

Board

22 September 2009

Concierge Service Review

Report by Director of Tenancy Services

For Decision

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This report outlines the findings of the Concierge Service Review which was undertaken as part of the Your Homes Newcastle service improvement programme with a view to improving services.
- 1.2 The Concierge Service, like many services which YHN offers, is provided at a subsidised cost. The current cost of the service to the Housing Revenue Account, (HRA), requires review as the income generated from service charges currently falls short of the actual cost of the Concierge Service by a considerable margin.
- 1.3 The service is highly valued by tenants, leaseholders and partners and the outcome of the review will deliver a modernised service to residents of Concierge blocks throughout the city.

2. Background information

- 2.1 Following YHN Board approval the review commenced in October 2008 and covers the Concierge Service which provides services to 57 blocks of flats throughout the city which are home to approximately 6,000 tenants and leaseholders.
- 2.2 The service has the largest staffing establishment within YHN with 160 staff providing services within three core areas:
 - Safety and Security.
 - Building Cleaning.
 - Good Neighbour.
- 2.3 The review is intended to provide a consistent, modern, flexible, technically

enhanced service for tenants in an efficient and effective way.

- 2.4 The factors and opportunities that have influenced the review were:
- The need for continuous service improvement and modernisation of the service.
 - The need to review management arrangements.
 - Current cost of the service.
 - The redevelopment of Riverside Dene, (Cruddas Park).
 - The technical nature of the service.
 - The National CCTV Strategy which recommends the link up and sharing of CCTV systems.
 - The recommendations of the 2005 Concierge Service Charge Review.
 - The potential to expand the service.
- 2.5 The review was conducted as part of the YHN Service Improvement Programme. The work undertaken by the Concierge Service Review Workstream incorporated:
- Collation of all existing data on the service.
 - Benchmarking with numerous ALMO's, Councils and similar services.
 - Provision of an overview to board members and tenants.
 - Technical review of existing equipment and development of options for future delivery of service.
 - Collation of projected costs.
 - Completion of a comprehensive consultation plan.
 - The workstream membership consisted of YHN officers from all directorates, the City Council and the Newcastle Tenants Federation who were represented through the Living in Flats Group.
- 2.6 The Review has taken 10 months to complete and has been one of the largest undertaken by YHN, impacting directly on almost 6000 tenants and 160 staff, and having significant financial implications in both revenue and capital terms.
- 2.7 In February 2009 YHN Board considered a number of options and decided that the tenants would be consulted on the following three options, all other options were discounted due to them not being able to address the factors or provide the opportunities outlined in paragraph 2.4:
- Option 1: Selective monitoring.
 - Option 2: Centralised monitoring from one central control room, with on site and responsive staff.
 - Option 3: Centralised monitoring from two locations with on site and responsive staff.

- 2.8 In addition to approving the assessment of the three options, YHN Board also considered Finance Committee's view that market testing be considered. Board agreed that market testing should be considered after the preferred option had been agreed and had been in operation for a reasonable period of time. This would allow YHN to demonstrate value for money and that the internal provision of services is challenged.
- 2.9 Following the report in February 2009 the Concierge Service Review Workstream appointed Global MSC Consultants to help and advise on the technical components of the review. Global MSC are leaders in their field, and have previously worked with the Safe Newcastle Partnership. Global MSC have conducted a full review of existing technical systems and made suggestions on the way forward. They have also undertaken consultation with partners, the full report from Global MSC is available to Board Members if required.
- 2.10 Whilst financial issues are dealt with later in the report there are principles regarding the service charge and the cost of the service which have already been considered by YHN Management Team. These decisions were that pooled charges for leaseholders were to cease, allowing them to be charged for the service they receive on a block by block basis. Tenants will continue to pay a pooled service charge calculated on only the costs of the service. The direct costs of the service do not include overheads such as management costs, central recharges, etc, but which are included in the total cost of the service for financial reporting.

3. Consultation

- 3.1 Consultation was undertaken with Concierge Service tenants and staff through a variety of methods and techniques.

Global MSC also undertook consultation with the police and Newcastle City Council as they are the main users of the CCTV and security systems within the area and information sharing will require the use of technology which can be integrated.

3.2 Tenant consultation

- 3.2.1 Tenant consultation was undertaken through a variety of different methods with assistance from the Newcastle Tenants Federation.
- 3.2.2 The Living in Flats Group have been involved throughout the review and assisted with the content of the information booklet and the questionnaire which was circulated to all Concierge Service tenants. The booklet and options sheet provided information about the review and the options and the questionnaire asked tenants to provide feedback about the options.
- 3.2.3 In addition, 22 information sessions were held across the city to provide further information to customers, gather feedback and to provide help in completion of the questionnaires. Additional assistance was also offered to tenants including telephone assistance, translations and home visits.
- 3.2.4 Newcastle Tenants' Federation supported the information sessions and held two

open meetings for representatives from Tenants' and Residents' Associations, (TARA's), to give feedback on the options and the review.

3.2.5 In addition to this managers from the Concierge Service attended numerous TARA meetings, arranged a tour of the existing service, as well as a visit to a control room environment in Sunderland and some of the blocks it controls.

3.2.6 Questionnaire responses

Out of the 4929 questionnaires sent out 859 were returned, out of those returned there was no clear preference for any of the options.

To analyse the results the feedback was broken down into Resident (Resident Concierge and 37 Hour) and Non Resident (24 hour lodge) sites. Preferences are shown in the table below:

	Total Response	Residential Sites	Non Residential Sites
Option 1	28.3%	29.3%	27.3%
Option 2	24.8%	24.6%	24.7%
Option 3	19.1%	22.8%	15.1%
No option chosen	27.1%	23.2%	32.9%

It was found that the vast majority of respondents, (44.9%), were aged over 65 years and 42.8% of respondents stated that they had a longstanding illness, disability or were in ill health. Demographic information from April 2009 shows that tenants over the age of 65 make up 27.5% of the Concierge Service tenants and a further 16.74% of all tenants have a disability.

The feedback from the questionnaires, information sessions and Newcastle Tenants Federation showed that tenants were concerned over:

- The perceived loss of a familiar presence within the block which could lead to an increase in tailgaters and anti social behaviour. They also felt that not having a presence in the block would stop people from wanting to live there and the sense of pride and community would be lost and tenants would be left feeling vulnerable.
- Funding for whatever option is chosen; if they would be able to afford any increases in service charge and if they would have to pay for new equipment and technology.
- Leaseholders expressed concerns over the cost of the service and how charges will be apportioned.
- Staff levels/numbers have also been raised by tenants as they are concerned that response times to incidents will increase and not enough staff will be available to monitor CCTV.

3.2.7 The full consultation report is attached in Appendix A with issues and responses attached at Appendix B, and Newcastle Tenants Federation's response is Appendix C.

The concerns raised in 3.2.6 are addressed in section 5.1.3 which seeks to show what the service will look like to tenants under Option 2.

3.3 Partner Consultation

3.3.1 Specific stakeholder consultation was undertaken by Global MSC with Northumbria Police and Newcastle City Council. There were no major issues arising from the consultation but both Northumbria Police and NCC asked to be involved throughout the process to ensure that all systems would support information sharing.

3.3.2 NCC through the Safe Newcastle Partnership are keen to be involved in any proposals regarding public space CCTV, further discussions will be required once an option has been agreed for implementation.

3.3.3 Northumbria Police have acknowledged that they need to increase and formalise information sharing around the National Intelligence Model.

3.3.4 In addition to the partner consultation there is still a need to be mindful of how any new technology would interface with other technologies such as Northgate and Customer Relationship Management systems.

3.4 Staff Consultation

3.4.1 The key issues/concerns arising from the staff consultation are:

- Possible increase in Anti Social Behaviour and levels of empty properties.
- Loss of local knowledge.
- Slower response times.
- Health and Safety risks for responsive staff.
- Impact on the police.
- Job losses/impact on pay and conditions.
- Whether they will get the training they need to fulfil their changed roles.

3.4.2 One third of Concierge Service staff attended the consultation sessions. Out of these staff, half took the opportunity to complete a feedback form and make comments which reflected the above, 17 staff preferred Option 1, 0 preferred Option 2 and 2 preferred Option 3. The remainder did not register a preference.

3.5 During the implementation of the approved option, consultation with tenants would continue to take place with the assistance of the Newcastle Tenants Federation.

4. Global MSC Findings

4.1 To enable the provision of a comprehensive report Global MSC undertook the following work:

- A complete review of all the current technical equipment ie CCTV, door access systems and existing network provision.
- Consultation with partners and staff.
- Site visits and task analysis within 24 hour and resident sites.
- Analysis of benchmarking and workstream data.
- Provision of technical advice relating to CCTV, network, control rooms and security systems, etc.

Global MSC reported that to facilitate any of the options, significant capital expenditure would be necessary to implement the installation of a dedicated closed network between all of the resident blocks, the control room(s), and to upgrade the equipment (CCTV, Intercom, Access Control etc). Board members will have an opportunity to view examples of the equipment suggested by Global MSC at the Board meeting.

4.2 Current position

4.2.1 Security technology has changed considerably since the installation of the majority of Concierge Service equipment. Consequently the equipment has become difficult to maintain as some equipment parts have become obsolete or difficult to source. Installation is also difficult on Concierge sites due to space constraints.

4.2.2 Global also reported that rooftop cameras could be repositioned to provide better coverage and images. In addition to this they have advised that significant improvements could be made to safety and security on resident sites by linking door access, CCTV, intruder and smoke alarms to a network and having them monitored 24 hours.

5. Options Analysis

5.1 Detailed analysis of all 3 options has been carried out with views of tenants, partners and staff canvassed. Whilst no individual option has emerged as a clear preference Board is recommended to approve Option 2 for implementation.

5.1.1 The questionnaire demonstrated however that 28.3% of tenants preferred Option 1, 43.9% preferred either Option 2 or 3, whilst 27.1% gave no preference. The logic behind combining the preferences for Option 2 and 3 is that both options revolve around a centralised control room(s), one in Option 2 and two in Option 3. Almost 50% of respondents therefore preferred an option with a central control room. In examining Options 2 and 3 the benefits of Option 2 over Option 3 are that Option 3 would require additional investment for which tenants would see no real benefit, income generation would be restricted, services between the 2 control rooms could vary, and from the external benchmarking undertaken all similar Concierge Services were considering centralising to one not two locations. Appendix E gives

further details.

5.1.2 All of the options are outlined in Appendix D, but the benefits of Option 2 are outlined in the following table:

Factors/Opportunities	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review the scope of the service with consideration to partnership working, centralisations and job descriptions. 	<p>Option 2 will allow for additional added value services to be offered to customers such as window cleaning, offering minor repairs and undertaking building cleaning within all of the Concierge Sites, this will be possible through the variation of existing contracts and redeployment of staff from lodges.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The need to review management arrangements. 	<p>The restructure of the service will provide a more robust management structure, reducing the staff to management ratios, increasing career development opportunities and providing a more consistent service to tenants.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Current cost of services. 	<p>Option 2 delivers the most savings whilst still addressing all factors/opportunities and meeting the needs of the tenants.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The redevelopment of Riverside Dene, (Cruddas Park.) 	<p>Riverside Dene will have a central Concierge Lodge installed ready for the first block being relet after modernisation. This lodge can then be utilised in Option 2 as the redundant control room for emergencies.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The technical nature of the service. 	<p>Significant benefits are available with the introduction of new technology, such as staff having access to housing management data, all properties having CCTV, door access systems, smoke and intruder alarms monitored 24 hours a day, tenants having direct access to staff via the control room at any time.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The National CCTV Strategy which recommends the link up and sharing of CCTV systems. 	<p>One control room would allow for a central point of contact to be established for all partners etc. Technical links could be established to allow the sharing of live images to assist in preventing and detection of crime.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recommendations of the 2005 service charge review. 	<p>The cost of the service has been addressed during the review and Option 2 would see the overall reduction in the cost of the service by approximately £1.2 million in addition to the removal of the indirect costs</p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The potential to expand the service. 	<p>of the service from charges.</p> <p>Option 2 will allow for additional added value services to be offered to tenants but will also provide scope for income generation opportunities to be realised.</p>
--	---

5.1.3 So what will the new service under Option 2 look like for tenants?

- Every flat covered by the Concierge service is linked to the Central Control Room with direct access from their flat so the tenant can talk to the Control Room staff via the intercom in the flat and vice versa.
- Every flat has their smoke alarm and intruder alarm monitored 24 hours a day. Should the alarm be activated we will respond in accordance with agreed procedures.
- Every flat has their blocks CCTV and Door Entry Access System monitored and controlled 24 hours a day. Incidences of “tailgating” will be challenged by Control Room staff with the additional benefit of responsive staff attending site if required. Information within the service however, does not evidence that there are currently repeated incidences of “tailgating”.
- Every block has regular on site Concierge staff providing building cleaning, repair reporting, good neighbour and enquiry services every working day, during the day. The staff would not be required to live on site but staff would work on regular blocks rather than being moved around. The existing Lodge accommodation would continue to be used as a base for staff but would not be used as a 24/7 Control Room.
- Every multi storey block has an information and access point directly linked to the Central Control Room located in the lobby of the block, giving additional access to the Central Control Room and information on services
- Every block receives the Concierge Responsive Service 24 hours a day. This service would respond to tenant complaints and enquiries, as well as to any emergencies or issues arising which the on site staff could not resolve. It would include accompanied viewing for void properties by new tenants and the patrolling of blocks as required to resolve any issues that may arise with anti social behaviour, power cuts, etc. The Responsive Service would provide support to Central Control Room staff by providing site presence when required.
- Every tenant has access to YHN services 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 52 weeks of the year including Bank Holidays.
- The services continue even for periods the tenant is not living in the flat i.e. the smoke and intruder alarms, and the CCTV and Door Entry Systems are monitored and responded to regardless of occupancy.
- Building cleaning that is currently under a service level agreement with the City Council will be carried out by YHN staff.

5.2 Resourcing

5.2.1 It is estimated that the establishment would reduce from 160 Concierge Staff to approximately 120 FTE. The roles of staff will also change, moving away from a generic job description to a number of more specific roles. This will have the following implications on resources:

- The Concierge Service establishment will need to be reduced. There are

currently 28 vacancies and it is envisaged further reductions can be managed through natural wastage. Should this not be achieved, retirement, retraining and redeployment would be considered with redundancy as a last resort.

- New job descriptions would be required to reflect the new roles.
- Staff would be assimilated into roles where appropriate.
- New roles could be ring fenced to those in the service and recruitment would follow YHN policies and procedures.
- Protection and buy out packages would need to be negotiated where appropriate, on the deletion of old roles.
- Shift patterns will change.
- The establishment for Co-ordinators will increase from two to three.
- Additional supervisor positions will be created reducing the current staff/management ratio from 1:20 to approximately 1:8.
- A technical member of staff should be employed or contracted to oversee the services systems.

5.3 Technology

- 5.3.1 To move forward with Option 2 a network solution is required, this will allow CCTV, door access, IT systems, smoke and intruder alarms to be linked to a central location.
- 5.3.2 Wireless, leased and self provide options have been assessed and Global MSC's technical team have recommended that a fibre network is the most stable for the requirements of YHN and have based their estimates on a leased fibre network.
- 5.3.3 Should Board wish to consider the possibility of a self provide network, more research would be required into costs and benefits, but this could be undertaken during the implementation phase.
- 5.3.4 It is felt that a wireless network would not provide the stability required for YHN at this time as the band width would not be sufficient and costs may be prohibitive. Global MSC have also been unable to identify another agency which has gone fully wireless as it remains unproven:

Networking the blocks could also provide the following benefits;

- Ability to integrate with Northgate.
- Ability to integrate with existing concierge service software.
- Provision of key management systems.
- Provision of information kiosks for all blocks.
- Provision of general information screens within foyers as above and ability to sell advertising space.
- The ability to integrate with mobile technology.

- Mobile technology would reduce mobile phone charges as staff would be contactable through handsets.
- Automated fault reporting from remote equipment such as CCTV and intercoms.
- Ability to work more closely with the Community Care Alarm Service.
- Increased communication with all blocks on the network, an entire block can be communicated with at once.
- Increased performance and audit information, i.e. provision of resourcing information for leaseholder charging.
- Provision of internet access to residents.
- Provision of TV services over the network.
- Ability to monitor private contracts.

5.3.5 The following table shows the technical functionality available within each option:

Function/Service	Option One	Option Two	Option Three
New Network Required	Yes (needs to be specialised to switch equipment at set times)	Yes	Yes
Upgrade of Existing Equipment	Yes	Yes	Yes
Control Rooms	1	1 (+redundancy)	2
Full Redundancy	No	Yes	Yes
Ability to monitor 3 rd Party Systems (BS5759)	No	Yes	Yes (management issues with split control rooms)
Provision of Internet Access	Yes (may be expensive as the network will be specialised)	Yes	Yes
Provision of TV Services	Yes (may be expensive as the network will be specialised)	Yes	Yes
Take over of existing services	No	Yes	Yes
Automated Fault Reporting	No	Yes	Yes
Integration too Northgate	No	Yes	Yes
Integration to resource management and job allocation software	No	Yes	Yes
Integration too Key Management	No	Yes	Yes
Information Kiosks	No	Yes	Yes
Help Points	No	Yes	Yes
Information Screens	No	Yes	Yes (need to be managed from one control room only)
Integrate to YHN's proposed Handheld PDA's	No	Yes	Yes
Remote CCTV Viewing via PDA	No	Yes	Yes
Remote VOIP Communications on PDA	No	Yes (in-range)	Yes (in-range)
Audit report of Control Room Staff	No	Yes (2-separate reports)	Yes(2-separate reports)
Ability to Provide Response instructions on Screen	No	Yes	Yes
Wireless Network for Stryker Cameras	Yes (Separate network required and additional costs)	Yes	Yes

5.3.6 In addition to the above, call centre and resourcing technology would be implemented into the control rooms providing the following:

- Information on calls waiting, waiting times and calls lost, allowing

resources to be distributed accordingly.

- Operator performance information i.e. calls taken or lost, time spent unavailable to tenants and break times.
- Supervisor will be able to monitor live data and manage the control room accordingly.
- Types, locations and times of incidents will be recorded allowing 'hot spots' to be identified and patrolled proactively or highlighted to partner agencies.
- Response and resolution times for incidents.
- Staff activity and location.

5.4 Value for Money and Financial Issues

5.4.1 There will be significant investment required for this project if approved.

5.4.2 Irrespective of approval, significant investment will be required to maintain and upgrade existing systems due to their age, parts becoming obsolete and lack of functionality.

5.4.3 Dependant on the decision made by Board a further report will be brought to Board detailing the funding options.

5.4.4 It is however anticipated that there will be no direct cost to the HRA should revenue savings be utilised to fund prudential borrowing. These costs will lie outside the service charge based on direct cost and therefore represent a subsidy to the service.

5.4.5 Capital costs would cover the provision of:

- Networking.
- CCTV.
- Intercom.
- Help Points.
- Access Control.
- Graphical User Interface.
- Information Display Screens.
- Information Booths.
- Control Room with Alarm Response Centre, (ARC).
- Alterations to sites to provide welfare facilities, storage, etc.

5.4.6 Efficiencies will be realised should the implementation of Option 2 go ahead. The 2009/10 projected spend for door entry system maintenance is approximately £700,000. Should all of the systems be upgraded they will be in warranty for between 3 and 5 years, (depending upon the contract), which would reduce the revenue expenditure in this area by potentially £700,000 per annum. In addition to

this further expenditure has been identified for Riverside Dene (£800,000,) and 3 concierge sites which require upgrades within the next three years (£900,000).

5.4.7 The implementation of Option 2 would allow for income generation opportunities to be pursued, these opportunities could include:

- Provision of chargeable internet.
- Provision of chargeable TV services.
- Third party public/private monitoring contracts i.e. CCTV, alarms etc, a similar service in Bristol is currently generating approximately £658,000 income per annum providing CCTV monitoring, lone worker monitoring and alarm monitoring.
- Selling advertising space on information boards (information awaited, £199 per 30 seconds per hour per 30 days.)
- Provision of building cleaning services to third parties.

5.4.8 It is recognised that the income generation opportunities would take time to be realised, probably only coming into play following implementation of Option 2, approximately 4 to 5 years from commencement of implementation.

To assist with the implementation of Option 2 it will be necessary to procure further consultancy assistance. Consultancy charges will be considered as part of the overall project cost.

5.5 Services Charges

5.5.1 The cost attributed to the Concierge Service in 2008/9 was £ 5.5m. (This included the Building Cleaning Service Level Agreement and other indirect costs such as departmental recharges.) The net direct cost of the Concierge Service in 2008/9 was £4.4m. The service charge varies between tenants depending on what service they currently receive. Tenants in the 24/7 Concierge blocks are charged £13 per week, whilst tenants in Resident Concierge blocks are charged £9 per week and tenants within the Byker Wall area are charged £10 per week. The income charged through these Service Charges totals £1.9m which leaves a deficit of £3.6m that is currently subsidised by the Housing Revenue Account.

5.5.2 It is proposed that we charge the same Service Charge to every tenant by offering the same services to every tenant. How much, if at all, the Service Charge is subsidised by the Housing Revenue Account is a decision which will be required by the Board.

5.5.3 Should Board decide to approve option 2 the direct cost of the Concierge Service would be £3.3m per annum. To recover this cost in full would mean levying a single rate Service Charge of approximately £11.32 for every tenant each week. Under option 1 a single rate Service Charge of approximately £12.87 would be required to recover the full cost, and under option 3 this would be approximately £12.23. The Building Cleaning SLA would be undertaken by Concierge staff under options 2 and 3. All of these costs are approximate and exclude indirect costs, which would still have to be met from the Housing Revenue Account. Further reports regarding Service Charges and Funding options will be reported to Board in due course.

- 5.5.4 Option 2, like all the options, sees an overall reduction in the cost of the service, however tenants on resident sites would see a small increase in charge. It is recommended that this is reviewed again nearer implementation and consideration be given to continued subsidy for tenants who may see an increase in charge.
- 5.5.5 It is important to note that Leaseholders will pay for the services received in their individual block and will pay a different rate of Service Charge to tenants for the same service. This is because charges to Leaseholders are governed by their lease agreement so Leaseholders must pay for the actual service received. Tenants on the other hand could pay a reduced Service Charge if the service is subsidised by the Housing Revenue Account.
- 5.6 Equalities and diversity issues
- 5.6.1 Leaseholders may pay a different Service Charge than tenants for the same service as outlined in 5.5.5.
- 5.6.2 The Concierge Service currently has three different levels of Service Charge for tenants dependent on which block the tenant resides. We are proposing one level of Service Charge for all tenants i.e. one size fits all. Tenant feedback has included the fact that some tenants would prefer to have a service that provides for the variance in service and consequently Service Charges.
- 5.6.3 The Service Charge is Housing Benefit eligible and consequently most tenants will have their Service Charges met by Housing Benefit. However for those not receiving Housing Benefit, they may have increased service charges to pay.
- 5.7 Communication Plan
- 5.7.1 As tenants and staff have been consulted throughout the review, a communications plan will be implemented to ensure that all tenants and staff are aware of the outcome of the review and the next steps, including the continued consultation outline above.
- 5.7.2 The communications plan will include the following:
- Homes and People Article.
 - A letter to all tenants and staff explaining the outcome of the review and consultation opportunities for the future.
 - An agenda item to the Living in Flats Group.
 - Attendance at Tenants and Resident Groups to explain the changes.
 - Information of the Concierge Service Website.
 - Meetings for all Concierge staff.
- 5.8 Implementation
- Based on the provision of a complete network and estimated timescale from beginning the procurement through the full implementation would be approximately 4 years.
- A detailed implementation plan will be prepared for whichever option is chosen.

6. Conclusion and Recommendations

- 6.1 The Concierge Service is highly valued by tenants, leaseholders and partners and is in need of modernisation in both technical and operational terms to be able to continue providing services of the highest quality for the residents of Newcastle.
- 6.2 Tenants, leaseholder, partners and staff have been consulted through a variety of ways regarding the three options previously approved by YHN Board in February 2009. The Newcastle Tenants Federation, through the Living in Flats Group, have contributed to this review.
- 6.3 Technical expertise during the review has been provided by Global MSC, one of the leading specialists in this field, who have advised YHN on the technical and operational requirements of each option.
- 6.4 An option analysis has been undertaken in technical, operational and financial terms. It is clear that the technology currently in operation will require renewal and upgrade whichever option is chosen. This would also have been required should YHN not have chosen to undertake a review because our existing technology has become largely obsolete. The proposed technology will give tenants and leaseholders a much improved service and YHN the opportunity to raise income.
- 6.5 The proposed staffing and management structure under option 2 will provide for improved services to tenants and leaseholders as well as opportunities and better working environments for staff.
- 6.6 The Concierge Service is one of several services that YHN provides which is subsidised. In other words the cost of providing the service is not fully covered by the service charges levied on tenants and leaseholders and is subsidised from the Housing Revenue Account. Board will be required to consider whether to continue subsidising the Concierge service, whichever option is chosen, and if so to what extent.
- 6.7 Board is recommended to agree:
- Option 2, centralised monitoring from one central control room with on site and responsive staff.
 - To receive a further report on the funding associated with implementation of option 2.
 - To receive further reports on service charges, implementation and communication plans.

Background Papers: Concierge Service Review Board Reports October 2008 and February 2009

Contact Officers:

If you have any questions about this report that you would like clarifying before the meeting you can contact either:

Helen Garbutt, Concierge Manager, telephone 0191 2788683 or e mail helen.garbutt@yhn.ork.uk

Martyn Burn, Head of Support & Care, telephone 0191 2788599 or e mail martyn.burn@yhn.org.uk

Concierge consultation report

Consultation was undertaken with Concierge Service customers and staff through a variety of methods, in accordance with a consultation plan which was agreed by the work stream group.

Staff consultation

All YHN staff were consulted through a dedicated Concierge Service Review Team Brief in March 2009. In addition; a focus group was held for Housing Management and Citywide Services, and a series of dedicated focus groups for Concierge Service Staff and feedback forms for completion.

56 of the 161 Concierge Service staff attended the consultation sessions, out of these staff; 29 took the opportunity to complete a feedback form and make comments which reflected the above, the feedback also showed that 17 staff preferred Option 1, 0 preferred Option 2 and 2 preferred Option 3 the remainder did not register a preference.

The issues raised by staff who took part in the consultation are outline below.

General concerns

- A concern that anti social behaviour will increase due to reduced presence of staff.
- The number of voids will increase as residents may chose to move out.
- Cost and damage to properties may increase due to concierge staff not being on site 24 hours per day.
- The times that staff work on site would need to be discussed with tenants and housing offices as each block has greatly different needs.
- Staff feel that a “one cap fits all” is the wrong approach to take.
- Local knowledge of concierge based in blocks is a valuable asset and staff should be retained in the area.
- Concern about loss of jobs.
- Any review should include quality over quantitative studies
- I feel we have become “a victim of our own success” by being a 24 hour service along with CCAS, our costs are high but we do not have any opportunity at present to bring money in to the service to offset costs.
- Local knowledge should be used to draw up plans for when lodges could be closed down and when they should be manned.
- Concerns about how fast the response times will be.
- Concierge attracts tenants to multi storey blocks and demand for properties may reduce.
- Concern about whether spilt shifts would be possible.
- Staff feel YHN will lose its good neighbour role with the proposed changes.
- Concern about service provision in emergency situations if the system goes down.

- Staff want reassurance that they will get the training they need.
- Staff feel there is a health and safety risk for the responsive staff role.
- Concern that staff won't be able to monitor all the cameras from one point.
- Staff felt the process wasn't fully transparent because estimated charges had been calculated without agreeing issues such as shift allowances.
- Concern that the investment needed wouldn't lead to an overall saving.
- Staff want to be involved in deciding who works where and in what role and would like information about the process for allocating new roles. Staff also wanted information about how trade unions will be involved.
- Concerns about maintaining chartermark accreditation.
- Staff wanted to know whether changes to pay and conditions would be effective throughout the whole of the service.
- Some staff felt that there wasn't enough detail about the options to make a decision
- There were concerns about existing staff who have health problems and will not be able to carry out additional duties.
- Staff wanted to know whether they would be supported if they want to leave the concierge service and work within another department within YHN.
- Staff were concerned about the impact on the police from changing the service.
- Some staff see the review as a good opportunity to develop and learn new skills. However, other staff were less positive about the proposed changes who feel that the service should stay the way it is.
- Staff feel the review should involve a pilot of the different options.
- Staff feel that concierge managers should work shadow concierge staff to understand role more
- Staff feel they should have been consulted earlier in the process
- Staff think that the review should include the management structure within the concierge service

Concerns relating to each option

Option 1

- Customers like staff being there during the night as they feel safer. This is the time when anti social behaviour happens. Anti social behaviour will increase if staff are removed.
- Selective monitoring will need to be different in all blocks depending on issues; this should not be a standard process.
- Staff are concerned about what will happen with the management of keys in this option.
- Staff feel that tailgaters would be more of an issue with this option.
- Staff are concerned about who will take in residents' parcels if there are no concierge on site
- Staff feel residents will miss the presence of staff if they don't live on site
- Some resident concierge felt they would be happier living off site as customers knock on their door during the night

- Staff felt that YHN should bring building cleaning in house in option 1
- Staff were concerned about the loss of night shift allowance
- Staff felt that standards of cleaning will reduce

Option 2

- Staff are concerned about how reliable CCTV will be.
- Staff are concerned about response times and the location of the control room.
- Staff want reassurance that responsive staff will have a base.
- Staff are concerned that some of the equipment needed and the control room would mean there would not be a cost saving.
- Staff are concerned that there will be an increase in the service's carbon footprint using more vehicles
- Feel there would be a loss of daily reports from concierge staff
- Staff want reassurance that PRI information about tenants will be made available for staff safety.
- Concern about who will issue key fobs when staff not on site.
- Staff are concerned about what will happen with incidents such as when customers are stuck in lifts.
- Staff want more information about how will the cleaning function be managed.
- Staff are concerned about how the new technology will be kept up to date.
- Staff are concerned that there will be no service to customers if there is a power cut.
- Staff are concerned that vulnerable tenants will they be put at risk if there is no staff presence.

Option 3

- Staff would like to know where the control rooms would be.
- Staff want reassurance that responsive staff will have a base.
- Staff are concerned about the cost implications of building two control rooms.
- Staff are concerned that there may be an impact on decent homes work e.g. access to keys.
- Staff are concerned that YHN are reducing our 3 star service.
- Staff are concerned that the costs would double for this option compared with option two.
- Staff are concerned that day staff will get less pay than shift workers.
- Staff feel sickness levels could be affected.

Additional services staff would like concierge service to provide

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To clear ASU and YPS properties when tenant moves out 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bin cleaning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grounds maintenance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove bulky rubbish
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Handyman service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Void clean and clears
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building cleaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collecting prescriptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking control 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver newsletter/leaflets 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rapid response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chute clearance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noise abatement enforcement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changing light bulbs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key holders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small repairs eg lock changes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help tenant move in
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New tenant visits 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor the wider area from the blocks and provide surveillance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could charge the police for the work we do that supports them 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make appointment for gas companies

How staff would change the service if they were given free reign to do so:

- For staff to have a more varied role so they can learn about all the concierge service. They could do this through a rolling shift pattern.
- Pull in SLA's to reduce costs and to provide a better service eg grounds maintenance, cleaning
- Support CCAS staff to be able to respond to alarms
- More joint working with housing offices and support staff in ASU
- Private work for housing associations
- Provide services for external agencies such as social services
- To look after the grounds maintenance
- Continue the good neighbour role
- Staff to be able to do accompanied viewings
- Staff to provide a handyman service for vulnerable tenants
- A permanent caretaker in each block
- Keep night shift with staff doing other work during the day
- Keep and upgrade the lodges equipment

Customer consultation

Customer consultation was undertaken through a variety of different methods led by the Tenant Involvement Team with assistance from the Newcastle Tenants' Federation.

The Living in Flats Group have been involved throughout the review and assisted with the content of the information booklet and the questionnaire which was circulated to all Concierge Service Customers. The booklet and options sheet provided information about the review and the options and the questionnaire asked residents to provide feedback about the options.

In addition, 22 Information sessions were held across the city to provide further information to customers, gather feedback and to provide assistance in completion of the questionnaires. Additional assistance was also offered to residents and help provided included telephone assistance, translations and home visits.

Newcastle Tenants' Federation supported the information sessions and held two open meetings for representatives from tenants' and residents' groups to give feedback on the options and the review. In addition to this managers from the Concierge Service attended a number of Tenant and Resident Association meetings, arranged a tour of the existing service and a visit to a control room environment and some of the blocks it controls.

Resident questionnaire

In June 2009, 4929 postal questionnaires were sent out to residents across Newcastle who receive the concierge service. In addition, a number of blank questionnaires were also distributed at consultation events which resulted in a further 22 forms being completed. By 12 August 2009, 859 respondents had completed the questionnaires. Based on the number of forms which were sent out and returned this represents a response rate of 16.9% which is relatively low for a postal survey. However, as 859 responses have been received so far this is a meaningful sample and can be considered representative of concierge customers.

The comments received from residents on the questionnaires were categorised and each theme was allocated a code in order to analyse the comments received.

Summary of results

Summary of options

- Option 1 was supported by 28.3% of respondents
- Option 2 was supported by 24.8% of respondents
- Option 3 was supported by 19.1% of respondents
- A number of respondents wanted their existing service to 'stay the same'. In total 27.8% of respondents did not indicate which option they preferred.

Option 1

- 243 respondents (28.3%) supported Option 1.
- Over a half of respondents (56.1%) did not offer any comments on this option.
- The top 6 reasons for supporting or rejecting this option was as follows:
 - On-site/personal approach (143 respondents 16.6%)
 - No change/no effect/stay the same (102 respondents or 11.9%)
 - General negative (72 respondents or 9.2%)
 - Issues around safety (66 respondents or 7.7%)
 - Concerns about charge or cost (53 respondents or 6.2%)
 - General positive (44 respondents or 5.1%)
- Respondents were asked what times they would like the selective monitoring to take place. Almost a third of respondents (31.3%) did not comment on this.
- A fifth of respondents (20.3%) favoured 8pm to 8am.
- 16.5% of respondents favoured 12 midnight to 8am
- 11.5% favoured 4pm to 12 midnight.
- In total, 48.1% of respondents favoured a shift which would part of the evening or night-time.
- In total, 20.5% of respondents indicated that they favoured a shift pattern that would work throughout the day time (e.g 8am-4pm, 9am to 5pm and 12 noon to 6 pm).
- A large proportion of those over the age of 65 did not respond to this question.

Option 2

- 213 respondents (24.8%) supported Option 2.
- Two-thirds of respondents (66.2%) did not offer any comments on this option.
- The top 6 reasons for supporting or rejecting this option was as follows:
 - On-site/personal approach (89 respondents 10.4%)
 - General negative (63 respondents or 7.3%)
 - General positive (50 respondents or 5.8%)
 - CCTV and safety issues (45 respondents or 5.2%)
 - No change/no effect/stay the same (38 respondents or 4.4%)
 - Concerns about charge or cost (35 respondents or 4.1%)

Option 3

- 164 respondents (19.1%) supported Option 3. This was the least popular option.
- Two-thirds of respondents (70.1%) did not offer any comments on this option.
- The top 6 reasons for supporting or rejecting this option was as follows:
 - General positive (68 respondents or 7.9%)
 - On-site/personal approach (60 respondents 7.0%)
 - Concerns about charge or cost (30 respondents or 3.5%)
 - General negative (58 respondents or 6.8%)
 - No change/no effect/stay the same (30 respondents or 3.5%)

- CCTV and safety issues (29 respondents or 3.4%)

Additional Services

Residents were also asked what additional services they would like concierge to provide. The top 6 services respondents would like to see the concierge do are as follows:

- Daily blocks inspections (494 respondents or 57.5%)
- Building cleaning (453 respondents 52.7%)
- Reporting repairs (417 respondents or 48.5%)
- Receiving parcels (403 respondents or 36.9%)
- Litter picking around blocks (399 respondents or 46.4%)
- Issuing fobs, keys (364 respondents or 42.4%)
- CCTV and safety issues (29 respondents or 3.4%)

127 respondents commented further on the types of roles the concierge should carry out. Of the options ticked many respondents stated that there would be no change (22%) in what the concierge do as they 'do' this already. However, 14.2% of respondents stated the concierge should also have responsibility in reducing or tackling ASB or crime related issues in their block. A further 10.2% wanted the concierge to be responsible for cleaning the blocks. 7.9% comments that they wanted to have a concierge that was on-site and offered a personal approach.

Additional comments

493 respondents made further comments on the options. Some of these were reiterated points made earlier.

- The top 6 themes of additional comments on these options were as follows:
 - No change or effect (144 respondents or 16.8%)
 - On site/personal approach (116 respondents 13.5%)
 - Change nothing (keep it the same) (110 respondents or 12.8%)
 - Concerns about charge or cost (77 respondents or 9%)
 - Issues around safety (72 respondents or 8.4%)
 - Positive comments about concierge (72 respondents or 8.4%).

Demographics

- The vast majority of respondents were in the older age brackets. 44.9% of respondents were aged over 65 years of age. In contrast there were only 9.9% of respondents who were aged between 16-34. The proportion of respondents in each age group increased as the age categories got older.
- Almost half of the respondents were male (37.6%) and a further 36.7% were female. 12.6% of respondents did not indicate their gender.
- The vast majority of respondents were white origin (86.9%), and 7.1% were from a BME background. 5.8% of respondents did not provide details of their ethnicity.
- Over half of respondents stated that they were Christian (55.4%) and a further 20.7% stated that did not follow a religion. Whilst 11.9% did not complete this section, a further 4.1% stated that they did not wish to say (totalling 16% of respondents).

- Nearly three-quarters of respondents stated that they were heterosexual or straight. Whilst 13.5% did not complete this section, a further 8.1% stated that they did not wish to say (totalling 21.6% of respondents).
- 42.8% of respondents stated that they had a longstanding illness, disability or were in ill health. A further 30.8% of respondents stated that they did not have a disability or ill-health and 2.1% stated that they did not know. Over 24.2% of respondents did not reply to this question.

Analysis by Resident Blocks

The table below provides a breakdown in the number of responses received by tenants who live in residential blocks. In total there were 384 questionnaires which were filled out by people who lived in residential blocks. This represents a response rate of 23.3%. The three residential blocks with the highest response rate are in bold in the table below.

Street	No. of properties	Number returned	Response Rate
Adelaide House	105	24	22.9
Denton Park House	80	37	46.3
Fawdon Park House	2	0	0.0
Harehills Tower	65	14	21.5
Hilltop House	80	32	40.0
Howard Street	18	3	16.7
Maytree House	50	4	8.0
Melbourne Court	153	27	17.6
Mill House	96	28	29.2
Proctor Court	56	11	19.6
Queens Court	116	17	14.7
Shaftoe Court	35	7	20.0
Shieldfield House	126	23	18.3
St Annes Close	252	38	15.1
Stoddart House	28	1	3.6
The Spinney	93	20	21.5
Tynedale House	45	11	24.4
Vale House	135	51	37.8
Wyndley House	111	36	32.4
Total	1646	384	23.3

The breakdown for options is similar for the whole sample.

- Option 1 was supported by 29.3% of respondents who lived in residential blocks
- Option 2 was supported by 24.6% of respondents
- Option 3 was supported by 22.8% of respondents
- A number of respondents wanted their existing service to 'stay the same'. In total 23.2% of respondents did not indicate which option they preferred.

Analysis by Non Residential Blocks

The breakdown for options is similar for the whole sample.

- Option 1 was supported by 27.3% of respondents who lived in residential blocks
- Option 2 was supported by 24.7% of respondents
- Option 3 was supported by 15.1% of respondents
- A number of respondents wanted their existing service to 'stay the same'. In total 32.9% of respondents did not indicate which option they preferred.

Summary

	Total Sample	Residential	Non-Residential
Option 1	28.3%	29.3%	27.3%
Option 2	24.8%	24.6%	24.7%
Option 3	19.1%	22.8%	15.1%
No option	27.1%	23.2%	32.9%

Information sessions

This section provides a summary of the feedback received at the 22 information sessions held across Newcastle. 302 residents attended these sessions in total.

General concerns and feedback

Many concerns and views were shared by residents across the city. These are outlined below:

- Customers like the familiarity of having the same member of staff on site and feel that this gives the staff a sense of responsibility and pride in the site.
- Customers prefer to have staff on site at night, both at current 24 hour and resident sites as they are available to assist with 'falls, strokes and when stuck in lifts'.
- Concern over increase in tailgating, Anti Social Behaviour and void levels if staff aren't onsite all of the time.
- Concerns that the network won't be stable enough and customers will be left without service provision if it goes down.
- Concerns about where the funding is coming from for the changes as the technology will be expensive to upgrade.
- Concerns about the service charge increasing – residents feel they will be getting a lower level of service at a higher charge.
- Concerns about affordability based on the estimated charges. People feel that those who are working and pay full rent will be forced out of concierge blocks.
- Residents felt that the review is being done 'to them' and that they haven't been given real choice. Many customers felt that they should be able to choose the best service for their block rather than 'one size fits all'.
- Leaseholders feel they should only pay for the service which they receive and should have choice on the level of service they get.
- Leaseholders felt treated unfairly – they were unable to make a decision in the consultation because there was no information about how much they will pay due to change over to an unpooled charging system.
- Concerns that staff won't be able to monitor all of the cameras from one location and that some incidents will be missed.
- Customers like the good neighbour role currently provided and worry this will be removed.
- Concern over the response times as little information on numbers of staff on duty.
- Perception that services will be lost or decline.
- Many customers, particularly vulnerable customers rely on concierge for additional help. They are concerned about where they will get help from if the service is changed.

Westgate Court

There were 2 attendees at this session. The main issues raised were relating to booking of the community room, giving out keys for the community room and keeping spare keys for residents.

Shaftoe Court

There were 4 attendees at this session. The main issues raised are outlined below:

- Some residents felt they didn't need a full time service. Want staff to only come on specific days to sort out rubbish e.g. 3 times per week rather than every day. However other residents felt that they need a resident caretaker there to provide help for residents out of hours.
- Would like a member of staff that they know rather than different staff dropping in at different times of the day in expensive vans. Feel that you don't get to build a relationship when staff change all the time.

Cruddas Park Information Centre

There were 10 attendees at this session. The main issues raised are outlined below:

- Some residents felt that option one is very similar to what they have now.
- The main concern in this area was about tailgaters and a worry that problems with tailgaters would increase because the presence in lodges is a deterrent.

Melbourne Court

There were 13 attendees at this session. The main issues raised are outlined below:

- There was a strong feeling that their concierge should remain resident.
- Feel that they get a much reduced quality of service when current concierge is on holiday and feel that this is the service that they are being offered for the future.
- The current concierge deals with anti-social behaviour and residents are concerned that it will increase if the concierge is not resident.
- Feel angry that staffing is being reduced and money is being spent on cameras.
- Very unhappy that costs are going to up and service is decreasing. Feel that the review is only being done for financial reasons.
- Some people feel cameras on all entrances were important and others felt it was more important to have is the corridors/walkways etc.
- Want different areas to have choice – not a standard service across the whole city. Can people be given the option to pay more to have resident concierge e.g. if everyone in block agrees £1 per week.
- Feel resident caretaker is a deterrent and area will decline. Can't put a value on this. Vested interest will be lost when non-resident and the sense of community will also be lost.

- Resident Concierge here is used by some residents quite a lot out of working hours. They were therefore concerned about what service they would get at these times.
- Residents feel it is unfair that for option 1 the estimated charge is the same for the 37 hours per week and 24 hours per day.
- Would like picking up rubbish to be written into job description.
- Concern about cut in wages/effective cut of wages in terms of forcing staff to pay rent.
- Elderly people in the block feel that they will no longer feel safe.
- Feel that the board have already decided what will happen.

Denton Park House

There were 29 attendees at this session. The main issues are outlined below:

- Many elderly residents who rely on concierge for assistance e.g. if locked out, falls, strokes, stuck in lifts.
- They get a fast response now because the caretaker lives on site – worried this will be lost.
- Feel block will deteriorate without a full time resident care taker.
- Will lose local connection – caretaker living on site gets to know residents.
- Fear about security if person not on site. Lots of people moved into the flats because of the security of having someone on site.
- Concerns of the cost for residents paying full rent – 24 hour would be more expensive than the charge they pay now.
- Worried about an increase in tailgaters if there is no caretaker resident.

Hilltop House

There were 32 attendees at this session. The main issues are outlined below:

- Residents want to keep their current care taker.
- Concerns about loss of local knowledge and personal touch.
- Concierge does a lot of additional things in their own time and residents will lose this support.
- Concerned about what will happen with the flat that caretaker lives in now.
- Concerns about service charge and increase and how people will afford to pay for this.
- Caretaker cleans windows inside flats for people who can't do their own, people will have to pay to have this done.
- Unhappy that they feel they are getting a reduced service at a higher price
- Concern if option 2 or 3 are implemented will lose service if cameras have been turned off because of complaints about invasion of privacy.

Moorland House

There were 4 attendees at this session. The main concern for residents here was how they would access the block if they were locked out.

Molineux Court

There were 14 attendees at this session. The main issues are outlined below.

- Concerns about the cost of the new technology and how this will be financed.
- Concerns about whether the new technology would work in their area.
- Feel unhappy that there were only 3 options to choose from.
- Feel YHN should use a private company to provide the service.
- Feel that the cleaning charge under option one is a scare tactic to prevent residents from choosing this option.
- Would like the service to stay as it is and pay more for this.
- Concerns that the service can't be managed from a central control room.
- Some residents would like to opt out of the service and not pay for it.
- Concerns about how long will it take before the new system is up and running.
- Concerns about safety and response times.
- Concerns about affordability of the estimated charges.

Merlay House

There were 5 attendees at this session. The main concerns were about a decline in security and the removal of staff from the blocks at night.

Walker Community Housing Office

One attendee came to this session. They felt that their service was being removed and that there would be a decline in security.

Mera Community Centre (opposite Wyndley House)

There were 23 attendees at this session. The main issues are outlined below:

- Would like the service to stay the same
- Think that they only have the option of option one as it is most similar to current service
- Feel that YHN board has already made the decision.
- Concerns that calls about incidents won't be responded to. Want assurances that there will be a quick response.
- Feel unhappy and believe they would be getting a lesser service but paying more, particularly for options 2 and 3.
- Concerns about the cost of implementing the changes.
- Feel there will be a problem with lack of continuity as the resident concierge know the habits and daily routines of the tenants.
- Feel that the whole service shouldn't change – just areas where there are problems.
- Concerns about safety of residents in case of a fire.

Pandon Court

There were 6 attendees at this session. The main issues are outlined below.

- Concerns about an increase in abusive intercom callers, as the presence in the lodge helps to address this.
- Feel they need the preference of having the concierge on site during the night.
- Are concerned that if customers are hearing impaired they will struggle to use the intercom.

- Leaseholders feel they should only pay for the additional services that they receive e.g. handyman service etc.

Adelaide House

There were 17 attendees at this session. The main issues are outlined below:

- Concerns about security. Feel safer with having someone on site, lots of problems with people hanging around outside the block and tailgaters.
- Location of caretakers flat means that he can identify the problems as it is located above the area where people hang around outside. Worried incidents won't be identified.
- Feel that the review is just about making money.
- Level of increase in charge means that tenants could have a bungalow or a house with a garden for the same type of money. Not comparable and unfair.
- Concerned that no one will pick up the phone to answer when they call.
- Want to keep current concierge and to continue to be resident.
- Resident caretaker takes pride in the block, feel this will be lost.
- Concerns about access if locked out of the block
- Would like access to the camera service through their TV, will give added security if they can watch.

Tynedale House

There were 13 attendees at this session. The main issues are outlined below.

- Would like the same person to be based there all of the time
- Concerns about costs proposed in the review and affordability of service charge.
- Want familiarity of having staff they get to know and build relationships with.
- Want more cameras to be able to see people in lifts and the car park. Feel this is a big security issue.

The Spinney

There were 20 attendees at this session. The main issues are outlined below.

- Option 1 is same as the service they have now – don't want that to change.
- Don't feel that option 2 and 3 would meet their needs.
- Like having face to face contact.

Queens Court

There were 19 attendees at this session. The main issues are outlined below:

- Concerns about being able to afford increased rent with service charges. Residents feel like they should give up work and go on benefits.
- Concerned about the high proportion of people in receipt of housing benefit who won't consider cost as part of their decision. They might choose the highest level of service because they don't pay for it.

People who pay full rent won't be able to afford their rent and eventually multi storey blocks will become benefit ghettos.

- Currently have the same as option one. However most residents don't use the free phone number to contact the service out of hours, contact police if have any problems.
- Feel that YHN aren't being sympathetic to the fact that there's a recession by proposing to increase the charges by such an amount. Feel charges should reflect the service you get – disagree with pooling of charges.
- Concerned that staff would not be able to monitor the whole of the city effectively from one central point and that incidents would be missed.
- Concerned that problems with tailgaters would get worse without staff present.

Eastfield Community Centre

There were 20 attendees at this session. The main issues are outlined below:

- Concerned that response time will not be quick enough depending on the location of the control room
- Concerns about staff being able to know who should and shouldn't be in the block because the tenants change so often – this will make it difficult to address tailgaters.
- Staff based at blocks have the local knowledge and this will be lost
- Would like the cameras to be able to cover the areas surrounding the blocks as this is where they have problems with anti social behaviour
- Think modern technology cannot replace the human touch. Concerns that one control room won't be able to monitor the whole of the city and incidents will be missed
- Feel YHN are neglecting their duty of care to tenants by changing the service
- Feel that the response times should be written into a contract or service standard and tenants should be entitled to compensation if these are not met
- Concerns about the cost of the new technology
- YHN should work with tenants in blocks to identify the best locations for cameras as different blocks have different needs.
- Salford in Manchester – estates have concierge and staff who patrol the whole estate – all tenants pay for this service not just those in multis. Think this should be looked at. Also they ensure landings can only be accessed from stairwells by tenants that live on that floor. This has helped address problems of trespassers
- Would like the same technology as sheltered housing – you can see who is buzzing you before you let them in
- Would like staff to have a note to say which tenants are vulnerable in any way e.g. health problems
- Feel tenants should have been given more options than the 3 they've been given
- Need to publicise clearly the times that the onsite staff will be in each block and procedure for reporting issues. When staff are on site they should be clearly visible

- Concerns that levels of anti social behaviour will increase if staff aren't on site as staff warn perpetrators which addresses the problem
- Concerns about the link with the postal service – keeping mail for postman and taking in parcels – will this be maintained
- Concerns that people will get into back entrances when they are prevented from accessing the front door by staff
- Ensure responsive staff are kept busy between incidents
- Can we maintain our 9-9 service where concierge intercept calls?

Vale House

70 attendees came to this session. Due to the high volume of attendees, staff had to arrange a second session at a local community centre. The main issues are outlined below:

- Worried about increases in service charges.
- Feel it is unfair to pool service charges.
- Worry that it will be less secure if concierge is not living on site.
- Feel that people who live on site take more pride in their work and the service will decrease if they don't live on site.
- Would like to keep their current concierge.
- Feel the changes are being done to them without real choice.
- Older residents are concerned that they will feel more vulnerable.
- Would like guarantees that the quality of service will not decline.
- Concerns about what will happen in case of a fire.
- Feel the local connection and personal touch will be lost if there is no resident concierge.

Kenton customer service centre

One attendee came to this session. They were worried that anti social behaviour would increase if perpetrators realised that there was no concierge located in the block.



Newcastle Tenants Federation

Response to Your Homes Newcastle

Concierge Service Review

August 2009

Introduction

This report highlights the Federation's response to the Concierge Service Review which is currently being carried out by Your Homes Newcastle (YHN). The main drivers for the review are highlighted below:

- Cost of the service – customers don't pay the full cost of the service at present so it is being subsidised by other tenants across the city
- To make sure that the service is value for money
- The National CCTV Strategy which recommends the link up and sharing of CCTV provision between partners including the Police and the Council
- The need to review the management structure within the service as the current structure does not allow for regular support for staff. This has an overall impact on the quality of service tenants receive
- The regeneration of Riverside Dene formally known as Cruddas Park

The below 3 options were identified for consultation with tenants:

- Option 1 – Selective monitoring
- Option 2 – Centralised monitoring from one control room with responsive and on site staff
- Option 3 – Centralised monitoring from two control rooms with responsive and on site staff

Our response pulls together comments and feedback from a number of events/consultation sessions including: the Living in Flats Working Group; two Federation Open Meetings held in November and July 2009; two field trips to view the current service provision and CCTV provision in Sunderland; feedback from TARAs and comments from various consultation sessions attended by Community Development Coordinators.

1. Background

The Concierge Service that tenants currently receive is considered to be vitally important to the overall welfare, satisfaction and security of tenants living in flats.

Many tenants involved in the review consultation stated that it was one of their primary reasons for choosing to live in a flat. This is further quantified in the YHN Concierge Satisfaction Survey 2008/09 which states that “87% of respondents who indicated that having a Concierge did have an influence on their decision to move also indicated that they were satisfied with the overall service”.

Tenants living in flats are passionate about the service they receive from the Concierge. This is partly to do with the fact that the Living in Flats Working Group at the Federation has played a key role in shaping the service as it is today. The group came into existence in 2003 specifically to tackle issues of security, cleanliness, void levels and isolation within the blocks and has worked in partnership with YHN to contribute to the overall improvement of the service. Some of the key improvements are highlighted below:

- Increased and improved CCTV
- A significant reduction of the number of void properties within high and low rise blocks
- Contribution to the setting up and monitoring of the cleaning standards
- The incorporation of the “good neighbour role” into the concierge duties
- The publication of the “Good Neighbour Guide” in 2008

The achievements of this partnership group were highlighted as good practice and contributed to the successful review of YHN’s Charter Mark Award for the service in 2006.

2. The Consultation Process

The Consultation Process So Far

Tenants living in flats who attended an Open Meeting at the Federation in November, called for all tenants receiving the service have an opportunity to comment on any proposed changes. They wanted the consultation be wide reaching and offer different ways of involvement.

The Federation would like to acknowledge Your Homes Newcastle for listening to this request and working closely with the Living in Flats group to develop a wide ranging consultation plan which included a questionnaire, 21 information sessions held across the city in July, consultation events held via TARAs across the City, advice and information across the telephone and four open meetings here at the Federation.

The consultation focussed on the 3 options highlighted in the introduction of this report and did not include an option for keeping the service in its current state. Whilst the Federation understands the need to review the service, it was generally felt that tenants should have been given the opportunity to shape any options being considered for consultation and that more options should have been available. Many tenants felt that they were limited in choice, that the three options were quite restrictive and that the decision had already been made.

Future Consultation

Tenants involved in the consultation that has taken place so far are keen to be involved in any further developments of the service. It was suggested that this should happen through the Living in Flats Working Group and also when appropriate on a block by block basis, utilising any active tenants and residents associations or by further information sessions. Tenants would like YHN to acknowledge that a one size fits all approach does not work and that at times there may be a need to develop the service according to the block.

3. General Concerns

The headings below detail the main concerns of tenants whether they have a resident concierge or 24 hour service provided by a shift worker.

Community Safety

All tenants felt that having a regular on site Concierge contributed greatly to the overall safety of tenants. Having a physical presence on site was seen as a deterrent to anti social behaviour and tenants felt that this particular aspect of the service could not be replaced by CCTV cameras or visiting staff.

The current Concierge staff in most instances had built up a sound intelligence of the issues for that particular area, for example, they were aware of any known trouble causers or anti social tenants and were able to act appropriately or be an independent witness if an incident occurred. One example that a tenant gave was a problem that they had been experiencing with a neighbour who played music loudly when returning from the pub at the weekend. The Concierge in this incidence was able to tackle the problem by having a quiet word with the perpetrator when they arrived back at the flats, reminding them to keep their music down so as not to disturb their neighbours.

One of the major concerns for tenants was tailgaters and how they would be challenged. Tenants accept that tailgating is a problem that will always be prevalent, however, were keen to point out that it is currently being managed at a local level by Concierge staff with local intelligence. Although the improvement of the CCTV cameras was welcomed by most tenants, it was generally the opinion that this problem would escalate, especially if being monitored from a central location.

CCTV

Tenants generally welcomed the upgrading of the CCTV in blocks and felt that this would be beneficial. Many blocks currently have outdated CCTV systems, with poor quality images that cannot be used by the Police or YHN if an incident occurs.

Although tenants felt that upgraded CCTV systems were a positive, the following concerns were raised:

- CCTV could not replace the intelligence and proactive service currently received from having a Concierge on site
- Some tenants were concerned about the over reliance on CCTV and would feel like they were being watched constantly a bit like Big Brother
- Tenants would like to know where the CCTV cameras would be placed as once someone is in the building they are free to access each landing
- How many staff would be monitoring the cameras? Tenants were concerned that incidents would be missed no matter how many resources were put in place
- Tenants raised concerns that the service would be changed without upgrading the CCTV in all the blocks and that finance would be used as an excuse

- New CCTV equipment and adequate staff to monitor it would come at a cost, tenants wanted to know how this would be financed taking into account the need to reduce the deficit

Customer Service/Good Neighbour Role

Tenants generally were happy with the service they currently receive and this is because the Concierge offers a friendly face to many tenants who may not be in contact with family/friends or may feel isolated. Tenants have seen the “good neighbour” role of the concierge develop over the years and feel that the presence of a familiar face adds an unexplainable value to tenants living in flats.

Many tenants have built up strong relationships with their Concierge and rely upon them for general support, looking out for vulnerable tenants etc. One elderly tenant stated that if it wasn't for the Concierge she would not have a conversation with anyone and would feel even more isolated.

Condition of Flats and Void Properties

Many tenants expressed concerns about the possible deterioration of flats and increased void properties or lack of demand. It was felt that changes to the service would have a detrimental affect on the demand for flats as many tenants chose to live in a flat because of the Concierge Service and the security and peace of mind the service offers. Concerns were also raised about the general cleanliness and condition of the flats. Tenants felt that the service would become a responsive service.

Responsive Staff

Concerns were raised with regards to response times due to the lack of clarity in terms of how many staff would be on duty and what would happen if the traffic was particularly bad. Questions were also raised about the cost of providing vans and fuel for these staff and would this not add to the cost of the service?

Tenants felt that if responsive staff were to be put in place then having a familiar face was vital, they were also keen to see responsive staff patrolling the city whilst on duty rather than sitting in an office waiting to be called to deal with an incident. Tenants, however, felt that the service would be more difficult to manage in terms of knowing who was where and keeping track of the work being carried out.

Cost of the Service

The cost of the service was a major issue raised by tenants, who felt that they needed to know what the true costs were. Many tenants had calculated what each tenant was paying and could not equate it to the level of service they received.

Concerns were also raised in relation to any future subsidy for the service. Tenants wanted assurances that if the service were to continue to be subsidised that their charges would not go up dramatically in the future.

Tenants wanted a detailed breakdown of the current costs and future costs of the service to enable them to make more informed decisions. It was suggested that this be brought to a Living in Flats Group.

The Definition of “Concierge”

Concierge is a French word and refers to an employee that lives in an apartment block and carries out general care taking duties. Tenants feel that they were paying for a service that would change into something completely different to what they had signed up to.

4. Specific Feedback on the Options

Feedback in this section of the report has been split into two parts in order to deal with feedback from tenants who currently have a resident concierge and tenants who receive the 24 hour Concierge Service.

Resident Concierge Feedback

Specific Concerns

All tenants that currently have a resident concierge service felt extremely strongly about not losing this service for the following reasons:

- The Resident Concierge (RC) takes pride in his work as it is his home
- The RC's are an integral part of the community, they bring the community together and are excellent neighbours

- Whilst tenants understood that the Concierge was only employed to work a 37 hour week, many RC's go that extra mile and are prepared to help tenants after hours if there is an emergency. They do this because they are good neighbours
- RC's tend to be within blocks which are age designated or house vulnerable people, they know their customers and can quickly assist those in greater need in an emergency
- Tenants were concerned about the cleanliness of the blocks deteriorating. Some referred to the blocks being "like a tip" when the resident concierge is on holiday/sick leave

Option 1

- Tenants receiving the resident concierge service currently felt that this option would leave people even more vulnerable after hours
- Concierge's that did not live on site may have less pride in their work
- The sense of community and safety would be lost
- Crime and anti social behaviour levels would increase
- The overall fear of crime would increase

Option 2 & 3

Tenants currently receiving the resident concierge service felt that these options were totally inappropriate for their blocks and would not consider option 2 & 3.

24 Hour Concierge Feedback

Below is specific feedback and comments from tenants who currently receive the 24 hour concierge service.

Option 1

- Concerns over response times when monitoring is centralised
- Majority of tenants wanted staff to be on site on an evening, especially at the weekend when incidents of anti social behaviour/crime are higher

Option 2 & 3

- Most tenants would like to see the Concierge staff around the site carrying out duties as oppose to being confined to their lodges
- Tenants generally wanted to keep an on site presence due to the reasons stated earlier in the report
- Some tenants who live in a block without a lodge were happier with on site staff during the day and responsive staff on an evening because they felt they were disadvantaged currently as the Concierge staff are confined to lodges which are not located in all blocks. One lady talked about being attacked in the entrance of the building. The concierge could not assist her apart from phoning the Police
- Tenants saw the benefit in having two control rooms but were concerned about the cost
- Tenants felt that the new service would be more reactive than proactive and that general satisfaction levels would be reduced

5. Services that tenants would like to see the Concierge cover

Tenants were asked what services they would like to see covered by the Concierge Service in the future and they said that they would like the Concierge to be responsible for the general management of the blocks including the following:

Environmental:

- Grounds maintenance – keeping the communal gardens looking nice (free from weeds and rubbish) and planting flowers
- Litter picking in and around the blocks
- Disposal of rubbish
- Help with the disposal of furniture

General Cleaning Duties:

- Cleaning of all communal areas
- Cleaning of windows both internally and externally at the entrances
- Cleaning to include floors and communal seating
- Regular chute cleansing
- Regular cleansing of the bins

Security:

- Be a visible presence to alleviate anti social behaviour
- Be a visible presence to reduce the fear of crime
- Report any incidents
- Stop people entering the flats who are not authorised

Repairs and Maintenance:

- Provide a handy man service to deal with low level repairs e.g. changing light bulbs, clearing blocked U bends, fixing bin chute catches
- Continue to keep keys and allow access to workmen for tenants who work

Development of the “good neighbour role”:

- Look after the overall welfare of tenants
- Provide help and assistance to vulnerable tenants

6. Additional Ideas/Suggestions for improvement

The following information is additional ideas and suggestions for the service.

Clear Vision and Objectives for the Service

Tenants would like a service that is clear and transparent for both staff and tenants. They would like clarity on what the service will deliver to put an end to the confusion that exists both with staff and customers.

Tenants would also like to see a transparent breakdown costs for the service.

Allocations and General Housing Management

Tenants would like to see a more proactive approach being taken to tackle anti social tenants living within the blocks. They would also like to see a strict process in terms of allocations and would like were appropriate for blocks to be designated by age. Tenants who took part in the Sunderland visit felt that this was one of the success factors of the scheme.

Main Entrances

Tenants felt strongly that if the service were to change that investment would be needed in the main entrances of the blocks. Many people talked about fobs not working, doors systems old and constantly breaking down, needing repair.

After the visit to Sunderland in June where tenants had the opportunity to view a particular block of flats the following suggestions were put forward:

- All blocks should have clearly defined defensible space. In Sunderland this was in the form of fencing around the communal areas of the block. Tenants felt that this would make people feel safer and would act as a physical deterrent for anti social behaviour
- All communal entrances to blocks need investment. Many communal entrances across the city are not considered to be particularly inviting. Many are in a poor, dark and dingy condition and attract anti social people. One example is the Westgate Multis. Tenants generally feel that if the entrances were brought up to a modern standard with good lighting that this would help to deter trouble makers

Tailgaters/Access to Landings

Tenants generally felt that the issue of tailgating was a major problem and one that was very difficult to eradicate all together. It was generally felt that tailgaters wanted access to landings and stairwells and once in the building were difficult to trace due to the fact that they would go up in the lift to one level, then come down the stairs to another and then proceed back into the lift until they reached their destination.

A suggestion put forward by a tenant as a possible solution to this was to lock all the fire doors to the stairs from the outside. This would mean that tenants could access the stairwells without needing a key in case of a fire, but would need a fob, coded especially for their landing to be able to access their landing and flat. This would limit the freedom that tailgaters currently have and may deter them accessing the building in the first place or assist in the monitoring of them.

The Fourth Option

It was suggested at one of the Federation Open Events for a fourth option for the 24 hour sites, please see below:

- On site staff during the day carrying out general duties such as cleaning, rubbish removal, good neighbour duties etc
- CCTV to be monitored centrally
- Nightshift staff based on site when tenants feel most vulnerable to tackle anti social behaviour etc

Staffing

- Concierge should be trained to signpost tenants on to other services
- Regular, familiar concierge staff was considered very important for the future of the service as they will be able to build up relationships and trust with tenants
- Employ staff with excellent customer service skills and offer a comprehensive training package to ensure consistency
- Put in place an easy way that tenants can show recognition/compliment those members of the concierge staff who deliver a service over and above what is required

General Suggestions

- Provide a notice board with details of the on site staff e.g. a picture with information such as name, times available on site etc
- Provide a lockable, wall mounted box where tenants could post issues/concerns/suggestions/compliments/complaints etc when there was no on site staff available
- Provide tenants living in flats with standard sized bin bags to stop chutes getting blocked
- On line access/touch screen monitors to access YHN website and services
- Intercoms to be placed in communal entrances for those needing to speak to the concierge

7. Conclusion

The Federation would like it's response to be considered by YHN's Board when making any decision for the future of the service. Tenants that took part in developing the response look forward to working with YHN in developing/implementing any future options.

Tenants and Residents Associations that participated in the response:

Adelaide House TARA
Avondale House TARA
Cruddas Park Tenants Group
Cruddas Park High Flats TARA
Denton Park House TARA
Dover Court Residents Association
Battlefield TARA
Eastfield Action Group
Harehills Towers TARA
Hill Top House TARA
Melbourne Court TARA
Mill House TARA
Pendower TARA
Queens Court TARA
Saftoe and Ewart TARA
Shieldfield House TARA
Shieldfield Three Towers TARA
The Spinney TARA
Three Sisters TARA
Vale House TARA
Westgate Multis TARA
Wyndley House TARA

Appendix C

Feedback from Customers	Response
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers like the familiarity of having the same member of staff on site and feel that this gives the staff a sense of responsibility and pride in the site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recognised that familiarity for both staff and customers is extremely important. It has always been the intention to give staff regular sites. Each option would allow for day shift staff to be based at a regular site, this would allow staff to become familiar with the site, it's residents and other YHN staff working in the area
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers prefer to have staff on site at night, both at current 24 hour and resident sites as they are available to assist with 'falls, strokes and when stuck in lifts' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst it is recognised that customers would prefer to have staff on site at night there is no evidence to support this. Activity analysis has shown that the quietest time on sites is during the night, very few incidents or customer contact is recorded • Staff who currently reside on resident sites are not required to remain on site after the end of their shift, therefore the services that some customers have come to rely on can not be guaranteed. Whilst staff do respond to customers if they are available, staff have feedback that it can be inconvenient and feel obliged to respond. Customers have been advised to utilise the 0800 number out of hours and signposted to services such as CCAS if they feel at risk of strokes or falls • Options 2 and 3 would guarantee a service to customers out of hours. All customers would have direct contact

	<p>with the control room(s) via their intercom to enable them to gain assistance at any time. They would also still have access to the 0800 number should they wish to use it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifts on current resident sites currently have an alarm which is linked back to CCAS. Should Option 2 or 3 be progressed the lift would also have a camera and be linked back to the control room(s.) This would ensure that anyone trapped in a lift would be noticed immediately and a reassurance provided via the communications system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would happen to existing Resident Concierge and their properties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident Concierge would be given the option to reside in their current properties or move out. If they chose to move out they would be given the opportunity to apply for Council accommodation via Your Choice Homes • If the properties became vacant they would become part of the housing stock and available for rent
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern over increase in tailgating, Anti Social Behaviour and void levels if staff aren't on site all of the time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whilst ASB and tailgating will never completely be eradicated, the existing methods of dealing with them will continue in all options. In Options 2 and 3 tailgating would be dealt with consistently across all sites. IT systems would highlight people attempting to gain access through repeatedly pressing buttons on door access systems and draw operators attention to the site. They

	<p>would then be able to challenge tailgaters by audio systems both on door access panels and with foyers and lifts. Should tailgaters persist in attempting to access the block the police would be called and response staff despatched to site</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Those customers living on current resident sites would benefit from Options 2 or 3 as CCTV and door access would be monitored 24 hours a day • ASB would be more identifiable under Options 2 and 3, technical systems would be monitored by more staff than at present. Should ASB occur the police would be called or responsive staff would be despatched, allowing the source of noise complaints to be identified etc • Under option 2 and 3 responsive staff would be available 24 hours and would undertake regular patrols of sites between other tasks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns that cameras would be installed then couldn't be used because of challenges over lack of privacy. Without staff to identify problems, customers were worried that incidents would not be picked up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional camera locations have been identified for existing resident sites. These would be installed under Options 2 and 3. Consideration has been given to the number of cameras and locations, and they would be placed on ground floors and entrance ways to ensure that any people accessing sites have to pass at least one camera, ensuring that their image is captured, whilst

	maintaining customers privacy
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YHN will be neglecting their duty of care to tenants if they implement any of the centralised options 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is believed that by implementing Options 2 or 3 customers safety will be improved as CCTV and door access systems would be monitored centrally by at least 4 staff at any time, in addition to the CCTV and door access systems, customers at existing resident sites would also benefit from having their smoke and intruder alarms monitored as those on current 24 hour sites • By providing all customers with direct access to centralised control room(s) under Options 2 and 3 the service will be able to respond to emergencies by despatching responsive staff. At present only 1 member of staff is available to response to issues after 7pm at night as all other staff are confined to their lodges within 24 hour sites and resident staff have no obligation to be available
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concerns that the network won't be stable enough and customers will be left without service provision if it goes down 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fibre network has been recommended to ensure stability. Under Option 2 a 'reserve' control room is planned for Cruddas Park House to ensure that services can be maintained should the main control room not be operational. In addition to ensuring the function of the control room, responsive staff would be available to assist on sites which lose any functionality. Should the system

	fail entirely, each block will be capable of working alone
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about where the funding is coming from for the changes as the technology will be expensive to upgrade 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is anticipated that the funding for the review will be met from prudential borrowing. The cost of the borrowing would not be passed onto to the customer. It is envisaged that the borrowing would be paid back within an estimated 10 years based on efficiencies in establishment only
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The current intercoms have no volume control and are not accessible for those with hearing difficulties 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intercoms available in Options 2 and 3 have a volume control and visible alert. They also would contain the key pad for the intruder alarm to negate the need for a separate key pad
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about the service charge increasing – residents feel they will be getting a lower level of service at a higher charge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whilst the estimated service charges appear to show the cost of the service increasing, they are the total cost of the service leaving no subsidy to be met from the HRA. At Management Team in June it was agreed that any increase in charge for customers would continue to be met from the HRA
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns about affordability based on the estimated charges. People feel that those who are working and pay full rent will be forced out of concierge blocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A number of options were submitted to board in February 2009, Board approved Options 1, 2 and 3 to be progressed as the other options did not deliver the drivers for the review

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents felt that the review is being done 'to them' and that they haven't been given real choice. Why were there only three options and who chose them? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It has been agreed that leaseholders will be charged for the services apportioned to their block. The introduction of mobile and resourcing technology will provide accurate information detailing the time staff have spent on individual sites allowing charges to be demonstrated
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customers felt that they should be able to choose the best service for their block rather than 'one size fits all' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff will be able to monitor all cameras as monitors will be set up to display images only when there is movement on the screen. There will also be a minimum of 4 staff on duty within the control room(s) at any time
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaseholders feel they should only pay for the service which they receive and should have choice on the level of service they get 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The good neighbour role will continue to be provided but will be more flexible under options 2 and 3 due to staff not being confined to lodges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Leaseholders felt treated unfairly – they were unable to make a decision in the consultation because there was no information about how much they will pay due to change over to an unpooled charging system 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Without systems being upgraded and the blocks linked to a network the changes can not take place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns that staff won't be able to monitor all of the cameras from one location and that some incidents will be missed 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Due to staff being on site during the day in all options response times will be minimal. During the night response times will be improved as currently there is only

	<p>one member of staff on duty to cover the city as all others are confined to their lodges. It is planned to agree response times for different types of incidents with customers prior to the changes being implemented</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers like the good neighbour role currently provided 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The good neighbour role will continue to be provided but will be more flexible under options 2 and 3 due to staff not being confined to lodges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern that change will go ahead without the technology being upgraded, leading to poor services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Without systems being upgraded and the blocks linked to a network the changes can not take place
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern over the response times as little information on numbers of staff on duty 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to staff being on site during the day in all options response times will be minimal. During the night response times will be improved as currently there is only one member of staff on duty to cover the city as all others are confined to their lodges. It is planned to agree response times for different types of incidents with customers prior to the changes being implemented
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers were keen to see responsive staff patrolling sites whilst on duty rather than waiting for calls 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was planned that responsive staff within all options would work proactively around the city. When not tasked with a specific job they would be expected to attend sites to undertake spot checks. They would also be tasked proactively to those areas with a higher number of incidents in a bid to deter and prevent ASB.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perception that services will be lost or decline 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was never the intention to remove or reduce services. The implementation of Options 2 and 3 is believed to provide more flexible, proactive services on site whilst maintaining the security of the blocks. Introducing Options 2 or 3 would also provide the same level of service across the city, combining on site services currently enjoyed on current resident sites with the security of existing 24 hour blocks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers would like to see the building cleaning brought in house 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In Options 2 and 3 the building cleaning would be brought in house. Discussions have taken place with Neighbourhood Services to amend the service level agreement to remove the multi storey blocks. The building cleaning would be undertaken by on site staff
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional services which customer would like are Environmental - litter picking, planting flowers, weeding, assisting with the removal of furniture General Cleaning Duties – cleaning of all communal areas, cleaning of windows both internally and externally at the entrances, cleaning to include floors and communal seating, regular chute and bin cleaning Security – Be a visible presence to alleviate anti social behaviour and the fear of crime, report any incidents and prevent tailgating 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of the additional services requested will be possible with the correct training for staff. Some of the services requested are already provided either by the Concierge Service or by other services. Marketing of the services will be revisited to ensure that customers are aware of the services available

<p>Repairs and Maintenance – Provision of a handy man service and retain keys for customers properties</p> <p>Develop good neighbour role – Provide welfare assistance to customers and assist vulnerable customers</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers would like to see a more proactive approach to tackling ASB within blocks and an improved allocations policy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One of the drivers for the review was partnership with other services such as the police. By creating better links with the police and other services the National Intelligence Model can be used to target resources, benefitting both Concierge Service customers and those on the surrounding estates • The allocations policy is not something that can be influenced by the review but the feedback will be passed onto Your Choice Homes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defensible space around blocks would be beneficial as people would feel safer and it would act as a deterrent to ASB 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Defensible space was not within the scope of the review but the feedback will be passed on
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communal areas would require investment as many are dark and not particularly inviting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decoration did not fall under the scope of the review but can be dealt with under the painting programme. Furniture etc would need to be researched and funded separately
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notices boards would be beneficial to customers so they would know which member of staff was on duty and how 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The costs for Options 2 and 3 have electronic notice boards included for all blocks, these boards would be

<p>to contact them</p>	<p>programmable centrally and would contain information on staff who are on duty, contact details, repair information etc. The screens would also be used to advertise latest YHN initiatives, adverts and could be used by TARAs to advertise meetings</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A suggestion box for complaints and compliments, suggestions and concerns would be beneficial when staff are not on site 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestion boxes could be placed in foyers for customer comments, complaints and compliments, but in Options 2 and 3, information and help points will be placed in the foyers of all blocks allowing customers to contact the Concierge Service at anytime, customers would also be able to make comments etc directly to staff within the control room(s) from their properties via their intercoms
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customers would also like to see a fourth option considered for existing 24 hour sites, this option would have on site staff during the day carrying out general duties such as cleaning, removal of rubbish and good neighbour duties, CCTV to be monitored centrally and nightshift staff to be based on site when customers feel most vulnerable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is the same as Option 1 plus the CCTV being monitored 24 hours a day from a centralised point. This option would be more expensive than Option 1 as the control room would have to be permanently staffed. It would also not deliver the drivers for the review, as it would not address the cost of the service or the current structure and associated management issues

Appendix D

Current Arrangements	Option 1 Part time centralised monitoring with responsive staff.	Option 2 24 Hour Centralised Monitoring with on site and responsive staff.	Options 3 24 hour Centralised Monitoring from 2 control rooms with on site and responsive staff.
<p>24 Hour Concierge provide by staff working shifts to provide cover 24 hours per day 365 days per year. Although based in one block they may monitor other blocks nearby to which they are connected via technically ie intercoms, CCTV and alarms. The staff are confined to their lodges for the duration of their shift.</p> <p>Building Cleaning on 24 hour sites is outsourced at a cost of £524,000 per year.</p> <p>Resident concierge staff provide cleaning and caretaking services on individual sites. Some staff live on the sites where they work. The service is provided 8am til 4pm Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday and on Wednesday and Saturday mornings. When the member of staff is not available a freephone number is available for all Concierge customers 24 hours per day.</p>	<p>Services will remain as they currently are but CCTV monitoring from a central control will replace some of the shifts, data collection results show that centralisation through the night would be more beneficial.</p> <p>Responsive staff will be available when CCTV and door access systems are being monitored centrally to deal with hazards and incidents only due to nightshift working.</p> <p>Intercoms and alarms for existing 24 hour sites will connect direct to the control room during periods of centralised monitoring</p> <p>Resident services will remain largely the same but staff will no longer live on site.</p>	<p>All CCTV and door access systems will be monitored from a central control room, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by a maximum of 8 Operators and 2 Supervisors</p> <p>On site staff will provide building cleaning, repair reporting, good neighbour and enquiries services during the day. No staff will reside on site.</p> <p>Responsive staff will be available 24 hours a day to support on site staff, deal with complaints, enquiries, hazards and provide added value services such as chute cleaning, accompanied viewings and proactive patrols.</p> <p>All sites will have their CCTV, intercoms, smoke alarms and intruder alarms linked to the control room and monitored 24 hours per day. Each site will be able to operate independently should an emergency arise. A 'redundant'</p>	<p>There will be two separate control rooms, one for the east of the city and one for the west. Each can assume complete control if there is a malfunction at the other.</p> <p>All CCTV and door access systems will be monitored from the relevant control room 24 hours a day, 7 days a week by a maximum of 4 Operators and 2 Supervisors per site.</p> <p>On site staff will provide building cleaning, repair reporting, good neighbour and enquiries services during the day. No staff will reside on site.</p> <p>Responsive staff will be available 24 hours a day to support on site staff, deal with complaints, enquiries, hazards and provide added value services such as chute cleaning, accompanied viewings and proactive patrols.</p>

<p>The Concierge Service provides safety and security, building cleaning and good neighbour services such as keeping keys and accepting parcels.</p>		<p>room will also be available at Cruddas Park.</p> <p>The service will be standardised across the city, with the flexibility to proactively deploy responsive staff to the areas where they are required, based on information gained from stronger relationships with the Community Housing Offices and the Police.</p>	<p>All sites will have their CCTV, intercoms, smoke alarms and intruder alarms linked to the control room and monitored 24 hours per day. Each site will be able to operate independently should an emergency arise. A 'redundant' room will also be available at Cruddas Park.</p> <p>The service will be standardised across the city, with the flexibility to proactively deploy responsive staff to the areas where they are required, based on information gained from stronger relationships with the Community Housing Offices and the Police although this will be from two separate locations.</p>
--	--	---	---

Appendix E

Options 1 and 3 have not been recommended, as they would not provide the best service for customers or meet the factor or opportunities for the review.

The reasons for not recommending these options are outlined below;

Option 1

- Due to Option 1 not providing a network to current resident sites, they would continue to operate stand alone, meaning that customers would still not benefit from being having their CCTV, smoke or intruder alarms monitored centrally, they would also not be able to contact the control room direct via intercoms in their properties
- Due to the lack of network to existing resident sites, help points would not be able to be located within the foyers or centralised door access systems, therefore access can not be intercepted should customers wish or the need arise
- In 2008 Management Team approved the replacement of resident concierge with 37 hour staff, customers at these sites would benefit more from the implementation of Option 2
- Option 1 does not delivered the centralisation recommended by the National CCTV Strategy which would improve information sharing with the police and other agencies
- Due to the resourcing requirement of Option 1 and the centralised control room not being staffed permanently, income generation opportunities would be limited
- Another driver for the review was to enable additional services to be offered and a more flexible proactive service for customers. The consultation showed that customers would prefer an on site presence at night, therefore limiting the additional services which could be provided by the responsive staff to day times only
- Having staff on site during the night would mean that responsive staff would not be available to assist with ASB, tailgaters or emergencies
- Continuing with a structure similar to the current one would not improve communications with staff, training and development or provide career development opportunities for staff, making it difficult to improve the services provided to customers

Option 3

- Whilst Option 3 is able to provide many of the benefits of Option 2 it would require additional investment to build two control rooms and additional resources for which customers would see not further benefit
- Although two control rooms would be available income generation opportunities would be limited due to the control rooms being smaller with less scope to expand
- Because services would continue to be separated consistency of service would still have the potential to differ between the control rooms
- All other services utilised in the benchmarking process had centralised or were looking to do so in line with the recommendations in the National CCTV Strategy