

Customer engagement strategy

Creating the future together

Context

This strategy sets out our proposal to improve tenant and leaseholder engagement with our housing services over the next 18 months. It is aimed at building the foundations for customer engagement before the introduction of a wider strategy, which we expect to develop with Haringey Council in 2022/2023.

Contents

1. Where we are now
2. Where we are going
3. How we will get there

Appendix A – strategic framework

1. Where we are now

Good track record

We have a good track record of engaging with residents. In 2020/2021 we measured satisfaction with our engagement activities. Of those residents who were involved in one or more activities, and responded to our survey, 83% found that the process of engaging with us was good, and the same percentage was satisfied with the level and type of information supplied. 72% were satisfied with our online engagement.

Through our partnerships and work with community groups, who contributed over 30,000 hours of volunteering, we have generated 'social value' equivalent to over £2 million. This figure is an indication of the value of the wider social, economic and environmental benefits that have happened as a result of community work. We calculated the figure through a tool called the UK social value bank, and it has been independently verified by HACT (Housing Associations' Charitable Trust).

Our dedicated team has built strong and trusting relationships with individuals and groups of residents who have come together, with or without our support, to address issues and interests they share. We support the Residents' Scrutiny Panel in their efforts to look at services and issues from the viewpoint of residents, helping to give them a voice with our managers and leaders. Colleagues in other teams have recognised the strength of our relationships with residents as well as our expertise in engaging with local people, developing their trust and having informative conversations. We have supported those teams with their consultations and difficult conversations. We always try to make sure that we meet the standards set for us in our contract with Haringey Council and in the government's regulatory standards.

We have also been successful in engaging with residents about their well-being, and creating services that reflect the different needs of residents.

In 2019 we created a foodbank service that proved invaluable at the start of the pandemic and continues to support residents suffering hardship.

Our Project 2020 offers youth activities and employment services that are helping residents gain employment and are working with children and young adults who are at risk of offending or being targeted by gangs, or who simply want to improve their education and have a safe place to play or meet others.

Our financial inclusion teams provide advice about benefits and budgeting, and support residents in order to improve their financial well-being.

Responding and adapting

Lots has changed in a short space of time. In response to the Covid-19 pandemic we've adapted and learnt a lot about what works well and being responsive. The benefits of this have been immense – we know because residents have told us – and we're ready to build on what we've learnt and do things differently to strengthen communities for the future. Feedback on this was provided in the 'Covid-19 Response Survey' conducted by BMG. This showed that 77% of respondents were satisfied with how we responded to the pandemic. This was further emphasised by the Residents' Scrutiny Panel's report on our work during the pandemic.

New expectations

In November 2020, the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government published 'The Charter For Social Housing Residents' (the MHCLG charter). This reflected the lessons the housing sector has learnt from the Grenfell Tower tragedy. At the time the charter was published, we had reshaped our services in response to lockdown and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Building safety is a theme in the MHCLG charter, but listening to residents is a bigger one. This is also likely to be the case when we apply what we have learnt from the pandemic.

It's been easier to get our actions and services right after listening to residents and using their feedback to help us adapt. In the summer of 2020 we asked residents about our response to the pandemic. Their feedback was positive overall, and we received some helpful suggestions for improvements. Feedback about the responsiveness of staff and our communications was particularly positive, and we have found that increasing our use of digital communication (by email, through our website, other online methods and through apps) has been very effective in reaching more residents.

The MHCLG charter sets out new expectations for landlords and some suggestions for meeting those expectations. The details are still going through a national consultation, which will make sure that we focus on the issues that matter the most.

In the meantime, the feedback from our residents and our own conversations is an enormously valuable resource to drive the changes that will make a difference.

2. Where we are going

‘A thriving Haringey - its homes, its people and its communities’

Residents are helping us to create our shared vision of success, which we are illustrating in our ‘Winning Hands’. This is our vision for providing services in a way that helps us to communicate our aspirations and commitments.

When creating Winning Hands, we used feedback from customer satisfaction surveys and other feedback (including Residents’ Scrutiny Panel reports) to identify themes for our vision. Those themes have been tested and refined through several rounds of consultation, helping us to clarify what success looks like so that we can design the steps to get there.

The themes of Winning Hands are as follows.

- Putting customers first
- Quality homes and neighbourhoods
- Individual and community well-being
- Great people
- Well-run organisation

With these in mind, we’ve listened to residents, heard from similar landlords about what works for them and their residents, learnt from what can go wrong, taken advice and guidance from the government, and built on the ways we adapted in lockdown, to fuel conversations with residents on how we can do things differently in future. And most of all, we have opened our minds to possibilities. Our aim is to create services that are built on residents’ views.

We will create opportunities for residents to tell us who they are, what they think, what matters in their homes and communities, and how we measure up to their expectations. There will be lots of ways to engage with us, tailored to suit residents’ needs, and we don’t want our residents to wait to be asked for their views. We will make sure residents can influence every aspect of the business and at every level.

Residents’ views will be vital in helping us to create our building-safety engagement strategy. This customer engagement strategy will link closely with the building-safety strategy, to make sure that the commitments set out in the building-safety strategy reflect the performance measures in this customer-engagement strategy.

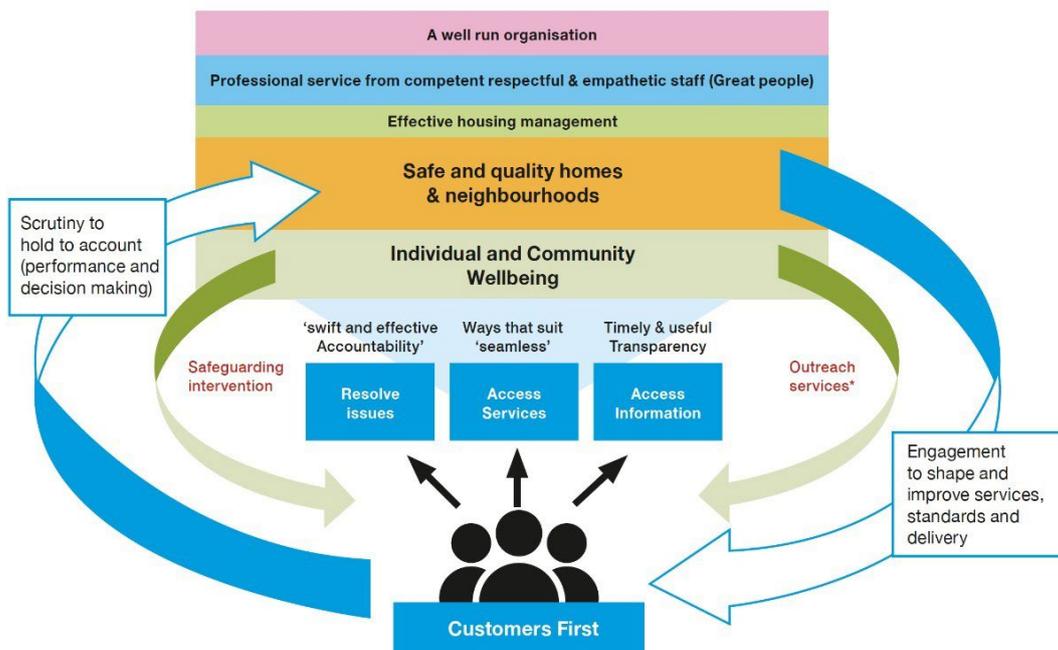
3. How we will get there

‘Listen – decide together – co-create – invest together’

Putting customers first, we will hear our residents’ views and use them to shape services, respond to their needs promote discussion and make decisions together.

We recognise that listening to residents is the strongest foundation of a great service. It underpins positive customer engagement, helps us to provide the right service at the right time and in the right way, and supports the value-for-money objectives we know matter to everyone.

We’ve started conversations with residents and identified six performance indicators to underpin our Winning Hands vision.



By January 2022, residents work together to share ideas and experience, support each other and have a louder voice.

By April 2022, the engagement team is recognised and roles are revised in order to lead and support resident engagement.

By November 2022, we have a training academy for residents, to help them gain the skills and confidence they need to get involved in their communities and hold us to account.

By March 2022, resident-led scrutiny holds the board and managers to account.

By March 2024, the best use is made of community spaces, achieved by us investing in the right facilities in the right locations so facilities are accessible to all our communities.

By October 2022, we use customer data to understand their needs and expectations and tailor our services accordingly.

Appendix A – strategic framework

Our approach to customer engagement will be as follows.

A Top down – structural and formal

Leaders and managers will ask questions, take views into account, and commit to providing clear responses, in good time, to explain how we have acted on those views.

B Bottom up – responsive and service-led

Building on the range of options that residents already know and use, we will strengthen the ways we gather, analyse and use feedback. We will welcome feedback from all sources, and invest in making sure that we understand it and use it in positive ways. We will use the feedback to build on what works well and to find solutions to problems.

C Accountable

This strategy sets out clear objectives that we will deliver. These include developing performance indicators to measure our success.

D Embedded

Resident engagement will be built into everything we do. We will have a team of engagement experts who will lead by example and develop their roles to share skills and hold others to account.

E. Empowering

Amplification – We will empower residents to make their voices heard. We will do this by investing in groups and structures. Residents' associations and community champions are already effective, and we will strengthen them. We will support residents with an interest in specific issues. Residents have told us that they would value opportunities for residents' associations to work together, support each other and be stronger together. We will help to create those arrangements and structures.

Capacity building – We will support community leaders of the future, to help them identify, develop and increase confidence and skills so that they can strengthen the voices of their families, friends and neighbours. We will empower residents to work together, speak out and create the future with us.

Tailored services - Tailored services need to be based on reliable information. We will invest in increasing our residents' confidence and creating great systems and solutions so that they will want to share information about who they are and what they need. We will make sure residents know that we will use their feedback in ways that will benefit them, and that we will keep their personal information safe and secure.