

Scrutiny Panel Service Review: Grounds Maintenance within Somerset February 2025

Why look at Grounds Maintenance?

Delivering a Grounds Maintenance service that is of a good, consistent standard and provides value for money for customers is essential. Keeping outdoor communal spaces clean and tidy is not only creating a nicer and safer neighbourhood, but it also makes a big difference to how we as customers feel about our communities and how others perceive them.

What we focused on:

We chose Somerset as a pilot area so we could take a closer look at what's working and how services could be improved. By focusing on one area, we were able to better understand the challenges and identify practical ways to improve, which can be adapted and replicated across other areas.

We looked at:

- Performance data which includes, complaints and Tenant Satisfaction Measures.
- Best practice on performance and communication for Grounds Maintenance from other organisations.
- Stonewater customer communications to see what information is available.
- Met with colleagues who deliver the Grounds Maintenance service.
- Met with colleagues who work within the Somerset Pilot team and who complete inspections.
- Deployed a survey to over 2,000 customers within the Somerset area to understand their thoughts on the Grounds Maintenance service.

As part of this review, we hosted our first customer focus group to better understand how customers in the Somerset area perceive the Grounds Maintenance service.

We'd like to express our thanks to the customers who attended the session, we appreciated your honest opinions about the service. Your feedback really has had a meaningful impact which has helped to make sure our recommendations reflect what matters most to all customers.

Our priority recommendations

We made 10 recommendations in total, and we're pleased to note that all the recommendations have been accepted by Stonewater and agreed with the Customer Experience Challenge and Assurance Panel (CXCAP).

Our priority recommendations are:

Recommendation 4

Stonewater to review the communications customers receive on grounds maintenance.

Recommendation 5

Stonewater to produce clear boundary maps of where grounds maintenance is covered in each area. Stonewater to make the maps easy for customers to access.

Recommendation 7

Stonewater to explore ways to strengthen the relationship between Homes and the CX Neighbourhoods team to deliver a seamless and effective service for customers.

What happens next?

The Engagement team is working with colleagues across Stonewater to respond to the recommendations and work on implementing them over the coming year.

How do Scrutiny Reviews work?

The Scrutiny Panel is made up of a maximum of 14 Stonewater customers who work alongside Stonewater colleagues to review and improve services.

A Scrutiny review takes an in-depth look at services and makes recommendations for changes or improvements based on the panel's investigations and findings.

You can find out more about the Scrutiny Panel on our webpage www.stonewater.org/scrutiny