



**CHOICE
PLACES**

Residential Management Services

YOUR PLACE

THE NEWSLETTER OF CHOICE PLACES | ISSUE 8 - OCTOBER 2024

SATISFACTION SURVEY SPECIAL



In May 2024, Choice Places carried out an extensive Satisfaction Survey, capturing the views of owners in our estates around East Ayrshire. We employed an external consultant, Knowledge Partnership, to carry out the exercise and over the early summer they undertook a representative sample (31.3%, 226 owners) of telephone surveys.

In the survey, we asked about various aspects of our service, such as how you would like to make contact with us now and in the future, and how good we are at keeping you informed of work taking place within your area, as well as your views on the open space maintenance where you live.

The results of the survey are as follows:

- Six out of ten owners are satisfied with our factoring service overall
- 47% of owners are satisfied with open space maintenance
- 56.6% of owners are aware of our complaints procedure

- 76% of owners believe Choice Places is easy to contact, with over 51% satisfied with their most recent contact
- Over 77% of owners are satisfied with the amount of information and clarity of their annual invoice
- 77% of owners like our twice yearly newsletter
- The preferred method of contact for most owners remains by letter (41%), although it should be noted that printing and postage costs represent the highest cost of communications to owners
- 79% of owners felt the level of communications issued by Choice Places was 'about right'

We must be honest and say we were disappointed with some of the outcomes. It goes without saying that we want to improve our customer satisfaction and provide the best possible service to you. So, we're

currently looking at an action plan to address areas where satisfaction levels are not as high as we would like them to be. But we'd like your help to do this.

We'd love a small group of owners to work with us to address some of the comments made and help us understand your views a bit more clearly. Possible areas for discussion include:

- Tackling open space maintenance issues eg grass cutting, weeding, maintenance of footpaths (that have not been adopted)
- Improving owners' contact experience
- Improving value for money

We've recently appointed a Community Connector, Angela Gracie, to help us engage with our customers (you can see some of Angela's early activities on her Facebook page, Atrium Community Connector). If you're interested in sparing just a couple of hours to chat through some of the issues so we can make service improvements to benefit everyone, please contact us at info@choice-places.co.uk.



Understanding Your Estate

Who Does What?

Within the Satisfaction Survey, we noticed a number of comments from owners who were confused about having to pay for things which they believe should be covered by their Council Tax, or who were not happy with Choice Places' lack of action on matters which we're not in fact responsible for.

To help clarify, we've put together this table below. You can also look at the plans on our [website](#) for your estate which also highlight roads and paths adopted by the local authority and those maintained by Choice Places. There are a number of agencies and organisations with responsibilities within your estate - not everything is the responsibility of the factor, but we liaise with all statutory agencies when issues are identified during walkabouts, etc.

PARTY	RESPONSIBILITIES
Individual owners in shared blocks	Your title deeds tell you about your rights and responsibilities for your property and for your shared responsibility for the upkeep of the common block. They also detail your proportional share of common costs and your obligations to manage and maintain the building jointly with the other owners. They also tell you about your responsibilities as an owner in an estate.
Individual owners in an estate	Your title deeds tell you about your rights and responsibilities for your own property and for your shared responsibility for the estate. They also detail your proportional share of common costs and your obligations to manage and maintain the estate jointly with the other owners.
Choice Places	A Factor is essentially a Property Manager and is appointed by a group of owners to help them repair and maintain their shared building and/or their estate. This relates only to deliver the responsibilities as outlined within the owners' Deed of Conditions – ie the Factor only delivers what the title deeds instruct. This generally relates to maintenance and repair of common closes, etc in common blocks or open space maintenance ie hard and soft landscaping in estates, as well as roads and footpaths NOT adopted by the local authority (the Council determines this, not Choice Places).
East Ayrshire Council	The local authority has a statutory responsibility for the provision of services in relation to education, social care, waste management and recycling, planning, adopted roads and footpaths (determined by the Council), environmental health, removal of abandoned cars, etc. It is these local public services that are funded by Council Tax income.
Other landlords	Any private land owned by other landlords will be maintained by them.
Scottish Water	Scottish Water is responsible for the water main in your street and all the pipework up to and including the stopcock at the boundary of your property. The owner will then normally have responsibility for any pipework from the stopcock into the property, and all your indoor and external plumbing. Scottish Water has the public drainage duty and is responsible for the drainage of rainwater run-off (surface water) from roofs, and any paved ground surface within a property boundary. Additionally, they help protect homes from flooding caused by sewers either overflowing or becoming blocked.
Police Scotland	To uphold the law and keep the public safe.



As promised in our last newsletter, we've started adding more information on our public estate inspections to our website. This will allow you to check out our findings, any actions that flow from these inspections and who they've been passed to. Make sure you check out www.choice-places.co.uk for both the inspection calendar and updates.

Communicating with our customers



Newsletter – we've gone digital!

Almost 30% of owners who took part in the Satisfaction Survey said they'd be more likely to read the newsletter in a digital format. So we hope this first change shows we're listening to you - and saving you money as well! We told you in our last edition that we'd be sending out the next newsletter by email only. Making use of emails and texts in our communications has a double benefit - it allows speedy communication in real time and it's cheaper.

We pass this reduction in costs onto you within your annual billing.

This Autumn edition is also available to download from the website www.choice-places.co.uk. If you want the next edition delivered directly to your Inbox, make sure you've signed up for the Portal and given a current email address.

Are there other things you'd like to see in these twice yearly bulletins? Please drop us a line and tell us - email info@choice-places.co.uk



Over 70% of you think we're easy to contact and that our level of contact is about right.



Customer Dashboard

From April to June, how many complaints were received regarding landscape maintenance?

What percentage of annual charges had been recovered by end of July 2024?

What percentage of public estate walkabouts were completed on time?

The full Customer Satisfaction Survey is carried out once every three years to help us review and improve our services to you. Apart from this, we rely on ongoing customer feedback, complaints and comments from people during walkabouts, etc to tell us what we're getting right and how we could do better.

We'd like to develop some basic performance information that we could publish regularly that might help us see how we're doing. What would you like to know? Send your ideas to info@choice-places.co.uk



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If you have any comments or questions, or want to know what Choice Places is doing at the moment, then please get in touch. Our contact details are:

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