



Access to Services Strategy 2007 - 2010

Our commitment

We are committed to providing equal access to information.
If you would like information in another language or format,
please ask us.

Tigrinya

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Amharic

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Farsi

ما متعهد هستیم به سیاست دسترسی برابر به اطلاعات
اگر این اطلاعات را به زبانی دیگر و یا در فرمتی دیگر میخواهید لطفا از ما درخواست کنید

French

Nous nous engageons à une politique d'accès égal aux informations.
Si vous souhaitez des informations dans une autre langue ou sous un autre format,
veuillez nous le demander.

Kurdish

ئیمه به ئهرکی خؤمانی دهزانی که سیاسهتی دهسراگه‌یشتنی یه‌کسان به زانیاری بو هه‌موان جیبه‌جی بکه‌ین
ئه‌گهر زانیاریت به زمانیکی که یا به فۆرمیکی که دهوی تکایه داوامان لی بکه

Polish

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Jeżeli chcieliby Państwo uzyskać informacje w innym języku lub
w innym formacie prosimy dać nam znać.

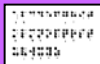
Urdu

معلومات تک مساوی رسائی کی پالیسی پر ہم عمل پیرا ہیں۔
اگر آپ کو معلومات کسی دیگر زبان یا دیگر شکل میں درکار ہوں تو برائے مہربانی ہم سے پوچھئے۔



CD

Braille



In large type

Abc

Any other format



Call 0845 8 507 507 or email communications@wdh.co.uk
(calls to OneCALL may be recorded for training purposes)

Foreword

Our revised Access to Services Strategy aims to deliver excellent services to our customers however they choose to access them, based on opinions and feedback Wakefield and District Housing (WDH) has received.

This strategy sets out the organisations ambition to improve the access of services to customers and outlines our plans for improving future access. In delivering excellence in customer access we aim to offer:

- **Choice** - ensuring that customers can access our services in a way that is convenient to themselves.
- **Accessibility** - providing local services in locations, at times and in ways that meet the individual needs of our customers.
- **Consistency** - making the best use of technology to ensure the same level of service and information wherever the service is accessed.
- **Value for Money** - quality, cost effective services that our customers want.

WDH want to make access to our services easy and convenient for the customer with increasing satisfaction levels with the services they receive. We will do this by putting the customer first and getting things right first time at the first point of contact with us. If mistakes are made we will acknowledge these, put them right quickly and learn from the experience to improve our services further.

The Access to Services Strategy supports a number of other plans and strategies and our partnership arrangements with other stakeholders.

Through our annual Tenants Survey, Tenant Challenge Days and Service Review Groups we have asked our tenants how they prefer to access our services. These views have been taken on board. Our Tenant Census Information challenges the way we provide services to differing needs of our tenants to ensure we do not provide a one size fits all approach.

WDH's Vision is to create confident communities and meet the aspirations of all who need to access our services.

KEVIN DODD
Chief Executive
Wakefield and District Housing

KEN TAYLOR
Chair of Board
Wakefield and District Housing

Access to Services

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1. Introduction and Summary

WDH is fully committed to ensuring all its customers have equal access to the services it provides and that customers can choose a way to access the service that meets their individual needs, lifestyle and preferences.

After a review of the existing strategy, WDH's revised Access to Services Strategy sets out the Vision, Mission and Values of the organisation and how we will work in the wider community for the benefit of all.

Our approach will be to:

- Offer choice to customers in how they wish to access the services of WDH.
- Ensure equal access for all, irrespective of how and where the service is accessed.
- Make all customers and stakeholders feel valued and treated with respect.
- Get things right first time.

These aims underpin our four Corporate Objectives to deliver our Vision.

We are committed to providing all our customers with access to quality services at times and in places convenient to them.

In developing the strategy we have considered what our current and future customers have told us is important to them and how they prefer to access our services. The way people can access and use our services will help WDH to plan for the future and any future changes are a direct response to this.

The strategy aims to ensure that our customers notice a difference and see that words become actions and actions provide them with services to improve their quality of life. This is regardless of individual circumstances or where they live.

The implementation of this strategy will deliver this commitment.

Key Milestones for 2007 – 2010

2007/8 Conduct the review of customer access to ensure quality and value for money of access options, including SAP's and electronic self-service options.

Engage with customers to ensure equal opportunity to consultation, involvement and decision making to shape the way services are accessed to meet their needs and continuously improve.

2008/9 Expand access options in line with customer needs and expectations to ensure equal access for everyone.

Develop OneCALL into a multi-media contact centre focused on quality, value for money and getting things right first time.

Mainstream Care Link Preventative Technology Grant initiatives to enable vulnerable people to access services, live independently and live active lives.

Test SAP extended opening hours to determine customer demand and ensure value for money.

Develop electronic ICT means of access such as WDH's website, kiosks, digital TV and text messaging to improve information services, self-service options and choice.

Extend mobile working to improve service quality and value for money.

Develop the potential of our employees by delivering high impact customer centred training to ensure we get things right for customers at the first time of contact.

2009/10 Know our customers to deliver and tailor services that are sensitive to the diverse needs of individuals, groups and communities.

2010 Create neighbourhoods where people wish to live.

2. Wakefield and District Housing's Corporate Vision and Values

Our **Vision** is to create **confident communities** throughout the district and beyond. People in confident communities feel safe where they live, trust the services they receive and are confident about their future prosperity and opportunities.

We have a challenging **mission** statement to achieve our vision to **inspire, transform and promote excellence**. We will **inspire** our tenants and residents, employee, partners and the housing sector to deliver a transformation of the communities we serve. To do this we are committed to delivering a three star service, ensuring excellence runs through all aspects of our work, and judging ourselves through the eyes of others.

Our values are to be **creative, inclusive and work with integrity**. Working to these **values** will help us deliver excellence and become an employer of choice.

Our Corporate **strategic objectives** are:

- Be a landlord of choice by putting the customer first.
- Adopt best practice in good governance to be a well-managed business.
- Be a positive force through leadership and influence to develop the potential of our people.
- Be a partner of choice to create better places to live.

Our Vision recognises that we will need to **explore new ways of working** and that this will be driven by a process of **opening up ourselves to both external and internal challenge** in the way that local services are provided to ensure that local **communities receive appropriate high value services**. Our Vision sets down these expectations will be carried out **honestly with total transparency** and that our decisions will be made professionally and with integrity.

Our efforts as a social enterprise and our ability to raise the bar and make significant social impacts by 2020 will depend to some extent on how successful we are at delivering services for the optimum cost whilst maintaining quality and customer satisfaction.

We will look to maximise the impact of the strategy overall by working with others where appropriate, investing our resource in local innovation to develop skilled workforces for the future.

All of our Vision expectations will require some form of investment and through this Strategy we will be able direct resources and actions so that **choices for modern living are achieved**.

WDH's Access to Services Strategy has four aims which link to broader Corporate Objectives as detailed below:

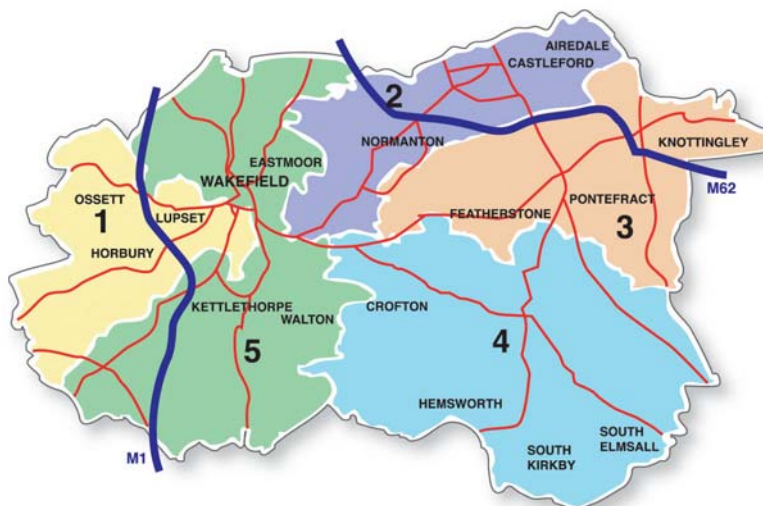
Corporate Objective	Strategy Aims
Be a landlord of choice by putting the customer first.	Get things right first time.
Adopt best practice in good governance to be a well managed business.	Ensure equal access for all, irrespective of how and where the service is accessed.
Be a positive force through leadership and influence to develop the potential of our people	Make all customers and stakeholders feel valued and treated with respect.
Be a partner of choice to create better places to live.	Offer choice to customers in how they wish to access the services of WDH

Wakefield and District Housing want people to recognise them as an organisation that cares, provides local services, is open to challenge and professional in everything it does. This strategy confirms this approach.

3. Background to Strategy

3.1 About Wakefield and District Housing

- WDH is a not for profit Registered Social Landlord (RSL) with charitable status and is regulated by the Housing Corporation.
- WDH is one of the country's largest new RSLs, managing over 30,000 properties.
- WDH has negotiated an innovative funding package, which will enable it to deliver a £700 million improvement programme over the next ten years.
- Over 100,000 people live in our homes throughout the Wakefield District.
- There are five management areas each covering between 5,500 and 7,200 properties based at Ossett, Airedale, Knottingley, South Elmsall and Eastmoor.
- We have 12 Service Access Points (SAPs) where people can visit and speak to our staff to access services.



- Our homes are a mix of houses, bungalows, maisonettes and flats, some of which are high rise blocks.
- We manage over 50 sheltered housing schemes for elderly and vulnerable people.
- We are managed through a Management Board, which is made up of equal numbers of independent, tenant and council representatives. Local people are involved through our five Local Management Committees.
- We operate a OneCALL service which is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. OneCALL receives over 18,500 calls a month relating to repairs, rent, anti social behaviour and general enquiries.
- Our Care Link service provides an emergency community alarm service 24 hours a day, seven days a week for 14,500 vulnerable service users so they can access WDH and other services.

3.2 OneCALL – 'one call, one solution'

OneCALL is the main source of contact for our customers and provides advice and assistance regarding any housing problem, including repairs reporting. The service is available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year on a single telephone number, 0845 8 507 507.

The aim of the service is to resolve most problems through a single telephone call 'one call, one solution'. Where callers need to be connected to other parts of the service to deal with their enquiry, for example Service Access Points, this is kept to a minimum.

OneCALL is the central point for enquiries made by other electronic means, such as the Internet or by email. Along with WDH's website development, this aspect of OneCALL will be expanded to include:

- Online repairs reporting.
- Enquiries to OneCALL by text message.
- Online application forms to link with OneCALL service provision.

People can also apply for WDH accommodation by using the automated bidding process to express an interest in properties as part of our Choice Based Lettings service 'Homesearch'.

Bringing together all telephone and electronic means of access to services to one single point should make it easier for customers to access the correct part of the service at first attempt. This means that customers only need to make one telephone call to have any enquiry dealt with to their satisfaction, without being 'passed from person to person'.

Some of the most frequent enquiries received by OneCALL relate to:

- Repairs reporting and enquiries about existing repairs.
- Rent payments and rent account information.
- Reporting anti social behaviour and the out of hours service we provide.
- Estate environment issues.
- Property improvement programme.
- Lettings enquiries.
- Homesearch expressions of interest for properties.
- General information on any WDH service.

When customers contact OneCALL we aim to:

- Answer at least 90% of calls first time.
- Answer at least 80% of calls within 20 seconds.
- Give the name of the organisation and the name of the person answering the telephone.
- Resolve the enquiry there and then. If it is not possible, we will get the appropriate person to ring the customer by the next working day. If the customer is vulnerable, we will make special arrangements to resolve the problem within four hours.

On average, OneCALL receives over 4,500 calls every week. Service Access Points help OneCALL when we have high volumes of calls to maintain service standards.

In addition to the calls it receives from customers, OneCALL also telephones customers to:

- Discuss rent accounts that are in arrears and make arrangements for payment.
- Check customer satisfaction with services delivered.
- Seek customers' opinions on the development of our services.

The outbound calling aspect of OneCALL's work will be developed further in future to meet the needs of the service and our customers.

3.3 Care Link Telecare Services – 'Peace of mind 24 hours a day'

Care Link is a 'Charter Mark' award winning emergency community alarm service operating 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It provides peace of mind, reassurance and support to elderly and vulnerable people throughout the Wakefield district to enable them to live independently, safely and securely in their own homes.

The Care Link control centre is based in Castleford where specially trained Control Operators are available 24 hours a day to answer calls within 15 seconds and to offer advice, reassurance, alert emergency services or contact friends and relatives.

It recognises and caters for the diverse needs of vulnerable individuals and has a client database, which is updated every 12 months. This includes:

- Clients' health details.
- Medication.
- Who the main carers are.
- Contacts in the case of emergency.
- Care, support or risk management plans that are in place.
- Any special needs that the client may have such as mental health and learning disabilities.
- Clients' ethnicity details.

Access to the service for everyone is ensured as all letters and leaflets are in plain English and individual needs and preferences are catered for by providing audio and visual material including Braille, Type Talk, Language Line and the use of interpreters and signers.

There are approximately 11,600 properties connected to Care Link serving approximately 14,500 service users including WDH sheltered housing schemes. All WDH tenants living in ground floor accommodation designated for vulnerable people are automatically connected to Care Link. However, the service is available to other elderly and vulnerable people who are not WDH tenants.

The service has officers who visit people in their own homes to demonstrate and connect alarms and to offer advice and guidance on the use of pendants and other sensors such as fall detectors, flood detectors and smoke alarms. There is a charge for the service dependent on the level of service required.

Care Link works in partnership with Wakefield Council's Family Services, the Health Service, Education, Police and Fire Service and plays a major role in supporting intermediate care, hospital discharge and community safety. alarms are also monitored for loan workers, school security and victims of domestic abuse.

Customers are placed at the heart of everything that Care Link does. The quarterly newsletter keeps them up to date with service improvements and the latest news and offers helpful advice. The Care Link User Group has customer representatives and members from its partner agencies to help develop the service, set service standards and targets and monitor service delivery and performance. The bi annual customer satisfaction survey enables customers to give their views on service satisfaction and informs us on where we need to improve.

We offer Service Users and potential customers information about the Care Link Service and a free demonstration service is available. Alternatively, the WDH website can be accessed by existing or potential customers and partners www.wdh.co.uk

Care Link is working with its partners to utilise the Government's Preventative Technology Grant to mainstream Care Link and Telecare into the way care and support services are delivered. This will help more vulnerable people to remain independent in their own homes for longer by enabling them to access and receive vital services.

Further work with our partners will deliver a response service to provide immediate assistance to customers in an emergency. This will enable customers to access and receive services from other emergency bodies such as the ambulance and fire service.

Our Care Link Telecare Services Strategy 2006 – 2010 explains what we do now and will do in future to deliver services and meet the future aspirations of vulnerable people within our community.

3.4 Homesearch

WDH's Choice Based Lettings scheme, Homesearch, advertises all available properties on its website and in the local press. All members of the scheme who meet the bidding criteria, can apply by various means for the properties advertised:

- At Service Access Points – in person or by telephone.
- Integrated Voice Response (IVR) – automated telephone dialling system.
- By telephoning OneCALL.
- SMS text messaging.
- Digital Television.
- Internet – www.wdhomeSearch.co.uk

This offers choice to meet the diverse needs and preferences of our customers no matter where they live within the Wakefield District.

Service access options including self-service processes that have been developed, tried and tested for Homesearch will be rolled out to provide better access to other service areas.

3.5 Service Access Points

The 12 Service Access Points are in the areas listed above with one in each area serving as the operational base for the area management team. The Service Access Points are open for business:

Monday to Wednesday	8.30 am – 5.pm
Thursday	10 am - 5 pm
Friday	8.30 - 4.30 pm

We are moving to Saturday opening in our town Centre Service Access Points.

The opening times for Service Access Points are clearly displayed in all locations and on the WDH website www.wdh.co.uk. These are kept under review and more flexible opening hours will be considered in future to enhance our service delivery.

All of our Service Access Points are fully accessible to everyone, Disability Discrimination Act 1995 compliant and provide:

- A range of up to date information leaflets, available in different formats and languages.
- Easy access to Language Line.
- An induction loop for customers who have hearing difficulties.
- The opportunity for private interviews, which is clearly advertised.
- A free phone service from which customers can contact other parts of the service or request services offered by Wakefield Council.
- Hate Reporting Centres for victims of, or witnesses to hate incidents such as racial or homophobic incidents.
- A range of methods for customers to pay rent and other charges.
- A range of up to date information about community activities.
- Access to computers for online ordering of repairs and access to Homesearch.

Each of the our Service Access Points has a dedicated Customer Service Team providing the first point of contact for visiting customers. The Customer Service Team will take ownership of the customer's enquiry and attempt to resolve the enquiry to the customer's satisfaction.

When dealing with customer enquiries we aim to:

- Deal with the enquiry at the first point of contact.
- Arrange a mutually convenient appointment where a customer's enquiry needs to be dealt with by another member of staff who is not immediately available.
- Ensure that customers are seen on time when they have an appointment.
- Arrange a home visit within 24 hours where necessary.
- Wear identity badges at all times.

We will constantly review the Service Access Points we provide to ensure they add value to the customer experience. The review will look at the ways customers wish to access our services and whether new developments can provide an enhanced service to our customers.

3.6 Home Visiting

Where it is appropriate we will provide a service to our customers by visiting them in their own home. Home visits may be undertaken for a number of reasons, for example, to:

- Assess the need for repairs to a property.
- Discuss rent arrears and make arrangements for repayments.
- Respond to reports of anti social behaviour.
- Inspect the condition of property, gardens or the general estate environment.
- Assess the need for disability adaptations or community alarms.
- Advise on the rights and responsibilities of right to buy and right to acquire applicants.
- To meet any special needs that residents may have.

When we visit a customer at home we will:

- Arrange a mutually convenient time.
- Wear an identity badge at all times.
- Leave a card advising that we have called giving contact details.
- In appropriate cases and within 48 hours of the visit, provide the customer with a summary of the visit and action to be taken.
- Utilise our IBS Open Systems, Tenancy Alert Register to adapt our approach to vulnerable and potentially violent customers.
- Carry a portable induction loop system for people with hearing difficulties.

We will invest in mobile working technology to assist our employees to respond more effectively and quicker to enquiries when visiting people in their own homes. This will improve our service quality, reduce wasted travelling time and costs, allow more home visits to be undertaken and assist our visiting employees to 'get things right first time'.

3.7 Internet

Our website, www.wdh.co.uk provides information about WDH services and how they may be accessed. To meet diverse needs, website standards are ensured by keeping to 'WC3' and 'BOBBY' internet accessibility standards. Through the website customers can:

- View key documents and leaflets relating to our services.
- Request a non urgent repair.
- Make enquiries about any of our services to OneCALL, by email.
- Download application forms for WDH housing.

When services are accessed via the website we aim to:

- Deal with enquiries within five working days.
- Ensure replies do not contain jargon and are easily understood.
- Give responses in larger type, different languages or in different formats where customers ask us to.

We will continue to develop our website to make it more interactive, allowing direct access to services through the website. In particular we will:

- Make application forms for WDH services available online.
- Develop online repairs reporting and complaints.
- Allow people online access to their personal information including rent accounts and property details.

In keeping with our commitment to Equality and Diversity, a translation service is available through our website. This allows translation of information into 12 alternative languages other than English. The website also provides information on how customers can use the Language Line service to communicate with WDH in other languages. Language Line provides access to services in over 100 languages.

3.8 ICT Development

The future development of the Access to Services Strategy is very closely linked to WDH's Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Strategy 2006 / 2010 - 'Transforming the Digital Landscape'.

One of the aims of this strategy is to provide information services that WDH and its customers want, creating new services that are accessible and efficient. This will enhance business processes and customer service, thereby enhancing customer choice.

Our 'IBS' information technology system aims to provide more personalised services and will be developed further to enable us to tailor services to individual needs.

Improved access to services will be provided through the effective use of the technology available to us. We will consider introducing new ways of using our services or improving existing ones through the use of:

- **Kiosks** - To provide access to all online information and services offered by WDH through interactive kiosks located in Service Access Points and other public buildings. This will make online services available to more of our customers.
- **Websites** - Developing our websites to make them easier to use and to make more services available to customers in their own home. We will work with our customers to identify the services they would like to access through this channel.
- **Digital Television** - The spread of digital television offers further opportunities to deliver WDH services to customers in their own home. Members of our Homesearch property allocations scheme can already make expressions of interest for properties and we will look to make more services available through this channel. In conjunction with the further development of interactive services on our websites, we will strive to 'deliver a service access point to every home'.
- **Text messaging** - Members of our Homesearch property allocations scheme can already make expressions of interest for properties via text messaging. We will look to make more services available through this channel.

The development of electronic means of accessing services will deliver further choice to customers in how they wish to access WDH services, offering options that suit their personal circumstances and preferences.

More emphasis will be placed on self-service systems to ensure access to services by any means and in many locations. This will provide a learning and development opportunity for those who use them.

We aim to make more WDH services available electronically, to complement and support face to face and telephone access.

3.9 Communication Standards

Customers may choose to access services in a number of ways including letter, complaint or compliment form, telephone, facsimile, email and Internet access. We will respond to all enquiries in accordance with the following service standards:

Where customers telephone we will:

- Answer enquiries to OneCALL within 20 seconds, or to Service Access Points within five rings.
- Always give the name of the organisation and the name of the person answering the telephone.
- Deal with enquiries immediately where possible or, ensure they are dealt with by the appropriate person within 24 hours.

Where customers wish to access services in writing we will:

- Date stamp it with the date it arrived.
- Provide a reply within seven working days. If this cannot be done, we will notify customers and tell them when they can expect a reply.
- Make sure replies do not contain jargon and can be easily understood.
- Give responses in larger type, different languages or in different formats where customers ask us to.

3.10 Complaints and Compensation

WDH aim to deliver quality services and 'get things right first time'. However, when things go wrong we will deal with complaints and claims for compensation quickly, fairly and consistently.

We will ensure that our complaints system:

- Is easily accessible and understandable.
- Is confidential.
- Ensures that investigations are thorough, fair and carried out within set timescales.
- Provides effective response and appropriate redress.

People can complain by:

- Filling in the form in the 'How to Complain' leaflet.
- In writing.
- By telephone.
- In person or at a local Service Access Point.

- By email or fax.
- Through a third party.

The complaints process is regularly reviewed to ensure that it remains effective. The current procedure has three stages. These are:

Stage 1 - Complaints are made to the Area Housing Manager who will investigate and aim to resolve the complaint. The person making a complaint will be notified of the outcome within ten days of WDH receiving the complaint.

Stage 2 - If the complaint is unresolved at Stage 1, it is investigated by the appropriate service Director who will make a decision regarding the complaint. This will normally be carried out within 15 working days from receipt of the complaint.

Stage 3 - If the complaint is unresolved at Stage 2, a review by the Chief Executive can be requested. The review will normally be completed within 30 days.

Sometimes, complaints investigations and responses may take more time than expected. When this happens, people are notified of the delay.

Our complaints procedure is constantly kept under review to improve the process and deliver a quick and effective resolution to complaints. We aim to keep dissatisfaction to a minimum but when things go wrong, we aim to rectify the situation at the earliest opportunity and learn from complaints to improve our services further.

4. What have we Learned?

4.1 Customer Engagement

This strategy has been developed and based upon what our customers have told us about our services and their preferences in how they wish to access them.

We have consulted and involved our tenants on access issues through the Tenants' Satisfaction Survey, the Choice Based Lettings consultation programme, Tenant Challenge Days, Mystery Shopping and Service Review Groups.

Our tenants have been surveyed in 2001, 2003, 2005 and 2006 (2005 was a face to face interview survey, the others were postal surveys). This is what they have told us:

	2001 %	2003 %	2005 %	2006 %
Satisfaction with choice of different ways to access services.	N/A	N/A	82	N/A
How did you last contact your landlord – Phone.	47	64	88	75
How did you last contact your landlord – Visited Service Access Point.	45	25	7	15
Was getting hold of the right person easy.	68	68	86	70

	2001 %	2003 %	2005 %	2006 %
Did you find staff helpful.	83	82	87	86
Were the staff able to deal with your problem.	77	77	N/A	78
Were you satisfied with the final outcome.	65	68	84	72
Satisfaction with opportunities for participation.	57	65	68	72
Keeping tenants informed about things that affect them.	78	84	81	87
How much account is taken of tenants views when making decisions.	26	25	14	39
Opportunities for participation in management and decision making.	57	65	68	72

The 2005 Survey told us that 82% of those surveyed were satisfied with the choice of different ways to access the service. Homesearch extended the choice of access and we are looking to extend the range to more services.

More people are contacting us by phone – increasing from 47% in 2001 to 75% in 2006. Of the 88% who contacted us by phone in 2005, 90% used OneCALL. Therefore, we are continually striving to improve the OneCALL service and have redirected resources accordingly to improve the service we offer to customers.

More people are also finding it easier to contact WDH with more being satisfied with their experience of doing so. Getting it right first time is a key objective for WDH so keeping our employees well informed, equipped and trained is vital to ensuring high customer satisfaction levels.

The 2005 survey told us that 20% of the tenants surveyed had computers and of those, 69% had Internet access and 63% an email address. 45% of those with email access would be interested in using the Internet / email to communicate with WDH. We are looking at ways of increasing the number of tenants that have access to the Internet.

Satisfaction with opportunities for participation, keeping tenants informed and participation in management and decision making has improved over time. In terms of how much account is taken of tenants' views when making decisions, 2006 saw an improvement with 39% saying a lot and 46.9% saying a little. Only 14.1% said none at all. We are working to improve this.

We will review our Access to Services Strategy through the same mechanisms taking account of tenants' and customers' views to strive for continuous improvement.

WDH is fully committed to involving tenants, residents and other customers in testing the way services are accessed and delivered and in the review and development of all services that we offer. We aim to give more opportunities to tenants and residents to become involved in the decision making process of WDH. We will seek to engage with tenants and residents in ways they feel comfortable with and aim to

increase the number of tenants and residents involved across all sectors of the community.

Our approach to involving tenant and residents and other customers is detailed in our separate Resident Involvement Strategy 2006 - 2010.

The following milestones are what we want to achieve over the next five years:

- | | |
|------|---|
| 2006 | Increase opportunities for involvement for all sections of communities. |
| 2007 | Know our tenants and residents within the communities of the Wakefield district. |
| 2008 | Ensure that all tenants and residents are at the heart of decision making, providing local solutions to local issues. |
| 2009 | Offer a wide range of involvement opportunities, using new technology. |
| 2010 | Create neighbourhoods where people wish to live - |

We will do this by:

- Continually looking at different methods of engagement, taking into account the views of tenants and residents and ensuring they are involved at a level they choose.
- Continuing to take every opportunity to listen and learn from consulting and involving tenants and residents and shaping services to meet their needs.
- Taking into account the training and development needs of tenants and residents.

This approach will ensure that everyone has access to services that best suits them.

WDH has achieved Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) accreditation. This is a quality standard for resident involvement that demonstrates to tenants and stakeholders that WDH is achieving and delivering high standards of service delivery.

4.2 Aim 1: Offer choice to customers in how they wish to access the services of WDH.

What WDH does:

- Provides OneCALL as a means of accessing WDH services 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Has 12 locally based Service Access Points which offer access to all WDH services.
- Carry out accessibility audits on our premises to ensure they are accessible to everyone.
- Provides free phones in all Service Access Points for easy access to other parts of the service or partner agencies.

- Offers all Service Access Points as Hate Incident Reporting Centres to assist those who have been the victim of, or witness to, racial or homophobic harassment.
- Provides the award winning Care Link Charter Mark service to all elderly persons properties and other vulnerable people to offer independence, support, safety and reassurance to those who are most vulnerable, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- Has a comprehensive website at www.wdh.co.uk allowing online access to a range of services.
- Provides the Homesearch website www.wdhomesearch.co.uk to advertise available properties to members of our Choice Based Lettings scheme.
- Homesearch applicants can express interest in available properties by a number of ways - in person at SAP's, SAP telephone, interactive voice response telephone, internet website, OneCALL telephone, interactive television and SMS text messaging.

4.3 Aim 2: Ensure equal access for all, irrespective of how and where the service is accessed.

What WDH does:

- Provides a range of access channels to suit individual needs and preferences.
- Ensures that buildings visited by customers are fully compliant with Disability Discrimination legislation.
- Provides easy access to Language Line for customers whose first language is not English.
- Has induction loops in all its offices to assist the hard of hearing.
- Arrange a home visit for customers who require this service.
- Ensures that all correspondence is in plain language.
- Correspond through audio or visual material, for example Braille and Typetalk where this is requested.
- Offers translation services through the WDH website.
- Includes a language panel on all information leaflets publicising their availability in alternative languages.
- Sets equality targets and performance indicators for all key service areas.
- Equality and Diversity Strategy demonstrates WDH's commitment to ensuring that Equality and Diversity Strategy is at the heart of everything we do.

4.4 Aim 3: Make all customers and stakeholders feel valued and treated with respect.

What WDH does:

- Provides a Customer Charter and Tenants' Handbook to inform tenants and customers of what they can expect from WDH in terms of service standards and targets.
- Aims to answer calls to OneCALL within 20 seconds or to Service Access Points within five rings.
- Identifies ourselves to customers on the telephone and wear name badges at all times.
- Offers private interviews at our Service Access Points for confidential discussions and clearly advertise this facility.
- Aims to answer all written correspondence within seven working days.
- Aims to answer all Internet enquiries within five working days.
- Surveys its tenants and residents at least annually to measure their satisfaction with key services.
- Involves customers in the review of services through Service Review Groups, Tenant Challenge Days, surveys and mystery shopping.
- Has a dedicated customer complaints team to ensure complaints are handled in line with Customer Charter standards and timescales.
- Provides quarterly tenant newsletters to inform of latest news and developments.
- Provides an Annual Report on the year's performance and developments.
- Has a website containing information and updates for easy access for tenants, customers and residents.
- Displays easy to understand quarterly information on performance at Service Access Points.

4.5 Aim 4: Get things right first time.

What WDH does:

- Ensures our working procedures are regularly reviewed to reflect changes in legislation and best practice and meet our tenants and customers needs.
- Has competent, well trained staff who take ownership of problems and work to offer a solution.
- Provides a range of up to date information leaflets to advise customers of the services that WDH provides.
- Aims to answer enquiries to OneCALL through a single telephone call, 'one call, one solution'.
- Has dedicated Customer Service Teams in all its Service Access Points who will take ownership of problems and attempt to resolve them at the first point of contact.
- Provides an effective complaints and compensation service that aims to remedy problems at the earliest opportunity if things do go wrong.
- Actively seeks feedback from its customers to measure effectiveness and improve services.

- Has a Website complying with accessibility standards, for example WD3, BOBBY to meet diverse needs.
- Has an integrated IT system that identifies vulnerable customers and potentially violent people.
- Implemented a CRM system as part of the new IBS ICT system.
- Developed and introduced a programme of regular information audits, involving users, to ensure that all information leaflets remain relevant to the needs of our customers. This involves an editorial panel consisting of customers and employees.

5. Aims of the Access to Services Strategy

Wakefield and District Housing's Access to Services Strategy has four aims. These are to:

- Offer choice to customers in how they wish to access the services of WDH.
- Ensure equal access for all, irrespective of how and where the service is accessed.
- Make all customers and stakeholders feel valued and treated with respect.
- Get things right first time.

We will deliver these aims by:

- Offering our customers a wide choice of how they wish to contact us.
- Ensuring that all buildings our customers visit are fully compliant with the requirement of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and they are equipped to meet the needs of all our customers. We will do regular accessibility audits on them to ensure that our premises are accessible to everyone.
- Recognising special needs and tailoring the delivery of services to meet these needs.
- Treating all our customers with courtesy, respecting confidentiality and dealing with enquiries as quickly as possible.
- Publishing our service standards for responding to enquiries and adhering to them.
- Ensuring that customers are advised of any delays in responding to their enquiry, with an explanation of the cause and when they can expect a full response.
- Ensuring that all enquiries are dealt with by competent and well trained staff who will take ownership of problems and work to offer a solution.
- Always aiming to resolve customers problems to their satisfaction and, where possible, at the first point of contact.
- Always advising the customer when it is necessary to refer an enquiry to another part of the service or another agency.
- Acknowledging any mistakes we make and ensuring they are put right when recognised.
- Encouraging feedback from our customers to regularly review the Access to Services Strategy to continually improve services offered.
- Considering value for money for customers when improving access arrangements.

6 Plans for Change

Aim 1: Offer choice to customers in how they wish to access the services of WDH.

Specific		Measurable		Resources			
Reference	Action	Target	Outcome	Who	Cost £	Target Date	Progress to Date
P23 O14	Expand access methods to OneCALL to speed up access to services and improve response times and customer service.	<p>90% satisfaction with different ways to access services.</p> <p>2005/2006 – 82%.</p> <p>90% satisfaction with OneCALL</p> <p>90% of calls answered by OneCALL.</p> <p>2006/2007 – 87%.</p> <p>80% of calls answered by OneCALL in 20 seconds.</p> <p>2005/2006 – 49%.</p> <p>2006/2007 – 78%.</p>	<p>Improve access to more services for customers 24/7.</p> <p>Increase self-service opportunities for customers.</p>	Assistant Director Customer Contact.	<p>£20,000 pa.</p> <p>Subject to business case consideration.</p>	March 2008.	<p>Various access methods introduced for CBL Homesearch.</p> <p>Satisfaction with OneCALL to be assessed with introduction of quality assurance tool. Installation imminent.</p> <p>Target for access options to be decided with Service Review Group.</p>

Specific		Measurable		Resources			
Reference	Action	Target	Outcome	Who	Cost £	Target Date	Progress to Date
P23 O14	Extend out-bound calling by OneCALL.	5% efficiency savings on outbound calling.	Improved customer feedback on satisfaction with services.	Assistant Director Customer Contact.	Within existing resources.	March 2008.	Introduced for debt control and satisfaction surveys for gas servicing and anti-social behaviour.
P23 P20 O18	Phase in mobile working technology to enable estate officers and trades people to be more responsive to acts of anti social behaviour and provide a more responsive repairs service.	5% efficiency savings on service delivery.	More responsive, efficient and cost effective service for customers.	Assistant Director Information Communication Technology.	Within existing resource.	March 2009.	IBS foundation modules in place. Pilot role outs commenced March 2007.
P23 O14	Expand Care Link and associated technology and services to older and vulnerable people to improve safety, independence and support in the community.	90% satisfaction with Care Link service. 2005/2006 - 95% 2006/2007 – 94% 85% of calls answered by Care Link in 15 seconds. 2005/2006 – 87% 2006/2007 – 83%	Enable more vulnerable people to live independently in their own homes. Easier access to WDH and other services for vulnerable people.	Assistant Director Customer Contact.	PTG funding. £150,000 p.a. from Family Services. Care Link Strategy action plans define resource requirements – from income generation and funding from other agencies.	March 2008.	PTG funding commenced for introduction and use of Telecare to deliver care and support. Family Services funding available (£150,000) for response service. Contract and spec produced. Service introduced July 2007.

Specific		Measurable		Resources			
Reference	Action	Target	Outcome	Who	Cost £	Target Date	Progress to Date
P23 P20	Develop its on-line services to make more services available electronically.	90% satisfaction with on line services.	Improve access to more services for customers 24/7. Increase self-service opportunities for customers.	Assistant Director Information Communication Technology.	To be defined.	March 2009.	Various access methods introduced for CBL Homesearch.
P23 P20	Provide interactive kiosks located in strategic locations, to extend access to on-line services.	90% satisfaction with different ways to access services 2005/2006 – 82% 90% satisfaction with on line services.	Improve access to more services for customers. Increase self-service opportunities for customers.	Assistant Director Housing.	£3,000 per kiosk + maint costs per year.	September 2008.	Kiosks being trialled at Castleford, Normanton and Pontefract SAP's and at WMDC's Open Door Project.

Specific		Measurable		Resources			
Reference	Action	Target	Outcome	Who	Cost £	Target Date	Progress to Date
P23	Review SAP's to ensure they offer value for money in terms of customer access to services.	<p>90% satisfaction with SAP's</p> <p>90% satisfaction with Customer Charter Service Standards for SAP's</p> <p>Aug 07, 100%</p> <p>90% satisfaction with SAP Physical Standards in Customer Charter</p> <p>Aug 07, 93%</p>	<p>More responsive, efficient and cost-effective service for customers.</p> <p>Improve access to more services for customers.</p> <p>Increase self-service opportunities for customers.</p>	Assistant Director Housing.	Within existing resources.	2007/2008	<p>Piloting Saturday morning opening at new SAP's – Castleford, Pontefract & Normanton, plus kiosks at these and other locations.</p> <p>Normanton SAP pilot showed very little useage. To discontinue Sat morning opening.</p> <p>SAP's to be reviewed as part of Access Options Review commencing Oct 07.</p> <p>Tenant Ld Inspection commenced June 27.</p>

Specific		Measurable		Resources			
Reference	Action	Target	Outcome	Who	Cost £	Target Date	Progress to Date
O13	KLOE 30 Access to services improvement and action plan.	<p>90% satisfaction with overall service provided by WDH.</p> <p>2004/2005 – 76%.</p> <p>2005/2006 – 79%.</p> <p>2006/2007 – 83%.</p> <p>90% satisfaction with different ways to access services.</p> <p>2005/2006 – 82%.</p>	<p>Improve access to more services for customers 24/7.</p> <p>Increase self service opportunities for customers.</p> <p>More responsive, efficient and cost-effective service for customers.</p>	Assistant Director Corporate Services.	To be defined in project plans.	2007/2010	Improvement plan drafted. Commenced implementation.

Aim 2: Ensure equal access for all, irrespective of how and where the service is accessed.

Specific		Measurable		Resources			
Reference	Action	Target	Outcome	Who	Cost £	Target Date	Progress to Date
P17 P23	Have information leaflets available 'off the shelf' in the most common languages for the population that WDH serves.	<p>90% satisfaction with overall service provided by WDH.</p> <p>2003/2004 – 76%.</p> <p>2004/2005 – 79%.</p> <p>2006/2007 – 83%.</p> <p>90% of tenants satisfied with overall service provided by landlord.</p> <p>- BME groups.</p> <p>2005/2006 – 79%.</p>	Equal access to services for everyone.	Assistant Director Corporate Services.	Within existing resources.	July 2007.	<p>Homesearch user guide translated into six languages. Leaflets to go on website – VFM option appraisal to be done.</p> <p>Superseded by information kiosks.</p>
P17 P23	Develop a register of staff language skills and make effective use of those skills to make access easier for customers who's first language is not English.	Register in place by Mar 08.	Ensure hard-to-reach groups are reached and can access and benefit from WDH services.	Assistant Director Human Resources.	Within existing resources.	March 2008.	

Specific		Measurable		Resources			
Reference	Action	Target	Outcome	Who	Cost £	Target Date	Progress to Date
P17 P23	Carry out regular audits of its buildings to ensure adequate signage and continued compliance with the requirements of Disability Discrimination legislation.	100% of audits completed. 90% satisfaction with SAP Physical Standards in Customer Charter Aug 07, 93%	Equal access to services for everyone. Everyone treated equally when delivering services. Ensure hard to reach groups are reached and can access and benefit from WDH services.	Assistant Director Corporate Services.	Within existing resources.	March 2008. Complete	Signage audits commenced. Access audits SAP's commenced. Tenant Led Inspections commenced June 07.
P17 P23 P20	Graduate the introduction of 'talking signs'.	90% satisfaction with different ways to access services. 2005/2006 – 82%	Equal access to services for everyone. Everyone treated equally when delivering services. Ensure hard to reach groups are reached and can access and benefit from WDH services.	Assistant Director Housing.	Within existing resources.	October 2007.	In progress and linked to installation of kiosks. Superseded by Information Kiosks with ultimate aim of having Live Video Link

Aim 3: Make all customers and stakeholders feel valued and treated with respect.

Specific		Measurable		Resources			
Reference	Action	Target	Outcome	Who	Cost £	Target Date	Progress to Date
P23 P15	Introduce exit surveys at our Service Access Points to measure customer satisfaction, at the point of service delivery.	<p>90% satisfaction with different ways to access services. 2005/2006 – 82%.</p> <p>90% satisfaction with Customer Charter Service Standards for SAP's Aug 07, 100%</p> <p>90% satisfaction with SAP Physical Standards in Customer Charter Aug 07, 93%</p>	<p>Ensure everyone has equal opportunity in terms of consultation, involvement and engagement.</p> <p>Ensure customer feedback to improve services.</p>	Assistant Director Housing.	Within existing resources.	July 2007.	Tenant led inspections commenced June 27

Specific		Measurable		Resources			
Reference	Action	Target	Outcome	Who	Cost £	Target Date	Progress to Date
P23 P15	Carry out follow up sample telephone surveys to measure satisfaction with recent enquiries or work completed.	90% satisfaction with overall service provided by WDH. 2003/2004 – 76% 2004/2005 – 79% 2006/2007 – 83% 80% of calls answered by OneCALL in 20 seconds. 2005/2006 – 49% 2006/2007 – 78%	Ensure everyone has equal opportunity in terms of consultation, involvement and engagement. Ensure customer feedback to improve services.	Assistant Director Customer Contact.	Within existing resources.	March 2008.	Commenced with gas servicing and anti social behaviour.

Specific		Measurable		Resources			
Reference	Action	Target	Outcome	Who	Cost £	Target Date	Progress to Date
P23 P15	Introduce tenant lead inspections to test service access and delivery.	<p>90% satisfaction with opportunities for participation.</p> <p>2003/2004 – 65%</p> <p>2005/2006 – 68%</p> <p>2006/2007 – 72%</p> <p>100% of scheduled inspection carried out.</p> <p>90% satisfaction with different ways to access services.</p> <p>2005/2006 – 82%</p> <p>90% satisfaction with Customer Charter Service Standards for SAP's</p> <p>Aug 07, 100%</p> <p>90% satisfaction with SAP Physical Standards in Customer Charter</p> <p>Aug 07, 93%</p>	<p>Ensure everyone has equal opportunity in terms of consultation, involvement and engagement.</p> <p>Ensure customer feedback to improve services.</p>	Assistant Director Housing.	Within existing resources.	March 2008. Complete	<p>Preparations underway to introduce Tenant Led Inspections and customer service training.</p> <p>Tenant Led Inspection commenced June 07</p>

Aim 4: Get things right first time.

Specific		Measurable		Resources			
Reference	Action	Target	Outcome	Who	Cost £	Target Date	Progress to Date
P23	Develop a database of complaints and compliments to develop an issues and good practice log and learn from complaints to further improve services.	80% of complaints answered within target.. 2005/2006 – 84% 2006/2007 – 82% Database in place by Mar 08	Improve service delivery to everyone. Reduce complaints and dissatisfaction.	Assistant Director Corporate Services.	Within existing resources.	March 2008.	Currently log complaints and compliments. Reporting system being developed.

Specific		Measurable		Resources			
Reference	Action	Target	Outcome	Who	Cost £	Target Date	Progress to Date
P23	Further develop our Customer Service training programme to enhance front line skills and knowledge.	<p>90% satisfaction with different ways to access services</p> <p>2005/2006 – 82%</p> <p>90% satisfaction with overall service provided by WDH.</p> <p>2003/2004 – 76%</p> <p>2004/2005 – 79%</p> <p>2006/2007 – 83%</p> <p>90% satisfaction with Customer Charter Service Standards for SAP's</p> <p>Aug 07, 100%</p>	<p>Ensure access to services for everyone.</p> <p>Improve service delivery to everyone.</p> <p>Reduce complaints and dissatisfaction.</p>	Assistant Director Housing.	Within existing resources.	March 2008.	<p>Preparations underway to introduce customer service training for all staff teams.</p> <p>Training completed and tested through Tenant Led Inspections</p>

Specific		Measurable		Resources			
Reference	Action	Target	Outcome	Who	Cost £	Target Date	Progress to Date
P23 P20 O18	Invest in mobile working technology to provide visiting staff with 'on site' access to information needed to resolve problems at the first attempt.	90% satisfaction with overall service provided by WDH. 2003/2004 – 76% 2004/2005 – 79% 2006/2007 – 83% 5% efficiency saving on service delivery.	More responsive, efficient and cost effective service for customers.	Assistant Director Information Communication Technology.	Within existing resources.	March 2009.	IBS foundation modules in place. Pilot roll outs commenced March 2007.

7. Expected Outcomes

- Improved access to more services for customers 24/7.
- Increase selfservice opportunities for customers.
- Improved customer feedback on satisfaction with services.
- More responsive, efficient and cost effective service for customers.
- Enable more vulnerable people to live independently in their own homes.
- Easier access to WDH and other services for vulnerable people.
- Equal access to services for everyone.
- Enable WDH to know who our customers are to tailor services accordingly.
- Ensure everyone has equal opportunity in terms of consultation, involvement and engagement.
- Ensure hard to reach groups are reached and can access and benefit from WDH services.
- Everyone treated equally when delivering services.
- Ensure customer feedback to improve services.
- Improve service delivery to everyone.
- Reduce complaints and dissatisfaction.

8. Equality and Diversity

WDH will ensure that in delivering services we continue to be inclusive and representative. We want all tenants and residents to be involved regardless of age, ability and background and will provide the support needed to enable this.

We aim to be effective in encouraging wider involvement and, to achieve this, we will research the needs of communities within the district so that we can tailor our services to meet their diverse needs.

We will ensure that information is available in a variety of formats, including different languages, on audio cassette and large print, by newsletter, leaflets, information in Service Access Points and the website. This will help all tenants and residents have access to up to date information.

Wakefield and District Housing is committed to delivering the highest standards of housing and related services and in meeting the diverse needs of all sections of the community. We will always:

- Treat people fairly regardless of ethnicity in all aspects of service delivery and access.
- Offer equal access to WDH services to all regardless of gender, sexual orientation, marital status, race, colour, ethnic origin, nationality, religious belief, age, disability or any other reason.
- Set and monitor equality targets and performance indicators for key service areas.

- Provide services that are sensitive to the diverse needs of individuals, groups and local communities.
- Work towards ensuring that our workforce is representative of the communities we serve.
- Ensure that customers, stakeholders and service users have suitable access to our customer Service Access Points and other WDH premises, ensuring that all legislative requirements are met.
- Provide access to information in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- Require WDH contractors and consultants to deliver services fairly and in a manner consistent with our Equality and Diversity Strategy.

WDH has a separate strategy for Equality and Diversity 2006 - 2010.

9. Monitoring and Review

The delivery of service standards in relation to access to services and the impact of the strategy will be monitored and reviewed in a number of ways.

Service access standards outlined in the Customer Charter will be monitored by Tenant Led Inspections to ensure standards are delivered. This is where tenants inspect and scrutinise services for tenants.

The annual Tenants' Satisfaction Survey will measure how satisfied tenants are with the services they receive set against targets that WDH set.

WDH's Performance Management Framework is designed to ensure we achieve our objectives, enable us to prioritise our resources, ensure value for money, motivate our employees and provide satisfaction for our customers.

It provides ownership and accountability to ensure we can deliver targets and continually improve performance. It includes performance indicators on access to our services to give feedback on how well we are doing in managing our business processes and what this means to customers.

Each task for improvement in the action plans has performance indicators and targets so we can measure the level of improvement once the task has been achieved.

The results we get from monitoring service delivery will be used to help us make future decisions to meet what customers expect and want at the right cost when accessing our services.