a number of websites and listed some ideas thought may add value for customers to GPHG Community Safety web page for customers

Liverpool Housing Trust

- ✓ LHT's website contained detail they'd been shortlisted for an award
- ✓ The website outlined how LHT would respond to reports of ASB
- ✓ LHT clear explained the information required, providing timescales and actions which could be taken when a report is received
- ✓ LHT provided a '0300' number for customers

Guinness Northern Counties

- ✓ Provide additional numbers for police and crime-stoppers
- ✓ Advertised the service offered as 24 hours, 7 days per week,
- ✓ Offered different ways customers can report incidents i.e.) by telephone, by email or by completing a form with general details of the incident

Two Castles HA

- ✓ We liked their customer centered approach
- ✓ Explained incomplete diary sheets may render the case inactive or closed

Cobalt Housing

- ✓ Contact details were clearly displayed at the top of page
- ✓ The website gave reassurance information is strictly confidential
- ✓ The website guarantees a return call within 24 hours
- ✓ There is one telephone number for a 24 hour service 7 day service
- ✓ Explains what will happen when a case is reported and outlines action plans

Stockport Homes

- ✓ Clear definition of ASB, what action can be taken, detail of witness support and links to their leaflet
- ✓ Specific webpage 'How to report ASB' with contact details clearly displayed

9. To conclude and what we would like to happen next

We would like to thank the Board, senior team and staff for their commitment to the management of the Community Safety Service. We have listed a number of requests for improvement in section 4 of the report. We would like CSV to monitor the delivery the action plan agreed by the Board.

We would like to thank all the customers and staff we interviewed and who gave their time to speak to us as part of this Service Review; for their honesty and for being open to sharing for service improvement. We would like to thank those involved in the Community Safety Service for sharing data, policies and information to enable us to complete this review.

Finally we would like to thank Tracy Gregory, Customer Involvement Coordinator for her support and encouragement each week and also Yvonne Davies of Scrutiny and Empowerment Partners Ltd for her mentorship and guidance.

We look forward to working with you again and sharing our next report with you.

Appendix A

Legislation available to registered providers, which inform Anti-Social Behaviour and Community Safety practices.

Legislation	
Housing act	Police & Justice act
Landlords & Tenancy Act	PACE
Protection from eviction act	RIPA
Crime & Disorder act	Care Act
ASB Act, (inc. ASB, Crime & Policing act)	Mental Health act
Equality Act	Various acts in relation to land
Human Rights act	Case Law precedents
Environmental Protection Act	Tort principals
Noise act	Housing & Regeneration act
Noise & Statutory Nuisance act	Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment act
Localism act	