

CORNWALL
HOUSING

Resident Engagement Strategy 2024-27

cornwallhousing.org.uk

**WE WILL
UNDERSTAND**

**WE WILL
MAKE IT EASY**

**WE WILL MAKE
IT WORTH IT**

**WE WILL PAY
ATTENTION**

**WE WILL MAKE
IT PART OF US**



A CORNWALL
COUNCIL COMPANY



1 Introduction

Cornwall Housing Limited (CHL) is changing as it embarks on a significant journey of improvement which will impact across all its service areas over the next 3 years.

This journey will change the way we work, how we make decisions on the services we provide, how we prioritise the work we need to do, and even on what processes we follow to achieve this. Coupled with this change, CHL also acknowledges there are many areas of landlord delivery and recognises that as a social housing landlord it must ensure that it does more than its core tasks, such as collect rent and repair homes. The change it seeks must also ensure that tenancies are sustained in their broadest sense and residents can play their fullest role possible within local communities.

Our Resident Engagement Strategy for 2024-27 is key to this as it sets out how CHL will listen to and work with residents who live in our homes, or otherwise receive a service we provide, to improve the services we deliver and help shape the future of our organisation.

This strategy is key to how we will listen to and work with our tenants



2 Context

Resident engagement at CHL is about ensuring the resident voice is sought, is heard, and has a meaningful impact into all our operational and strategic decision-making. This is further supported when looking at the different contexts that CHL need to consider in developing this strategy, as each comes with its own expectations.



Cornwall Council context

The Council's Housing Strategy and Commissioning Plan for Council Housing services has been produced drawing on best practice from across the country and explains how the local authority plan to listen to residents, engage with residents and will involve residents in the successful running of our business.

Given the role CHL has in delivering housing services on behalf of the Council, this commitment to engage is something that is expected from CHL, as honored within the management agreement in place between the two organisations:

Residents will have the opportunity to be meaningfully involved in decisions about service delivery and standards.

Cornwall Housing Ltd context

The CHL Business Plan identifies how resident engagement and the delivery of effective services shaped by residents, should be at the heart of all social housing landlord providers.

The gathering of insights and using feedback and local views help drive efficiencies and ensure that services meet the needs of local people. If insight mechanisms are working and feedback is being heard then failure will be identified early and service change made, leading to better outcomes for both residents and organisations. This shapes why this remains a crucial test for any social housing landlord and is a theme that cuts through all areas of service provision.

CHL fully supports this and as an organisation with strong links with our involved tenants, welcomes the opportunity to develop further ways of reaching and hearing residents' voices. The strategy places our customers at the very heart of all we do and recognises that their collaboration in co-creating, scrutinising, and improving our services is essential if we are to tailor, strengthen and improve what we do.

There are also key lessons that CHL can learn from when looking at engagement in the context of how the sector needs to engage with residents on compliance and building safety, a recommendation from its own Altair review.

Regulatory context

As a registered provider of social housing, we are committed to delivering against the standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing (RoSH), which include the Consumer Standards. The introduction of the new **Transparency, Influence and Accessibility Standard** means that tenant engagement is no longer an optional extra, it is a regulatory requirement that is fundamental to the successful running of a social housing organisation.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government’s (MHCLG) Charter for Social Housing Residents, published in November 2020, and the National Housing Federation’s (NHF) Together with Tenants publication, both set out the case for landlords to further strengthen their relationship between residents and landlord.

Resident feedback context

The first step in developing an effective strategy to support the way we can effectively engage with customers, is to ask customers how they would like to do this.

In Summer 2023, CHL ran the **Better Connections Survey** aimed at gathering a wide range of views from residents on how they would like to engage, and it is this intelligence that is being used to create our Resident Engagement Strategy.

It has helped CHL to deliver a strategy that meets the various levels of engagement that our residents would like to see offered, by adopting different levels of engagement for different purposes.

Just over 1,250 residents responded and told us what they would like to see, and the strategy has been devised to deliver this.



3 Scope and definitions

The strategy will set out how residents can be involved to influence service improvements and what outcomes will be achieved as a result.

For the purposes of this strategy we define ‘resident’ as a tenant, leaseholder or other user of our services.

Whilst this strategy is focused on engagement as an organisational objective, it is expected that the influence of this approach will be reflected in other strategies, policies and CHL ways of working.

The Resident Engagement strategy is more than a document in its own right, it is an approach that is expected to be referenced and acknowledged in all activities throughout CHL.



4 Our commitments

Our commitments have been developed in response to the context CHL operates in. They meet:

What the Council wants to see,

What the Regulator expects,

And speak directly to what our residents have told us on how they would like to engage.

We have also looked to good practice – both from within the sector and beyond - and engaged with service areas from right across the organisation.

The result is the 5 key pillars highlighted below:

PAY ATTENTION

We will make the most of the information provided by our residents to improve how we work.

UNDERSTAND

We will make sure that we get to know our residents better.

MAKE IT EASY

We will provide the opportunities to engage with CHL in different ways that suit residents' needs and wants.

MAKE IT WORTH IT

Residents will see the action we take as a result of the feedback we receive.

MAKE IT PART OF US

We will make engagement and involvement part of everyday life at CHL.

Pay attention

Engagement shouldn't only happen when we run a survey or hold a focus group. We want to make sure that we use of all the information residents provide us any time they contact us or access our services. This means we will listen to everyone and not only those who actively share their views.

Understand

How can we deliver great homes and excellent services if we don't know what it is residents need and want from us. That means we need to get to know our residents more and really understand what is important to them. It also means looking closely at the information they provide, and not just hearing what we want to hear.

Make it easy

Engagement should be open and accessible to all those living in a Cornwall Housing home. That means providing a range of opportunities and ways of collating residents' views. It may mean tailoring how we do certain things to the ways we know work for different people.

Make it worth it

There's nothing worse than being asked for your views and then ignored. That won't happen at Cornwall Housing. If residents tell us something, we promise to do something about it. If we can't do what they are asking, we'll explain why. We will also look at ways we can encourage and reward those who get involved with us.

Make it part of us

Engagement shouldn't only be ad-hoc. It should be engrained throughout the business. We will make sure engagement and involvement is regular, reliable and written into the very structure of Cornwall Housing.



5 Our Engagement Framework – how we will engage



We are committed to supporting any resident interested in taking part in any initiatives which will promote engagement.

We want to engage with as many of the people living in our homes or receiving our services as possible.

The wider the group of voices we hear, the better we will understand our customers and the more we can improve our homes and services to meet your needs.

Using all the information residents provided us with through the Better Connections survey and taking into consideration the views of some of our most involved residents, we have created our engagement framework.

We aim for the new Resident Engagement Strategy to consider and cater for these different

wants and needs, by adopting different levels of engagement for different purposes.

CHL will provide a menu of engagement options that are dynamic, fit for purpose and appropriate to needs, providing the opportunity for customers to get involved and make a difference how, and when it suits them.

Being involved in any activity does involve a level of commitment but the following sets out potential levels and types of engagement, and what this would require:

Purpose	Frequency	Number	Method	Tenant time	Tenant skills	Activities
Heard Level 1 – You tell us without knowing						
Data readily available from customers through everyday transactions and contact is used to achieve evidence-based, customer focussed decision-making	Constant	Whole customer base	Desktop studies and analysis	Zero	None – personal lived experience only	Reports from Housing management System. Reports from property data and repairs.Complaints and compliments. ASB reports. Website statistics. Call statistics. Unprompted feedback through webforms or other sources.
Asked Level 2 – You tell us when we ask you specific things						
Captured data from proactively approaching customers to ask them for feedback and views about specific topics or changes being considered to achieve evidence-based, customer focussed decision-making	Planned, occasional ad-hoc, reliable.	Broad customer base and specific representative samples.	Email/web and phone, occasional post.	Less than 1 hour per activity.	None – personal lived experience only.	TSMs. Complaints satisfaction surveys. Repairs satisfaction surveys. Other transactional surveys. Ad-hoc online surveys. Ad-hoc phone surveys. Ad-hoc postal or face to face surveys
Involved Level 3 – You occasionally or regularly share your views, experiences and skills						
Captured data through consultation events, as well as joint working through service development and co-design sessions, plus regular contributions to business-as-usual activities	Regular scheduled, occasional and ad-hoc.	Targeted customer base	Email/web, phone, post, face to face, in person in communities, online groups	1 to 4 hours per activity.	Training requirements and/or personal lived experience.	Service improvement groups. Co-design sessions and workshops. Communications Crew. Estate monitors. Community groups. Interview panels.
Invested Level 4 - You are our most involved residents. You check what we are doing and hold us to account						
Tenants with considerable knowledge of our organisation, as well as lived experiences and other professional and life skills provide oversight, monitoring, scrutiny and challenge.	Regular scheduled.	Narrow customer base.	In person and on-line meetings, plus study groups and reading/ emails for specific tasks.	Multiple days throughout the year		Training requirements. Knowledge of organisation and regulation.

Our strategy will ensure CHL provides help to access training to ensure customers have the skills to contribute confidently and effectively, and we will also commit to making the staff resource available to support this engagement framework.

6 Roles and responsibilities

Setting the context for the roles within the organisation.

The Board has the overall responsibility for this strategy.

The Executive Leadership Team will be responsible for implementing the strategy to meet the key pillars.

The Senior Leadership Team will be responsible for the operational activity within their service areas which are required as per the strategy action plan.

The Head of Customer Services and Engagement will be responsible for developing the action plan to support the delivery of the strategy.

The Communication and Engagement Manager will be responsible for co-ordinating the delivery of the Action Plan and ensuring our engagement framework is administered and supported.

All staff are required to participate in contributing to the success of this strategy and are expected to:

- Demonstrate their contribution to delivering this strategy through departmental, team and personal objectives.
- Understand the impact of their behaviour and approach, and ensure they deliver their role in line with the 5 key pillars.



7 Measuring success – monitoring and review

To ensure we are successfully delivering this strategy, we will use the following measures:

- **Produce an action plan** which supports the delivery of this strategy by setting out the activities required. The delivery and progress of the action plan against its targets will be reviewed quarterly by the CHL Tenants Forum and reported through to the CHL Board. This will also be proactively promoted to the CHL wider staff team.
- **Produce an annual report** for publication to all residents and key stakeholders.
- **Regularly review our engagement activities** to understand their impact and the number of people engaging with us.
- **Data collected** through the Tenant Satisfaction Measures will give an indication on whether we are achieving our aims .
- **Track our progress** in co-creating our services with both customer satisfaction and performance indicators, to demonstrate and prove how we have done this.
- **Monitor** how successful we are in being inclusive and engaging with our diverse communities.



8 Equality, diversity and inclusion

We are committed to equality of opportunity for all.

Capturing and understanding the resident voice is central for putting customers at the heart of everything we do, so it is essential that it represents the diversity of our customers, their characteristics and their needs. We will develop specific action plans to ensure our resident voice represents the needs of our diverse community.



9 Value for money

We are committed to ensuring that all services are delivered with value for money in mind and so will always look for opportunities to both improve services and reduce costs across the business to achieve this.

Our organisation is changing and at the core of this change is ensuring we run our operations as efficiently and effectively as possible, so we can maximise the resources we have available to maximise the outcomes they produce. This will enable us to grow our investment in providing good quality and good value services for residents.

To do this we need to increase the resident influence across all our activities but also on how those activities are delivered in terms of value for money.



This strategy gives the commitment to inform and actively engage residents in our value for money decision making, and to play a part in the scrutiny of our services. This will include feedback on service delivery, participation in service reviews, and involvement in procurement decisions.

10 Strategic review

This strategy will be reviewed at least every 3 years or when good practice, regulation or legislation changes mean we need to ensure the activities and anticipated outcomes remain relevant.



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Alternative formats

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