



Golden Lane Housing

working in partnership with 

Service quality report

for people with a learning disability and wider stakeholders



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Foreward



Having a place to call home to build your life around is important for everyone. By creating this environment, giving people choice with the right support enables people with a learning disability to achieve independence and be part of their community.

Over time a person's needs may change, and as a landlord having a flexible service will continue to support the individual to find the right tailored housing solution.

Through our research we identified there is currently no standard practice to determine whether landlords in the social or private sector are providing quality housing and services before or after a person has moved into their home.

This report describes how we researched the right tool to enable us to assess our own service quality which can be shared with other organisations within the housing and learning disability sector. People's expectations of a landlord can be very different from those being delivered, and only by having both perspectives could we get an accurate picture the quality of our services for people with a learning disability and for all those people involved.

The results noted in this report are helping us to shape the future of our services. While acknowledging where we are providing a quality service it has highlighted areas for improvement and action is being taken. Through monitoring our services continually it is supporting us to deliver the best possible service to our customers.

We hope the development of this service quality tool and the results will be useful for other organisations to improve their service delivery.

John Verge
Regional Business Manager (South), Golden Lane Housing

Executive summary

This report is intended to support the decision-makers to develop the service quality Golden Lane Housing (GLH) provides to people with a learning disability and wider stakeholders, and develop a service quality tool to be shared within the housing sector and partnership organisations to support best practice.

John Verge, GLH's regional business manager, south undertook the research in association with Warwick Business School to gain an accurate and detailed picture of people's perceptions of GLH's housing and development services, whilst gaining a greater understanding of what they expect from an excellent landlord.

Service quality and customer satisfaction is increasingly becoming an important issue for providers of services for people with a learning disability but there has been no clear method to determine and improve it within the sector.

Key points - customers expectations and perceptions

External and internal customers were questioned on their expectation of an excellent service and asked for their perceptions of GLH's current service. The results from 256 respondents provided clear evidence that overall GLH was meeting expectations of their customers. However, clear recommendations for enhancing the level of service quality in specific areas were identified.

GLH used the ARCHSECRET model to provide an assessment of service quality for people with a learning disability by providing expectation, perception and the subsequent gap scores for customers.

- For people with a learning disability their expectations were at a similar level to professionals. Expectation results for family were higher but this is unsurprising in the micro context of wanting the best services for their loved ones.
- Communication, humanness and security emerge as the most important expectation dimensions. The highest perception scores provide clear evidence that GLH is meeting the expectations in respect of communication, security and humanness.
- The lowest scores across the entire customer base were competence and responsiveness. Professional expectation results indicated that GLH is being clear with this client group about clarifying problems and providing timescales. GLH staff's lowest result was competence indicating recognition of pressures on staff to provide a full service.

Recommendations

Although the overall gap score across all customers was close to zero providing positive findings that GLH is providing a quality service, there are a number of areas that require improvement.

For external customers the worst gaps identified were in:

- Improved training for staff
- Delivering a promised service
- Failure to deal effectively with complaints

There appears to be the necessity to provide further appropriate training to existing staff and strengthen the induction programme of new staff joining this growing organisation to ensure the right level of service is provided.

Service standards need to be established and where service failings occur it is important that complaints are adequately addressed. Further reporting and analysis of complaints are required by senior managers.

For those families responding, the largest gap was in the tangible dimension and provides clear evidence that GLH must seek further funding from external sources to finance special adaptations.

Professional response indicated that competence and responsiveness were the largest gaps and highlights the importance of continuing to develop a knowledgeable and reactive workforce.

Specific recommendations

- Continue to support training to improve competence perceptions
- Introduce service standards for external customers to improve perception of responsiveness
- Review complaints procedure and monitor outcomes
- Reassess current adaptation policy and investigate adaptations funding through statutory and trust grant funds and internal maintenance budget
- Improve perceptions of competence, responsiveness and reliability across the customer base



Introduction

This report sets out to establish the views of people with a learning disability and wider stakeholders about the service quality of our development and housing services through a service quality tool that can be shared across the housing sector. It is based on the research from the project specifically designed to look at customer perceptions of GLH's service delivery and expectations from an excellent landlord.

We explored the different service quality approaches for the voluntary housing sector providing services for people with a learning disability, assessed our current service quality approaches with internal and external customers and determined the application of the tool across other learning disability services.

This report looks at how these results will shape the changes to the way we work and sets out recommendations.

What is a learning disability?

A learning disability is a reduced intellectual ability and difficulty with everyday activities. For example, household tasks, socialising or managing money, which affects someone for their whole life.

People with a learning disability tend to take longer to learn and may need support to develop new skills, understand complex information and interact with other people.

The level of support someone needs depends on individual factors, including the severity of their learning disability. For example, someone with a mild learning disability may only need support with things like getting a job. However, someone with a severe or profound learning disability may need full-time care and support with every aspect of their life. They may also have physical disabilities. People with certain specific conditions can have a learning disability too. For example, people with Down's syndrome and some people with autism have a learning disability.

Learning disability is often confused with dyslexia and mental health problems. Mencap describes dyslexia as a 'learning difficulty' because, unlike learning disability, it does not affect intellect. Mental health problems can affect anyone at any time and may be overcome with treatment, which is not true of learning disability.

It is important to remember that with the right support, most people with a learning disability in the UK can lead independent lives.

Background

Before the research could be undertaken we needed to find the most appropriate tool to provide clear results for improving service quality.

Researching the service quality tool

An understanding of how a customer judges service quality and satisfaction is vital. Defining service quality can help organisations influence how customers perceive their service and this is as challenging in the voluntary sector as in the profit sector.

There are three definitions of service quality:

1. Satisfaction – degree of fit between expectations and perception
2. Inferiority and superiority - a relative impression of the organisation and its services
3. Quality delivered – consistent conformation to specification

Through our research we identified the appropriate models and methods for assessing service quality for housing and development services to people with disabilities, their families, statutory agencies and support providers.

Model and method

In recent years non-profit organisations have used a variety of evaluation tools to understand the viewpoint of customers, facilitate the deployment of resources, improve strategic planning and progress quality of service.

Analysis showed that the American perspective of service definition and methodology provides the most appropriate approach for this sector. However, it is recognised that modifications to the most widely used service quality tool SERVQUAL was needed. An assessment of this tool indicated there was limited research into the learning disability field which resulted in the development of an alternative framework.

In 2000, 'ARCHSECRET' with ten theorised dimensions was created to help address the key research questions for people with a disability:

Figure 2.1

ARCHSECRET service quality dimensions

A	Access
R	Responsiveness
C	Communication
H	Humaneness
S	Security
E	Enabling/Empowerment
C	Competence
R	Reliability
E	Equity
T	Tangibles

They appear to be well adjusted to reflect people with a disability of the voluntary housing sector (see Appendix 1, P26). Limited results certainly indicated that it has more potential use for GLH. The model provided the opportunity to assess the expectation and perception of service quality for GLH's different customers and their employees.

This research aimed to determine the applicability of ARCHSECRET for people with a learning disability and professional customers in a voluntary housing organisation.

The survey and design

The survey assessed the service quality achievement of GLH against an excellent landlord with internal and external customers who have experienced our service over the last three years.

Using the ARCHSECRET model, an easy read and professional version of the survey were produced. The survey has 52 statements to establish the perception and expectation of service quality answered through a numeric seven-point scale to indicate customer's and staff's conformity or congruity, the example below is taken from the easy read version (see Appendix 2, P27):



Pilot

GLH conducted pilot of the survey to obtain people's views prior to the survey being sent out. The response was extremely positive with minor amendments.

Postal and online surveys

A postal survey was sent to tenants, families and carers due to the extremely structured design of ARCHSECRET making it self-completing and enabled individuals to have the option to discuss the questions with their support networks prior to completing them.

The support providers and staff completed the survey via Survey Monkey, a web based method during the same period as it was determined this would improve the response rate.



Golden Lane

Golden Lane Housing

4 for 3

verve

Large chipped bark for mulch
control & soil moisture retention
for paths, large beds & borders

Results and analysis

A main objective of the project was to determine the perceived service quality of GLH's housing and development service from the perspective of the different external customers and GLH staff. The service quality features that were important for each group are highlighted along with an assessment of the dimensions which fail to satisfy the different customers. Summary data from the ARCHSECRET survey for perceptions and expectations, along with the subsequent gap are presented.

Response rate

The analysis was conducted on the data received from 256 respondents who have all experienced GLH's development and housing service over the past three years. The overall response rate of 30% compared favourably to the intended 25% response rate (see Table 4.1), with the greater proportion received from tenants and professionals.

Table 4.1
Summary of response rate

	Number of surveys sent out	Number of surveys returned	Number of completed surveys returned	Response rate
Tenants	413	113	107	26%
Families	185	34	32	17%
Professionals	213	92	92	43%
Staff	30	25	25	83%
Total	841	266	256	30%

Demographics

The response composition of the professional group comprised of 74% from GLH's largest support provider partner Mencap (see Table 1.3). Staff across all divisions of GLH responded to the survey (see Table 1.4).

Table 1.3
Types of responded professional customers

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Mencap	68	73.9%	73.9%
Other support provider	18	19.6%	93.5%
Commissioner	5	5.4%	98.9%
Other (consultant)	1	1.1%	100%
Total	92	100%	

Table 1.4
Golden Lane Housing departments

	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative percent
Central Operations Team	6	24%	24%
Finance Team	3	12%	36%
Property Services Team	3	12%	48%
Regional Team	10	40%	88%
Leadership Team	3	12%	100%
Total	25	100%	

Experience of service

The majority of those responding to the survey had been engaged with GLH’s housing and development service for over one year (see Figure 2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5). However, 40% of those tenants who responded had only been housed by GLH within the last year (see Figure 2.3). Almost 60% of employees had been working at GLH for over two years (see Figure 2.6).

Figure 2.2
Summary of overall customer experience

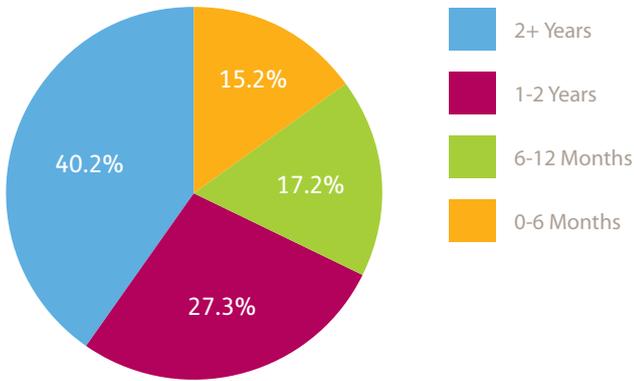


Figure 2.3
Length of residency for tenants

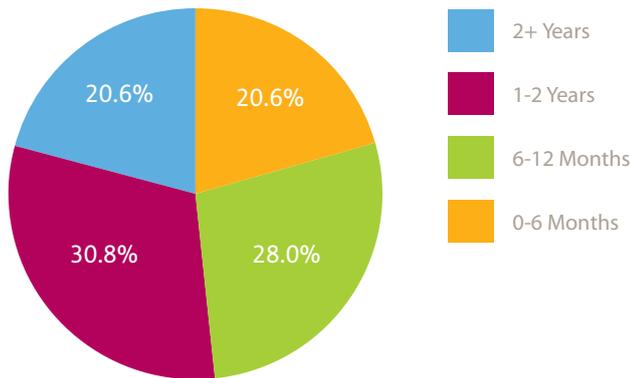


Figure 2.4
Family experience of service

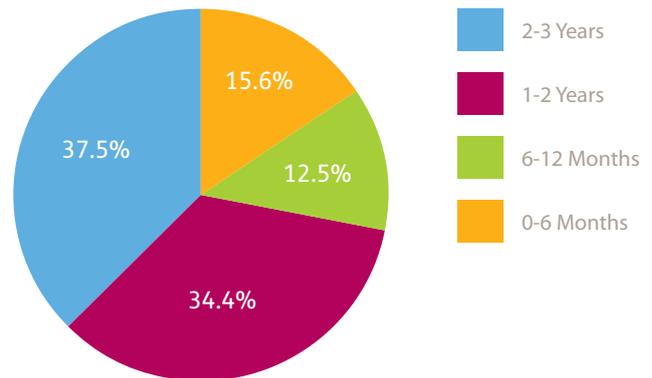


Figure 2.5
Professional experience of service

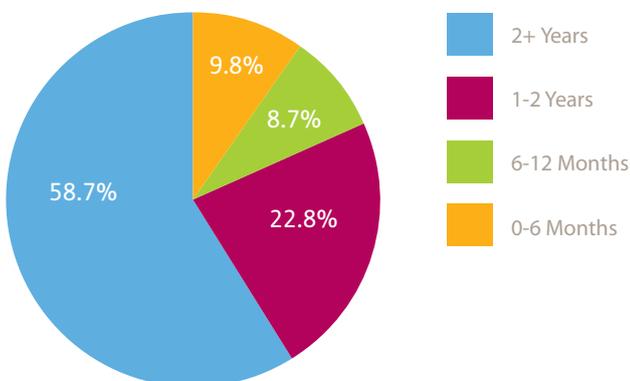


Figure 2.6
Length of working service for staff

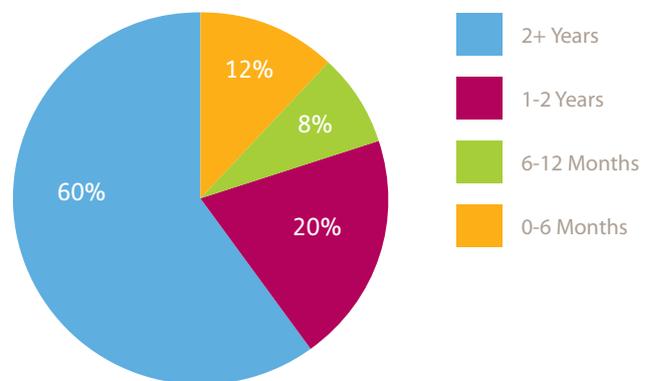


Table 1.5

Importance percentage rating of 10 dimensions – family, professionals and staff

	Mean score
Humaneness	89.3
Security	88.7
Competence	87.0
Responsive	86.8
Reliability	86.6
Access	85.9
Equity	84.3
Communication	82.7
Tangibles	81.0
Enabling	78.0
Overall average	85.03

Results

The comparatively high response rates, particularly from professionals, indicated that the instrument appeared to encapsulate the characteristics of service quality for this voluntary sector. Results of 85% for the overall importance ratings of the dimensions provided substantive evidence that all dimensions were relevant, with only enable/empower dimension failing to reach 80% (see Table 1.5).

Analysis

The results indicated that where the groups of tenant, professionals and staff were analysed separately the fundamental factor structure was largely supported. Statistical research shows that for assessing the quality of housing services for tenants with a learning disability, the ten dimensions of ARCHSECRET can be reduced to seven factors. New dimensions of personalisation (encompassing communication, trust and compassion), staff professionalism (encompassing reliability, enabling and competence) and accessibility (encompassing access and responsiveness), complement the existing dimensions of humaneness, security, equity and tangibles. The clear concept of a personalisation dimension emerging in all three group factor analyses demonstrates that this factor is the most important determinant of perceived quality for people with a learning disability.

ARCHSECRET expectations

Statements from the survey

The statements are based on the expectations of a landlord, some of these include; negotiating rights to housing and support, listening to opinions, meeting a person's needs, creating an environment to enable an individual to achieve their personal goals, accessibility of the property and materials, providing a flexible and dependable service, meeting changing needs, providing accurate information and about the landlord's staff. For the full survey see Appendix 2, P27.

Table 1.6 denotes the overall expectation scores for the ten ARCHSECRET dimensions and show the mean score was 5.46. The expectations were lowest for the enabling (5.27) and access dimensions (5.27), and highest for communication (5.75) and security (5.65). Table 1.7 provides a breakdown of each grouping. There are distinct priorities for each of the three groups.

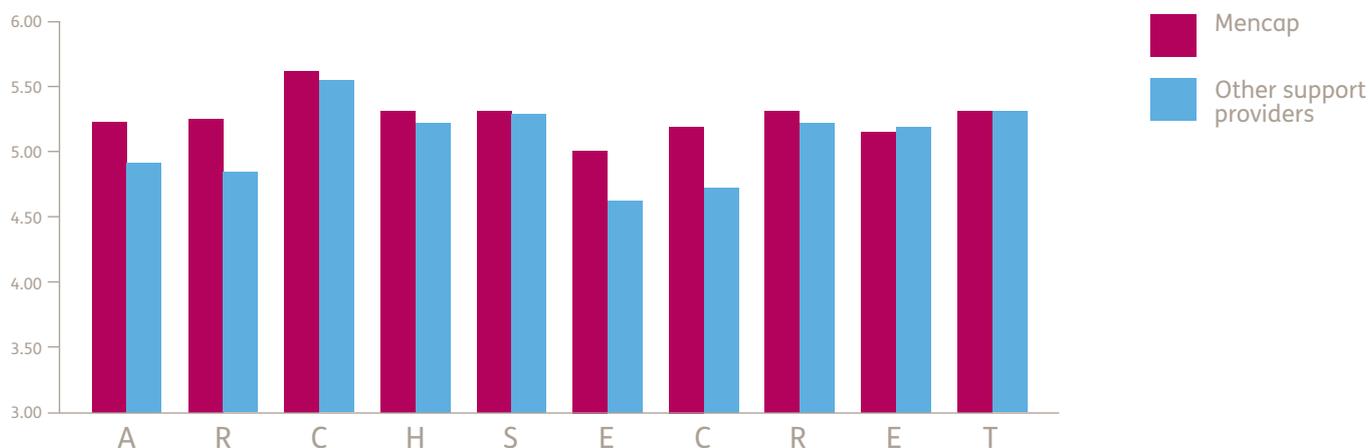
Table 1.6
ARCHSECRET dimension expectations - overall

Variable	Customers Mean score
Access	5.32
Responsiveness	5.34
Communication	5.75
Humaness	5.58
Security	5.65
Enabling	5.27
Competence	5.37
Reliability	5.46
Equity	5.43
Tangibles	5.44
Average overall	5.46

Table 1.7
ARCHSECRET dimension expectations - groups

Variable	Tenants Mean score	Family Mean score	Professional Mean score	Staff Mean score
Access	5.04	6.10	5.17	6.03
Responsiveness	4.98	6.23	5.20	6.25
Communication	5.50	6.36	5.63	6.52
Humaness	5.37	6.36	5.35	6.29
Security	5.58	6.23	5.36	6.28
Enabling	5.29	5.85	4.93	5.70
Competence	5.16	6.34	5.12	6.07
Reliability	5.20	6.40	5.27	6.00
Equity	5.25	6.25	5.20	6.00
Tangibles	5.22	6.44	5.25	5.76
Average overall	5.26	6.26	5.25	6.09

Figure 2.7
Mencap and other support provider expectations



Results and analysis of each group's expectations

Tenants

Results

The results for the tenants show that they had a slightly lower expectation from the overall population mean (5.26). Their priority service quality dimensions were security (5.58), communication (5.50), and humaneness (5.37), whereas the lowest rated dimensions were responsiveness (4.98) and competence (5.16).

Family

Results

These results differ considerably to the family respondents who had a much higher expectation of service across the entire 10 dimensions (6.26); with their highest priorities being tangibles (6.44), reliability (6.40), communication (6.36) and humanness (6.36).

Professionals

Results

For professionals their expectations were closer to the tenant's score (5.25) with their highest priorities being communication (5.63) and security (5.36) indicating that dialogue between tenant, professional and the landlord is important within a context of a safe supported housing environment. The professional's lowest priorities, enabling (4.93) and competence (5.12), matched closely those of tenants and families.

GLH staff

Results

GLH staff expectations, like the family group, were higher across the board (6.09) than the tenant and professional respondents. Staff priorities were communication (6.52) and humanness (6.29), exactly reflecting those of the tenants. Similar to the family and professional group, enabling (5.70) was a lower priority for staff.

Analysis

It was not unexpected that an important requirement for these vulnerable tenants was to feel safe in their home and have a landlord that deals with them sympathetically, confidentially and reassuringly. The trust and deference that many people with a learning disability have for professionals may have resulted in lower expectations of organisational competence and responsiveness.

Analysis

Enabling was the only dimension that scored less than 6.00 and suggests that they had lower expectations for landlords to support their loved ones to achieve their personal development goals. The family's unquestionable desire to advocate for the rights of their relative and their wish for them to live in a property that meets their physical and emotional needs may explain these higher expectations. Professionals in the care and support sector will have a wider range of knowledge of social and private landlords than perhaps any of the other external customer groups and their expectations would have consequently been influenced by their own experience.

Analysis

For support providers, like Mencap, enabling and empowerment are critical roles for them in supporting people with a learning disability and therefore this could account for the reason they did not consider this to be an important assessment of service quality for a landlord. Lower expectations of the competence of landlords in terms of staff numbers, and range of services indicate an acknowledgement of the current financial pressures that many social landlords are currently working under.

Analysis

The findings suggest that GLH staff also consider the support provider should be providing the service to enable.

Statements from the survey

The statements are based on the perceptions of GLH, some of these include; negotiating rights to housing and support, listening to opinions, meeting a person’s needs, creating an environment to enable an individual to achieve their personal goals, accessibility of the property and materials, providing a flexible and dependable service, meeting changing needs, providing accurate information and about GLH’s staff. For the full survey see Appendix 2, P27.

The overall perception scores for GLH service are shown in Table 1.7 and show the mean score was 5.20. The perceptions were highest for communication (5.48) security (5.45) and humanness (5.38), with the lowest perception scores being competence (4.98) and responsiveness (5.03). Analysis of the different group responses provides insight into the current perceptions of the GLH service. The breakdown of each group is provided (see Table 1.8).

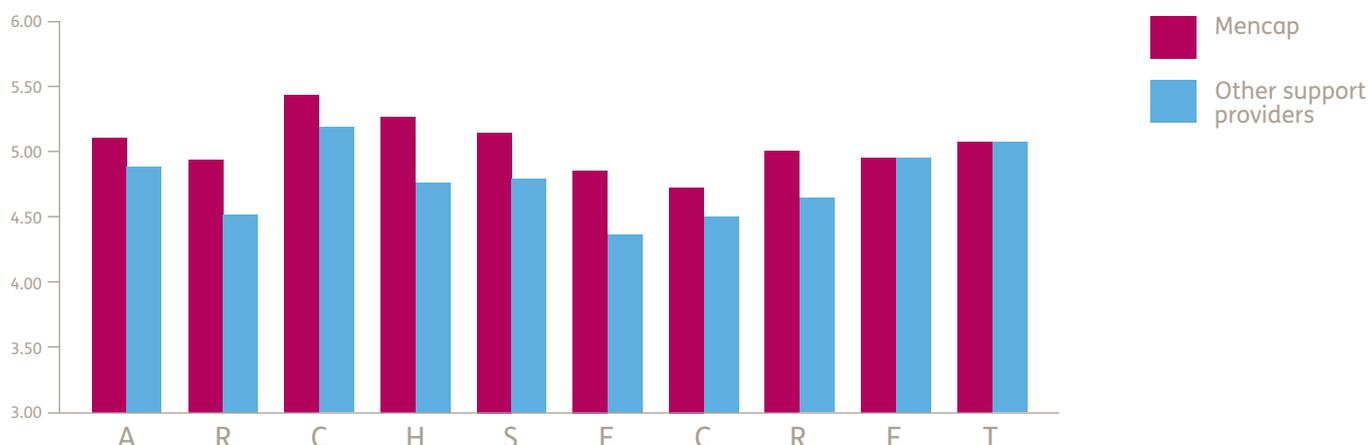
Table 1.7
ARCHSECRET dimension perceptions – overall

Variable	Customers Mean score
Access	5.22
Responsiveness	5.03
Communication	5.48
Humaness	5.38
Security	5.45
Enabling	5.07
Competence	4.98
Reliability	5.10
Equity	5.10
Tangibles	5.20
Average overall	5.20

Table 1.8
ARCHSECRET dimension perceptions - groups

Variable	Tenants Mean score	Family Mean score	Professional Mean score	Staff Mean score
Access	5.17	5.52	5.04	5.68
Responsiveness	4.98	5.17	4.84	5.68
Communication	5.42	5.53	5.40	5.99
Humaness	5.38	5.39	5.13	6.31
Security	5.67	5.66	5.04	5.70
Enabling	5.27	5.14	4.77	5.28
Competence	5.20	5.25	4.70	4.73
Reliability	5.17	5.30	4.93	5.20
Equity	5.19	5.21	4.88	5.44
Tangibles	5.33	5.19	5.01	5.40
Average overall	5.28	5.34	4.97	5.54

Figure 2.8
Mencap and other support provider perceptions



Results and analysis of each group's perceptions

Tenants

Results

Tenant perceptions of GLH overall service were reasonable with an overall score of 5.28. The highest mean ratings was security (5.67), communication (5.42) and humanness (5.38) exactly matching their highest expectation service quality dimensions. Responsiveness (4.98) and reliability (5.17) were both perceived to be the lowest rated dimensions.

Family

Results

Family's overall perception of the service were similar to the tenants (5.34), with security (5.66) and access (5.52) being the highest ratings. This indicates GLH was advocating effectively for the housing, support and funding rights for tenants to enable them to feel safe in their home. The lowest perception ratings for families were competence (4.70) and enabling (4.77).

Professionals

Results

The lowest overall perception ratings came from the professionals with a rating of 4.97. The highest rated dimensions of communication (5.40) and humanness (5.13), and the lowest of competence (4.70) and enabling (4.77), were consistent in professional groupings.

GLH staff

Results

GLH staff themselves provided the highest mean perception rating of 5.54. They perceived GLH's service dimensions of humaneness (6.31) and communication (5.99) to be particularly high and this matched their expectations of a landlord for people with a learning disability. The lowest rated factors were significantly lower for competence (4.71) and reliability (5.20).

Analysis

The findings indicate that GLH need to provide a more prompt, more flexible, dependable service to its tenants.

Analysis

This suggests there needs to be more confidence in the organisation to provide a quality service to meet the constant needs of their relatives.

Analysis

There is a higher perception of quality across the entire dimensions for Mencap staff suggesting that further attention needs to be given to the other important external customers (see Figure 2.8).

Analysis

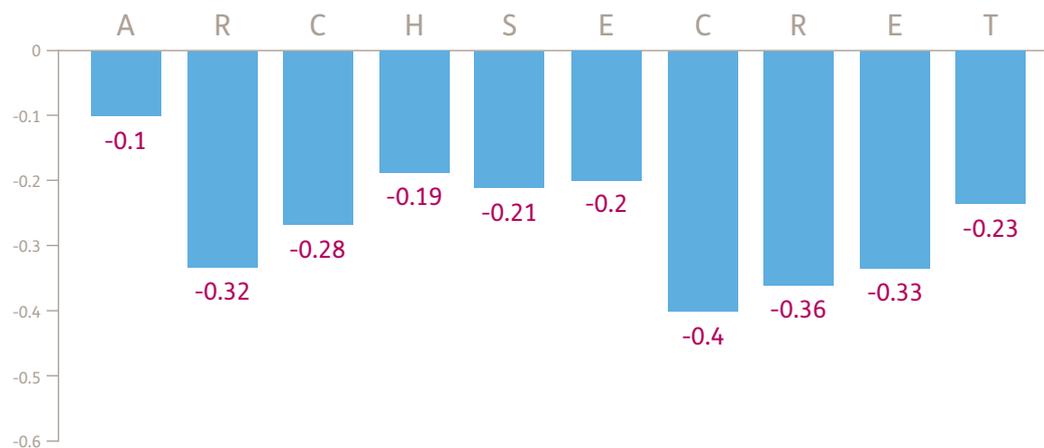
This may reflect the number of new staff joining the organisation at a time of rapid growth from the new leasing arrangements and the properties purchased from the recent successful £10 million GLH bond.

ARCHSECRET gap analysis

Table 1.9
ARCHSECRET dimension gap - overall

Variable	Customers Mean score
Access	-0.40
Responsiveness	-0.36
Communication	-0.33
Humaness	-0.32
Security	-0.28
Enabling	-0.23
Competence	-0.21
Reliability	-0.20
Equity	-0.19
Tangibles	-0.10
Average overall	-0.26

Figure 2.9
Overall mean gap scores for each of the 10 ARCHSECRET dimensions



Results

Table 1.9 and Figure 2.9 reveal the overall gap scores for the ten ARCHSECRET dimensions for this survey. The mean gap score is -0.26, and across the entire survey population the evidence indicates that GLH is very close to providing a quality service and satisfying customer expectations, with no dimension gap score greater than -0.5. The gaps produced by deducting the perception scores from the expectation scores indicate the largest gaps are competence (-0.40), reliability (-0.36), equity (-0.33), and responsiveness (-0.32). The smallest gaps were access (-0.10) and humanness (-0.19).

Analysis

There is a clear indication that GLH is overall providing a service that meets customer expectations. However, the areas of competence and reliability need special attention.

Figure 2.10
Grouping gap scores



Results

The different groups reveals some distinct differences between the various groups (see Figure 2.10).

Analysis

There are clear gaps in service for families and this reflects the higher expectations from a specialist landlord.

Table 1.10
ARCHSECRET dimension gap - groups

Variable	Tenants Mean score	Family Mean score	Professional Mean score	Staff Mean score
Access	0.12	-0.58	-0.07	-0.35
Responsiveness	0.00	-1.06	-0.36	-0.57
Communication	-0.08	-0.85	-0.23	-0.53
Humaness	0.01	-0.97	-0.22	0.01
Security	0.09	-0.58	-0.34	-0.58
Enabling	-0.02	-0.71	-0.18	-0.42
Competence	0.03	-1.10	-0.42	-1.33
Reliability	-0.04	-1.09	-0.35	-0.80
Equity	-0.07	-1.03	-0.33	-0.56
Tangibles	0.10	-1.25	-0.24	-0.36
Average overall	0.01	-0.92	-0.27	-0.55

Results

Reliability is consistently identified in the literature as the most important determinant for assessing service quality and therefore specific attention needs to be given to this area. Table 1.10 shows the breakdown of each group.

Analysis

Whilst the gap score for overall service quality is relatively small, there is evidence of issue of reliability.

Table 1.11

ARCHSECRET items, definitions, data and rankings – external customers

	Variable	Expectations Mean score	Perceptions Mean score	Gap Mean score	Gap ranking (worst to best)	Perceptions ranking (1=best)
CP2	Staff number and ability	5.29	4.90	-0.39	26	24
RL1	Service promised	5.36	4.99	-0.37	25	20
RN2	Complaints	5.22	4.85	-0.37	24	25
RN1	Timely services	5.19	4.82	-0.36	23	26
CM4	Accurate information	5.41	5.10	-0.30	22	15

Results

The five lowest gap ranked items for external customers are shown in Table 1.11. There appears to be a deficiency in; the right number of competent staff (CP2), an inability of GLH to provide a service as promised (RL1), the failure to constructively deal with any complaints (RN2).

Analysis

These results may reflect the pressures on new and experienced staff and signifies how important it is for senior managers to review current resources and the development plan for staff training requirements. The central customer service team coordinates complaints and a review of their workload and current procedures would be recommended.

Figure 2.11

Tenant mean gap scores for each of the 10 ARCHSECRET dimensions



Results

It has been shown that the tenant’s expectation of the service quality from a landlord was the lowest for all external customers, and the resultant gap scores suggest that these expectations are currently been met by their landlord GLH (see Figure 2.11). Positive perception gap scores were access, security and tangibles. The only factors that were marginally negative were communication, equity and competence.

Analysis

Overall GLH provides a quality service from the perspective of their tenants. It reflects where the focus of service quality should be for any such organisation.

Figure 2.12
Family mean gap scores for each of the 10 ARCHSECRET



Results

Figure 2.12 illustrates a larger gap score for family respondents, perhaps reflecting their greater expectations in a landlord for their relatives (-0.92). Tangibles (-1.25), reliability (-1.09), responsiveness (-1.06) and competence (-1.10) all have significant gap scores which all need addressing. The lower gap scores were security (0.58) and access (0.58).

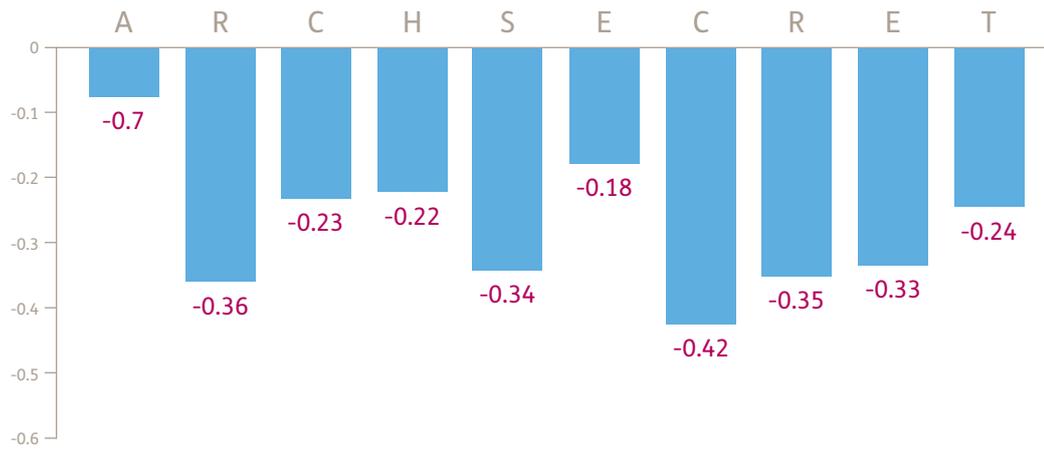
Analysis

Clearly GLH does not appear to be meeting the expectations of families in terms of physical facilities in the property. GLH may need to ensure that it regularly coordinates with tenants and their circle of support to ensure that their property meets their current needs. Mechanisms would need to be improved to secure the appropriate funding to undertake any additional works identified through external grants.

The gaps provide evidence that there is work required to improve the staff professionalism perception for families in terms of reliability, responsiveness and competence. Measures could include more regular contact and feedback with families, where appropriate, at the annual tenancy health check housing officers carry out and monitored service standards for responding and dealing with the families of GLH tenants. The lower response rate from this group suggests that they are less engaged with GLH, often due to the age and health of the family and their reliance on adult social care and the support provider.

Figure 2.13

Professional mean gap Scores for each of the 10 ARCHSECRET dimensions



Results

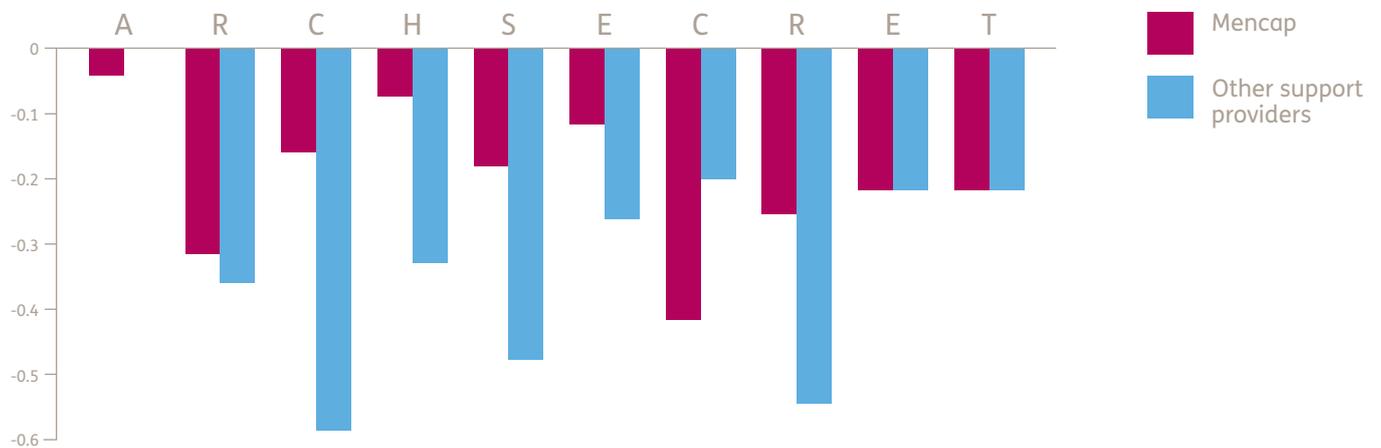
In the case of the professionals, there was a negative gap for every factor with the mean being -0.27 and the dimensions of competence (-0.42) and responsiveness (-0.36) having the widest gap. GLH is close to meeting professional’s expectations for a quality service for the factors access (-0.07), enabling, (-0.18), humanness (-0.22), communication (-0.23) and tangibles (-0.24).

Analysis

GLH is close to meeting the expectations of professionals except in the areas of competence and reliability. This reflects the greater importance professionals place on these service quality dimensions. It is important any landlord focuses on closing the gaps in these areas.

Figure 2.14

Mencap and other support provider gaps



Results

Figure 2.14 shows that for Mencap eight of the dimensions are close to being met, only capability and responsiveness being above 0.30. Staff ability (CP2) and providing a timely service (RN1) were placed lowest in the gap ranking by Mencap (see Table 1.12). The most striking difference between the ‘other support providers’ and Mencap was the gap for communication (-0.58) and reliability (-0.54). From the perspective of ‘other support providers’ GLH is also failing to communicate in a language that is understood by tenants (CM3) with a score of -0.67.

Analysis

Communication with tenants has always been a key priority for GLH and the current update of accessible material, including a revised tenancy DVD, along with evaluating tenant involvement, appears long overdue following this slightly negative perception.

Figure 2.15

Staff mean gaps scores for each of the 10 ARCHSECRET dimensions



Results

The gap scores of GLH staff are analysed and Figure 2.15 demonstrates that they considered that the service is not reaching service quality except for the humaneness dimension. The largest gaps were for competence (-1.33) and reliability (-0.8). Overall, the results from GLH staff mirror closely the outcomes from Mencap staff and suggest a sound internal assessment of the current service provision.

Analysis

Overall, the results from GLH staff mirror closely the outcomes from Mencap staff and suggest a sound internal assessment of the current service provision.



Conclusions and recommendations

What is the assessment of service quality for GLH customers?

ARCHSECRET provides an assessment of service quality by providing expectation, perception and the subsequent gap scores for customers. Much of the existing literature suggests that people with a learning disability have low expectations and their desires are moderated by their predictive expectations. However, this research suggests that this is not the case.

For people with a learning disability their expectations were 5.26 and at a similar level to professionals (5.25). Expectation results for family (6.26) were higher but this is unsurprising in the micro context of wanting the best services for their loved ones. Communication, humanness and security emerge as the most important expectation dimensions and contrast to reliability and responsiveness in the majority of SERVQUAL studies. The highest perception scores provide clear evidence that GLH is meeting the expectations in respect of communication (5.48), security (5.45) and humanness (5.38). The lowest scores across the entire customer base were competence (4.98) and responsiveness (5.03) suggesting more assurance is needed in these areas. Professional expectation results indicated that GLH is being clear with this client group about clarifying problems. The overall gap score across all customers was -0.26 providing positive findings that GLH is providing a quality service. Nevertheless there are a number of areas that require improvement.

How can GLH Improve its service quality to customers?

For external customers the worst gaps identified were in:

- Improving staff training
- Delivering a promised service
- Failure to deal effectively with complaints

There appears to be the necessity to provide further appropriate training to existing staff and strengthen the induction programme of new staff joining this growing organisation to ensure the right level of service is provided. Service standards need to be established and where service failings occur it is important that complaints are adequately addressed. For those families responding, the largest gap was in the tangible dimension and provides clear evidence that GLH must seek funding from external sources to finance special adaptations. Professional response indicated that competence and responsiveness were the largest gaps and highlights the importance of knowledgeable and reactive workforce.

Recommendations

Specific recommendations for senior GLH managers

- Review training and induction of staff to improve competence perceptions
- Introduce service standards for external customers to improve perception of responsiveness
- Review complaints procedure and monitor outcomes
- Reassess current adaptation policy to potential fund adaptations through statutory and trust grant funds

Summary of results

- ARCHSECRET provides a robust instrument for assessing service quality for people with a learning disability in the social housing sector
- A seven factor service quality structure shown to exist for people with a learning disability - two consolidated dimensions of Personalisation and professionalism emerge for people with a learning disability services
- Communication, humanness and security emerge as the most important expectation dimensions
- People with a learning disability do not necessarily have low expectations of service quality
- Further opportunities to research generalisability of instrument within social housing organisations and other service contexts for people with a learning disability

Appendix 1 - ARCHSECRET dimensions and items

Access (AC)

- AC1 The landlord is willing to negotiate the rights to services for you
- AC2 The landlord ensures accessibility to the property, personnel, easy read materials and the service
- AC3 The landlord can give you information, advice and support on ways you can get funding

Responsiveness (RN)

- RN1 The landlord's staff provides a prompt and timely service to you
- RN2 The landlord constructively handles complaints from you
- RN3 The landlord is willing to defend and fight for the rights of you
- RN4 The landlord provides a flexible service to meet the needs of you

Communication (CM)

- CM1 The landlord's staff are polite and courteous to you
- CM2 The landlord's staff are willing to listen to the opinion and point of view of you
- CM3 The landlord's staff communicates in a way that you can understand
- CM4 The landlord provides complete and accurate information to you in good time

Humanness (HM)

- HM1 The landlord's staff are willing to help you with concerns and reassures you in terms of personal anxieties.
- HM2 The landlord is sympathetic to your needs and respects the privacy of you
- HM3 The landlord respects the confidentiality and feelings of you

Security (SC)

- SC1 The landlord's tenants feel safe under the care of their support staff
- SC2 The landlord keeps up to date and secure records about your relative

Enabling/Empowerment (EN)

- EN1 The landlord creates the environment to enable you to take responsibility for their personal development
- EN2 The landlord provides opportunities and support for you to achieve your personal goals

Competence (CP)

- CP1 The landlord is able to deliver the level of service to you with clear terms and conditions
- CP2 The landlord has the required number of staff who have the ability to do the job
- CP3 The landlord is able to deliver the full range of services to meet the changing needs of you

Reliability (RL)

- RL1 The landlord delivers the appropriate service as promised
- RL2 The landlord provides a dependable service which does not vary over time
- RL3 The behaviour of the landlord's staff make you feel that they can trust them and have confidence in them

Equity (EQ)

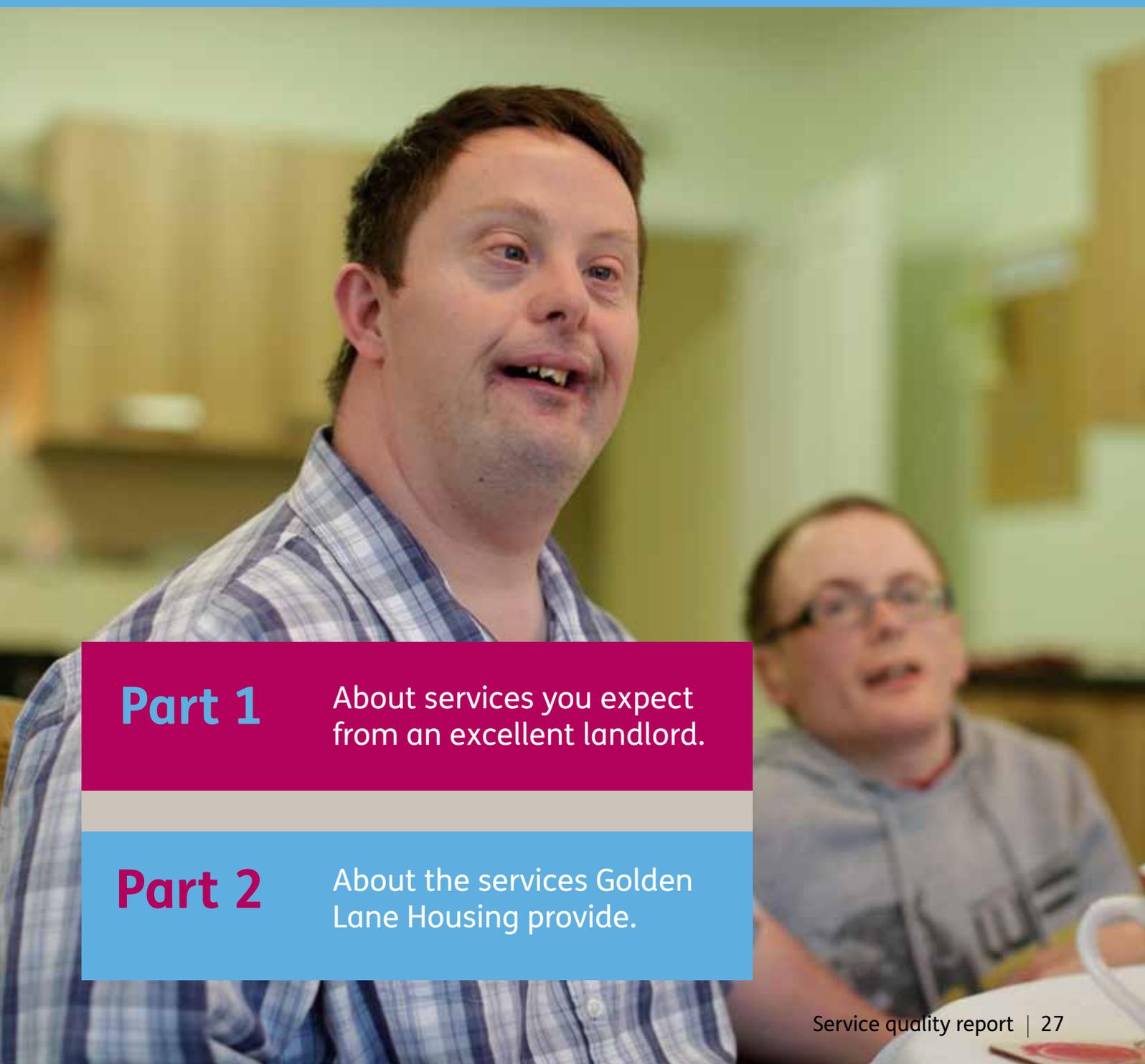
- EQ1 The landlord delivers an equitable service for you as well as groups of tenants

Tangibles (TA)

- TA1 The landlord offer the right level of physical facilities in their properties



What do you think about landlord services? Before and after moving into your home



Part 1

About services you expect from an excellent landlord.

Part 2

About the services Golden Lane Housing provide.

What you expect from an excellent landlord



Before you became a Golden Lane Housing tenant

Golden Lane Housing would like to know what services you expected from an excellent landlord when you were looking for a home. This was before you became a Golden Lane Housing tenant.



Please tell us how important each statement is by circling one number. 1 means you strongly disagree because it is not needed, 7 means you strongly agree because it is very important. You may circle any number in the middle that shows your views. There is no right or wrong answer.

If you need help filling this in, please ask your support staff to help you.



1 The landlord is willing to negotiate the rights to services for you.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



1

Absolutely disagree



2

Strongly disagree



3

Slightly disagree



4

Neither disagree or agree



5

Slightly agree



6

Strongly agree



7

Absolutely agree

Part 1

What you expect from an excellent landlord



- 2 The landlord ensures accessibility to the property, personnel, easy read materials and the service.



- 3 The landlord can give you information, advice and support on ways you can get funding.



- 4 The landlord's staff provides a prompt and timely service to you.



- 5 The landlord constructively handles your complaints.



Part 1

What you expect from an excellent landlord



- 6 The landlord is willing to defend and fight for your rights.



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- 7 The landlord provides a flexible service to meet your needs.



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- 8 The landlord's staff are polite and courteous to you.



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- 9 The landlord's staff are willing to listen to your opinion and point of view.



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7



1

Absolutely disagree



2

Strongly disagree



3

Slightly disagree



4

Neither disagree or agree



5

Slightly agree



6

Strongly agree



7

Absolutely agree

Part 1

What you expect from an excellent landlord



10 The landlord's staff communicates in a way that you can understand.



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11 The landlord provides complete and accurate information to you in good time.



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12 The landlord's staff are willing to help you with concerns and reassures you in terms of personal anxieties.



1



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7



1

Absolutely disagree



2

Strongly disagree



3

Slightly disagree



4

Neither disagree or agree



5

Slightly agree



6

Strongly agree



7

Absolutely agree

Part 1

What you expect from an excellent landlord



13 The landlord is sympathetic to your needs and respects your privacy.



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14 The landlord respects your confidentiality and feelings.



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15 The landlord's tenants feel safe under the care of their support staff.



1



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3



4



5



6



7



1

Absolutely disagree



2

Strongly disagree



3

Slightly disagree



4

Neither disagree or agree



5

Slightly agree



6

Strongly agree



7

Absolutely agree

Part 1

What you expect from an excellent landlord



16 The landlord keeps up to date and secure records about you.



1



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17 The landlord creates the environment to enable you to take responsibility for your personal development.



1



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18 The landlord provides opportunities and support for you to achieve your personal goals.



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19 The landlord is able to deliver the level of service you need with clear terms and conditions.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



1

Absolutely disagree



2

Strongly disagree



3

Slightly disagree



4

Neither disagree or agree



5

Slightly agree



6

Strongly agree



7

Absolutely agree

Part 1

What you expect from an excellent landlord



20 The landlord has the required number of staff who have the ability to do the job.



1



2



3



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21 The landlord is able to deliver the full range of services to meet your changing needs.



1



2



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22 The landlord delivers the appropriate service as promised.



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23 The landlord provides a dependable service which does not vary over time.



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6



7



1

Absolutely disagree



2

Strongly disagree



3

Slightly disagree



4

Neither disagree or agree



5

Slightly agree



6

Strongly agree



7

Absolutely agree

Part 1

What you expect from an excellent landlord



24 The behaviour of the landlord's staff make you feel that you can trust them and have confidence in them.



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2



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4



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6



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25 The landlord delivers an equitable service for you as well as groups of tenants.



1



2



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26 The landlord offer the right level of physical facilities in their properties.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



1

Absolutely disagree



2

Strongly disagree



3

Slightly disagree



4

Neither disagree or agree



5

Slightly agree



6

Strongly agree



7

Absolutely agree

Part 2

Your perceptions



After becoming a Golden Lane Housing tenant

Golden Lane Housing would like to know what you think about our services. Please be honest.



Please tell us how important each statement is by circling one number. 1 means you strongly disagree because it is not needed, 7 means you strongly agree because it is very important.

You may circle any number in the middle that shows your views.



How long have you been a Golden Lane Housing tenant? Please circle.

0-6
months

6-12
months

1-2
years

2-3
years



1

Absolutely
disagree



2

Strongly
disagree



3

Slightly
disagree



4

Neither
disagree
or agree



5

Slightly
agree



6

Strongly
agree



7

Absolutely
agree

Part 2

Your perceptions



- 1 Golden Lane Housing is willing to negotiate the rights to services for you.



- 2 Golden Lane Housing ensures accessibility to the property, personnel, easy read materials and the service.



- 3 Golden Lane Housing can give you information, advice and support on ways you can get funding.



- 4 Golden Lane Housing's staff provides a prompt and timely service to you.



1 Absolutely disagree 2 Strongly disagree 3 Slightly disagree 4 Neither disagree or agree 5 Slightly agree 6 Strongly agree 7 Absolutely agree

Part 2

Your perceptions



- 5 Golden Lane Housing constructively handles your complaints.



1



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- 6 Golden Lane Housing is willing to defend and fight for your rights.



1



2



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4



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6



7



- 7 Golden Lane Housing provides a flexible service to meet your needs.



1



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4



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6



7



- 8 Golden Lane Housing's staff are polite and courteous to you.



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2



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4



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6



7



1

Absolutely disagree



2

Strongly disagree



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Slightly disagree



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Neither disagree or agree



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Slightly agree



6

Strongly agree



7

Absolutely agree

Part 2

Your perceptions



9 Golden Lane Housing's staff are willing to listen to your opinion and point of view.



1



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10 Golden Lane Housing's staff communicates in a way that you can understand.



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11 Golden Lane Housing provides complete and accurate information to you in good time.



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4

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Part 2

Your perceptions



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15 Golden Lane Housing's tenants feel safe under the care of their support staff.



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16 Golden Lane Housing keeps up to date and secure records about you.



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7



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Absolutely disagree



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Strongly disagree



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Neither disagree or agree



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Part 2

Your perceptions



- 17 Golden Lane Housing creates the environment to enable you to take responsibility for your personal development.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



- 18 Golden Lane Housing provides opportunities and support for you to achieve your personal goals.



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- 19 Golden Lane Housing is able to deliver the level of service you need with clear terms and conditions.



1



2



3



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5



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7



- 20 Golden Lane Housing has the required number of staff who have the ability to do the job.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



1

Absolutely disagree



2

Strongly disagree



3

Slightly disagree



4

Neither disagree or agree



5

Slightly agree



6

Strongly agree



7

Absolutely agree

Part 2

Your perceptions



21 Golden Lane Housing is able to deliver the full range of services to meet your changing needs.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



22 Golden Lane Housing delivers the appropriate service as promised.



1



2



3



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23 Golden Lane Housing provides a dependable service which does not vary over time.



1



2



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6



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24 The behaviour of Golden Lane Housing's staff make you feel that you can trust them and have confidence in them.



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



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Neither disagree or agree



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Part 2

Your perceptions



25 Golden Lane Housing delivers an equitable service for you as well as groups of tenants.



1



2



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4



5



6



7



26 Golden Lane Housing offer the right level of physical facilities in their properties.



1



2



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4



5



6



7



1

Absolutely disagree



2

Strongly disagree



3

Slightly disagree



4

Neither disagree or agree



5

Slightly agree



6

Strongly agree



7

Absolutely agree

You agree



I am the tenant/s or the person filling in the questionnaire on behalf of the tenant/s. I agree Golden Lane Housing can use the information in this questionnaire.



Tenant's name

Address

Signature

Date



If someone else has filled in this form:



Name

Signature

Date



Please send this questionnaire back to Golden Lane Housing in the freepost envelope by 24 July 2013.



All the completed questionnaires will be put into a prize draw. The winner will be chosen at random and contacted by **Friday 2 August 2013.**



Appendix 3 - Methodologies

The observations and positions in this report are based on two research projects. The first research project was to establish the most appropriate service quality tool to gain customer viewpoints which could be more widely used across the housing sector for people with a learning disability. The second research project enabled us to collate and analysis our customers feedback to enable GLH to improve our service delivery.

The research was conducted over a four month period from June until September 2013.

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