

# Customer voice.



staffs housing

# Contents.

- Page 3** The voice of the customer
- Page 3** The bigger picture
- Page 4** Together with Tenants commitments
- Page 5** What we'll do to meet these commitments
- Page 6** How you influence Staffs Housing
- Page 8** What is customer involvement?
- Page 9** How can you get involved?
- Page 11** Who do I contact for more information?

# The voice of the customer & THE BIG PICTURE

There are also some changes to the national guidance on how we work with customers.

## Our approach

At Staffs Housing we talk straight, we don't overcomplicate, we keep our promises and we put you at the heart of the process.

That's why we are making sure you have an opportunity to influence our services by listening to what you have to say and acting on the feedback we get from you.

Serving our customers and creating great experiences for you is the best part of our job. At Staffs Housing you matter, and we need you to help us improve your homes and services.

We've developed this document with customers to explain how you can use your voice and the customer engagement platform to be heard, for you and for the benefit of all customers.

## Government policy

In response to the Grenfell Tower fire, the Government published a housing white paper - the Charter for Social Housing Residents. This proposes changes to building safety and to the regulation of social landlords. Its intention is to ensure residents feel protected and empowered with improvements in transparency, accountability and services from social landlords.

Find out more here - [www.bit.ly/socialhousingwp](http://www.bit.ly/socialhousingwp)

## National Housing Federation

Together with Tenants is a housing initiative focused on strengthening the relationship between tenants and social landlords.

Read more on the following pages and at [www.housing.org.uk/our-work/together-with-tenants/](http://www.housing.org.uk/our-work/together-with-tenants/)

## TPAS

Is a national body advising on tenant engagement and reset its National Tenant Engagement Standards in 2021 to reflect the renewed focus on the importance of the customer voice. Read more about this here [www.tpas.org.uk/standards](http://www.tpas.org.uk/standards)

## Regulator of Social Housing

Regulates what social landlords do and sets the consumer standards which all social landlords are expected to work to [www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards](http://www.gov.uk/guidance/regulatory-standards)

## Honeycomb Group

Staffs Housing is a part of Honeycomb Group. As an organisation we want to improve how you can influence the quality of our homes and our services. Our Customer Engagement strategy also forms part of this plan which will be uploaded to the website later this year.

# Our commitments.

TOGETHER WITH TENANTS

Our commitments over the next three years have been developed in partnership with our customers and are based on the National Housing Federation's Together with Tenants Charter.

**6** our six key commitments



# What we'll do to meet our commitments.

## 1 Relationships

We will treat our customers with respect and relationships will be based on openness, honesty and transparency. We'll make sure we understand how you want to be involved, provide lots of opportunities for you to get involved and offer training to help you if you need it.

## 2 Communication

Customers will receive clear, accessible and timely information from Staffs Housing on issues that matter to you, including important information about your home and the local community, how we are working to address problems, how we run the organisation and information about performance on key issues.

## 3 Voice and influence

We will listen and value your views and this information will be used to inform decisions. Every individual customer will feel listened to on the issues that matter to you and you can speak without fear.

## 4 Accountability

Collectively you will work in partnership with us to independently scrutinise and hold us to account for the decisions that affect your home and services and the quality of the homes and services we provide.

## 5 Quality

Your home will be good quality, well maintained, safe and well managed. We'll agree our safety standards with you and tell you how we have performed against them each year.

## 6 When things go wrong

We will give you advice and support when things go wrong and a simple route to raise an issue or to make a complaint. We will give you clear time-scales setting out when you can expect a response.

If you are not satisfied, there is a simple appeal process and then an opportunity to appeal to the Housing Ombudsman if you are still unhappy.

# Customer influence.

HOW YOUR CONTACT WITH US AFFECTS WHAT WE DO

We record every point of contact you make with us so that we know how often you need our services and which services you use the most.

**service demand**

What you say about our services. Using text, email or phone we may ask you what you think about our services so we can learn from you and improve.

**feedback**

CUSTOMER

Your influence on what we do. Customer engagement is about providing a range of opportunities for you to have your say find out how in the next section.

**involvement**

When you aren't happy with a service we make it easy for you to make a complaint so that it is dealt with well and we learn from mistakes and improve.

**complaints**

**Bradeley Village resident Mal joined the customer involvement group in 2019. After a traumatic year losing his leg and overcoming homelessness, Mal wanted to give back and help others.**

"After having my leg amputated I found myself homeless in hospital. It was a really worrying time but luckily I was offered a home at Bradeley Village and have lived there ever since.

I wanted to join the customer involvement group at first to keep myself busy and take my mind off what I'd been through. Another factor was being able to give back to Staffs Housing who had helped me no end. The support I received from the

housing staff who would often pop in to check on me and make sure I had everything I needed was amazing. The whole team really helped me settle into the village so joining this group and being able to give something back was great.

I firstly joined the customer scrutiny panel, where we test services by interviewing customers and carrying out surveys and research. I was then invited to more and more things and got chatting to other people which was fantastic for my wellbeing. Since joining I've helped to write customer leaflets and documents too, making suggestions and helping to make sure they're clear and easy to understand.

Everyone I speak to at Staffs Housing is lovely and approachable. I'm astounded by how open they are.

When things go wrong, they hold their hands up and work with customers to find a resolution that's right for everyone.

They're always looking for ways to improve their services, but they need the help of their customers to do it. So, if you do spot a problem, or you think, there's something that can be improved say something because if we don't, how can we expect things to change?

***"I would encourage anyone thinking about getting involved to do it! I really enjoy it. It helps me to get out, meet new people and it means I can have my say and stay informed too."***



## **Mal's customer story.**

Customer Mal has been an involved customer at Staffs Housing for over three years. He's helping to improve our services and gets to stay busy at the same time too!

# Customer involvement.

## WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

It means you have your say and help us manage Staffs Housing in a way that keeps your needs, thoughts and opinions at the centre of everything we do. We want to hear from as many of you as possible to help us design our services.

There are lots of ways you can do this, just pick the one that suits you best.

Our involvement opportunities are open to all customers and the Customer Engagement Team will help and support you to make sure your voice is heard.



*It's an exciting time to get involved, you get the best opportunity to influence the way we work and help make a difference to our services*

**Katie and Jo**

CUSTOMER  
INVOLVEMENT

### Help us develop your online account

We're developing an online service so you can report repairs, pay your rent, and keep your details up to date.

We need customers to help us develop the way it will work, how it will look and hear your thoughts on how you think the online account would work for you.

# HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED



## Join our maintenance group

When we begin our new maintenance and repairs contract, we will need your help to give feedback to the contractor.

Join our maintenance group to help us understand how customers are finding the service, what needs improving and to make sure the contractor is providing great customer service.



## Become a mystery shopper

You'll carry out tests throughout the year on our customers services and on our ready to let properties and report back on the service you received and the standards of our properties.



## Join our customer scrutiny panel

You'll interview customers, carry out surveys and research great customer service to make sure we're doing everything we can to ensure everyone has access to great customer experience.



## Join our customer assurances group

Meet with other customers and some of our board of directors to discuss our performance such as the results of mystery shopping, customer scrutiny and survey results, and play a part in shaping our services with your thoughts, opinions and ideas.

# HOW YOU CAN GET INVOLVED



## Help us set up new resident groups

We'd love to help you set up new residents groups in your communities where you can come together for a shared purpose - to work on a communal garden, bid for money to improve your area from the Staffs Housing community fund or to simply build friendships and create a support network.



## Be a part of piloting new customer groups

Led by you, customer forums would be an opportunity to tackle any issues affecting you and your community. We can help invite guest speakers like your local PCSO or Fire Officer or you could invite a Staffs Housing member of staff to chat to you about the issues concerning you the most.



## Take part in surveys and polls to share your views

Some of you may not be able to give a lot of time to attend meetings or read documents, but we would love to know if you could answer a short survey or give us a quick response to a key question where we would value your opinion. This could be by text, email or through our Facebook group.



## Take part in environmental change and the zero carbon challenge

We know that the environment and the climate crisis are critical issues for residents. We will be developing our own net zero carbon plan to reduce carbon dioxide emissions and meet new reduction targets. How homes are used and heated is key to this so we are looking for interested customers to get involved in helping us with these plans.



### Training & skills

If you need any additional training or skills for one of your involvement roles we can help you. Some of our involved customers have used their new skills in their workplace, for their own personal development and in their everyday lives.

### Coaching & mentoring

We can arrange for you to have a coach or mentor if you need a little extra help to get involved and have your say.

### Expenses

We will pay for your expenses, including travel, any additional carer fees and food costs.

### Need one more reason to get involved?

You will meet and work alongside other customers and see the real-life impact you can have on improving things for you and your community. Come help us make a difference - get in touch today!

**What's in it for you** AND HOW WE'LL SUPPORT YOU



# Interested in taking part?

GET IN TOUCH

Whether you're looking for more information, or you've decided to get involved. Get in touch with our Customer Involvement Team

[www.honeycombgroup.org.uk/getinvolved](http://www.honeycombgroup.org.uk/getinvolved)

[www.facebook.com/groups/HoneycombGroupCE](http://www.facebook.com/groups/HoneycombGroupCE)

[involve@honeycombgroup.org.uk](mailto:involve@honeycombgroup.org.uk)

01782 743828