

Scrutiny Review Group; Elaine E, Ann E, Rob D, Steve S, Lyn F

Staff Involved; Kate-Marie Foster, Customer Experience Manager supported the review as the Scrutiny Coordinator along with support from Terri Goult, Customer Services Manager & Luis Camara, Independent Living Manager

The scope was agreed as follows;
Reviewing the Out of Hours Service (OOH).

What We Did

During the review the group undertook the following scrutiny activities;

- Reviewed OOH response times for priority and emergency calls for April 25 – Feb 26
- Reviewed details of all complaints relating to OOH service since May 2024
- Reviewed the Business Continuity Plan for emergency situation planning
- Undertook Mystery Shopping contacting the OOH service
- Reviewed the Resident Handbook
- Undertook the following surveys via PFH Connect;
 - Out of Hours Service Survey – Emergency Repair - 165 Responses
 - Out of Hours Service Survey – Emergency Help - 159 Responses
- Reviewed Service Standards
- Reviewed Resident Satisfaction Survey 2025 Results

Project Timetable

	Date
Scope & Planning Meeting	3 rd February 2026
Update and Progress Meeting	24 th February 2026
Update and Progress Meeting	3 rd March 2026
Update and Progress Meeting	18 th March 2026
Review and Agree Findings	1 st April 2026

Draft report circulated for final comments	2 nd April 2026
Final Report Completed	15 th April 2026
Report to Resident Committee	7 th July 2026
Report to Board of Directors	To be confirmed

General

The group received an initial overview from staff on the Out of Hours Service including volume of calls, response times, targets and complaints received about the service. The group understands there are two elements to the service as follows;

1. Emergency Repairs (such as heating not working, plumbing issues)
2. Emergency Help (usually for a medical emergency where an ambulance is required)

This service is managed by a third party, Sanctuary and residents can contact the emergency repairs side by calling PFH main number, and the emergency help side by pressing an existing pendant or pull cord in their homes.

Though members of the group had previously contacted the service to report emergency repairs, no one in the group has used it to request emergency help. The overall experience in the group had been positive apart from one incident which had resulted in a formal complaint following a negative interaction with the operative who had attended to fix the issue.

The group found it more difficult to understand the emergency help element of the service due to limited numbers of residents sharing their views on the service as part of the survey work and lack of detail behind the performance figures from the OOH service. It was felt if PFH understood exactly who was using the service and what for, it could help target and shape future services which would have a positive impact on all residents. For example if a resident had contacted the OOH service because they had slipped getting out of the bath, PFH could follow up to check if they needed any additional aids and adaptations which may result in less falls and the residents being able to live independently for longer (recommendation A).

The group reviewed the results from the Resident Satisfaction Survey in 2025 which asked residents on views about the emergency call service. These showed mostly positive reviews; 89% satisfied with OOH response speed, 89% satisfied with call handler and 81% satisfied with the outcome. As there have been some changes over the last 12 months as the service was acquired by another business, the group requested a further survey was sent to all residents via PFH Connect with additional questions on awareness of the service. The surveys were split between the two services and the results were as follows;

Survey 1 - Out of Hours Service – Emergency Repair 165 Responses (12.97%)

58.39% of residents know how to contact the OOH Service

69.57% of residents know what types of repairs are classed as emergencies

16.37% of residents had contacted the OOH Service in the last 12 months

79.34% of residents were satisfied with the time it took for the call to be answered

82.05% residents were satisfied with the way the call was handled

Survey 2 - Out of Hours Service – Emergency Help 159 Responses (13.46%)

20.13% had contacted the OOH service in the last 12 months to request emergency help

70.97% residents were satisfied with the time it took for the call to be answered

71.43% residents were satisfied with the way the call was handled

The group noted there appears to be a drop in satisfaction compared to the Resident Satisfaction Survey (2025). It also noted that residents seemed less satisfied with the emergency help service, however when analysing further, some comments received on the emergency help related to emergency repairs. Some negative comments had been given in the survey, though one mentioned long wait times, most didn't give a lot of insight on how it could be improved;

“Needs improving”

“The pull cord people take care too long and we're paying for it, I think the ok service would do a better job for our out of hours service and our services”

“Disappointed”

“Crap Service”

The survey did have positive comments too, here's a sample;

“Thank you for the work they completed.”

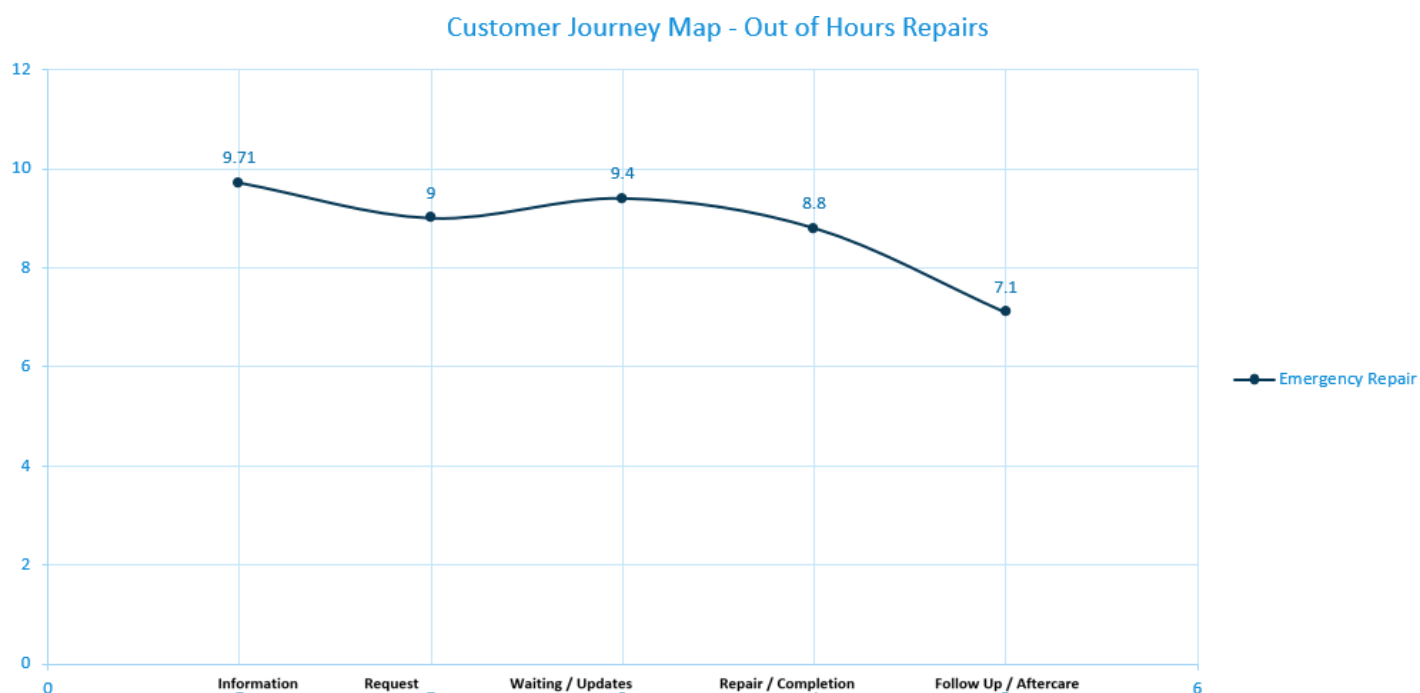
“No all very good no complaints thank you”

“Call was answered promptly and problem rectified within a couple of hours. It was late on a Sat night”

The group requested the Customer Experience Manager undertake a customer journey mapping exercise to help in their understanding of resident experience. Seven residents were part of this, all of whom had accessed the Out of Hours Service to raise emergency repairs since January 2026. The issues they had were as follows; 3 x heating failure, 1 x lost keys, 1 x communal door not working, 1 x front door not working and 1 x blocked toilet.

The residents were asked to score out of 10 each part of the journey from awareness

of the service to aftercare. The results are below;



The residents scored highest on the information stage - having understanding and awareness of the service and how to make contact with it. However in the survey requested by the group, residents were asked if they knew how to contact the service - 23.6% said no and 18% said they weren't sure. Furthermore in the survey, residents were asked if they knew what types of repairs were classed as emergencies – 21.74% said they weren't sure, and 8.7% said no. Following this, the group reviewed the Resident Handbook which had been revised in 2025 and circulated to all residents last year, noting that the section on how to contact OOH service was clear and to the point and listed some examples of the types of emergency repairs. The group felt there was good information out there for residents, but it would be beneficial for PFH to remind residents of how to access the service to address the results in the survey (recommendation B).

The residents were overall very positive about the ease of calling the OOH team, the wait time for the call to be answered and the attitude of the call handlers.

“Rang the main number, very easy.”
Mr B

“Lovely young man who dealt with the call.”
Mrs T

“Polite and explained the next steps as emergency”
Mrs M

However one resident had experienced a wait of over 30 minutes for the call to be answered. The group had also viewed complaints, one of which had waited 40minutes for the call to be answered and another where they'd rang 11 times to have

their call answered. The group understood that a resident calling multiple times, only resulted in them going further down the queue of calls to be answered and leading to more resident frustration. The group would like to see the new service have the option of a call back if possible, it was felt this would be a better service for residents (recommendation C). The group understands calls are aimed to be answered within 3 minutes and complaints are discussed with the OOH provider for learning and understanding. The group were also informed the complaint where the resident had been waiting 40 minutes was during a period of extreme weather and this had increased the volume of calls. The group felt these examples of where the wait times had been significantly higher than expected were no doubt frustrating for the individual, but appeared to be isolated and generally residents were happy with the wait times. The group felt this further supported recommendation A to ensure PFH have good data from the OOH provider so they can have a solid understanding of accurate wait times residents are experiencing.

Residents generally had a positive experience at the stage the operative attended to fix the problem.

“He showed ID, took his shoes off and solved the problems straight away” Mrs T

“Good operative who fixed the repair. Very helpful 10/10” Mr L

“You’re all really good. It needs saying” Mrs C

Where residents were less satisfied was when the problem couldn’t be fixed, or required follow up work.

In a couple of cases the operative mentioned that further work might need doing and the resident wasn’t certain if this would be taken further automatically or if the resident needed to follow up with PFH in normal hours. Some examples below;

Mrs T – Had reported a blocked toilet, a problem that had occurred previously, when operative attended he fixed the problem but commented that the toilet had a narrow outlet which is why it kept happening, Mrs T wasn’t sure if that meant someone would come back and fix it or if she would need to contact PFH again.

Mr B – Reported issue with boiler, when operative attended he mentioned that a part would probably need replacing, but then managed to fix it. Mr B said it has been working fine ever since but is wondering if the part still needs fixing

Mrs M – Reported front door not closing, operative attended and couldn't fix, managed to secure and said it would need a specialist. Mrs M has since chased PFH several times but doesn't understand when this will be fixed

Mrs F – Reported an issue with her boiler and radiators not working. She has reported similar issues in the past saying she feels cold and each time a little bit of work is done which she is grateful for, but feels like it needs looking at all together why her property is cold.

Even where residents experienced some uncertainty they still scored highly of PFH overall. The group feel that there should be a clear handover to the residents following an emergency repair. Ensuring the resident fully understands the next steps, whether this is that PFH will contact the resident for any follow up or further works, or if the resident needs to contact PFH for further guidance (recommendation D).

Conclusion

The group felt that overall the service was good for residents, and though there had been some complaints and experiences where service had fallen below what residents should expect, these appeared to be isolated and PFH had investigated and responded appropriately. Residents were pleased to see high satisfaction in the Resident Satisfaction Survey 2025, the survey the scrutiny group requested, and further experiences shared in the customer journey mapping. The group note as there had been some decline in satisfaction with the service, PFH should continue to monitor residents satisfaction with the OOH service on a regular basis and not wait until the next Resident Satisfaction Survey which will be due in 2028 (recommendation E).

The group feel their recommendations will further strengthen the service and hope it helps with the upcoming procurement of the service noting what is working well now, and how some changes can improve it further.

The group would like to thank all staff and residents who have been involved in shaping and supporting the review.

Recommendations:

A – When procuring the new contract for the out of hours service, PFH should ensure they get quality data about who is using the service particularly when requesting emergency help including detail about the call and the outcome. This could then help shape future services and projects PFH can deliver to help residents remain in their homes longer.

B – PFH to undertake regular communication to all residents about how to access the Out of Hours Service, including what repairs are classed as emergencies and what they can expect from the service.

C – When procuring the new contract for the out of hours service, PFH should consider a provider that is able to offer a callback function for residents contacting the OOH service for emergency repairs.

D - There should be a clear handover to the resident following an emergency repair. Ensuring the resident fully understands the next steps, whether this is that PFH will contact the resident for any follow up or further works, or if the resident needs to contact PFH for further guidance.

E – PFH should undertake periodic satisfaction surveys with residents using the OOH service to ensure satisfaction remains high