

## Appendix 2 - Tenant Scrutiny Review- Improving Communication with Tenants

This review and action plan supports service delivery against the following **Regulator of Social Housing – Tenant Satisfaction Measures:**

<b>TP01</b>	Overall satisfaction
<b>TP06</b>	Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenants' views and acts upon them.
<b>TP07</b>	Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them.
<b>TP08</b>	Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect.

This review and action plan also support service delivery against the following **Tenant Engagement Framework 2022-25** outcomes:

<b>Outcome 1</b>	Putting our customers at the heart of everything we do.
<b>Outcome 2</b>	Delivering a range of options to give all our tenants an opportunity to get involved.
<b>Outcome 4</b>	Enable tenants to scrutinise and challenge our performance by providing open, transparent, and accessible information.

Recommendation (in priority order)	Lead Officers	Actions	Target Date	Update
<p><b>Recommendation A: Letters</b></p> <p>Continue to work through Council forms and letters to make sure that they are understandable and written in plain language for all residents.</p> <p>Have a process in place to review the letter templates with customers.</p> <p><u>Anticipated Outcomes:</u></p>	<p>Tenant Involvement Coordinator</p> <p>Housing Heads of Service</p> <p>Head of Customer Services</p> <p>Rotherfed</p>	<p>Establish a Tenant Communications Group.</p> <p>Develop a forward work programme to review letters, documents and the Home Matters magazine.</p> <p>All letters will be reviewed to ensure they are understandable, relevant,</p>	<p>June 2023</p> <p>June 2023</p> <p>July 2023</p>	<p>Housing Services letters were last reviewed in September 2021 just before housing staff started using a new computer system called 'NEC'.</p> <p>NEC is a housing management system which allows staff to view information linked to tenants and their properties.</p> <p>Screen team in operation and</p>

## Appendix 2 - Tenant Scrutiny Review- Improving Communication with Tenants

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved communication with tenants.</li> <li>Moving some services on-line.</li> <li>Improved customer satisfaction.</li> <li>Better engagement with tenants.</li> <li>Customer easy read and input.</li> </ul>	<p>Communications and Marketing Manager</p>	<p>thoughtful with an appropriate and suitable tone.</p>		<p>reviewing communications regularly. Letters will form part of their forward plan.</p> <p>Tenancy Health check form, and Environmental Works Schemes letter and a questionnaire reviewed so far.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation B: Strategy</b></p> <p>Provide a strategy on how the Council communicates with people living in Rotherham.</p> <p>Inform tenants how Council officers will communicate/ consult with them.</p> <p><u>Anticipated Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved communication with tenants.</li> <li>Moving some services on-line.</li> <li>Improved customer satisfaction.</li> </ul> <p><b>Recommendation B: Strategy cont.</b></p>	<p>Communications and Marketing Manager</p> <p>Tenant Involvement Coordinator</p>	<p>Provide information detailing how the Council will communicate, engage, and consult with tenants.</p> <p>Ensure all staff across the Housing Services are familiar with and refer to the tenant communication and engagement bullet points.</p> <p>Develop a forward communication plan to be regularly reviewed by the proposed Tenant Communications Group and Housing Involvement Panel.</p>	<p>December 2022</p> <p>June-December 2023</p> <p>June 2023</p>	<p>The Tenant Engagement Framework provides details of how the Council will communicate, engage, and consult with tenants.</p> <p>A Customer Access Strategy and Digital Strategy are in place which set out how customers can access council services and what information is available to customers in a digital format.</p> <p>Consultation and Engagement Framework sets out guidelines for Council staff to follow when undertaking any type of public consultation and engagement activity.</p> <p>A Housing training programme is being developed for roll out from June 2023.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation C: Complaints and</b></p>	<p>Customer</p>	<p>Provide a direct link from</p>	<p>March 2023</p>	<p>The current web page can be</p>

## Appendix 2 - Tenant Scrutiny Review- Improving Communication with Tenants

<p><b>Compliments web pages</b></p> <p>Provide a link tile on the web page to allow people to find information on how to make a complaint/ comment or pay a compliment.</p> <p>Include reassurance on the linked page that it is useful to receive feedback and that there will not be repercussions from making a complaint.</p> <p><u>Anticipated Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased feedback from customers to improve and shape services to meet customer needs.</li> <li>• Improved communication with tenants.</li> <li>• Improved website.</li> </ul>	<p>Services Manager</p> <p>Complaints Manager</p>	<p>the housing webpage to the Complaints contact us page.</p> <p>The following sentence is to be added to the complaint webpage ‘please be assured that making a formal complaint will not affect the services you are entitled to, that are the subject of your complaint’.</p>	<p>March 2023</p>	<p>navigated by selecting ‘contact us’ at the bottom of the webpage which then provides a list of contact options including ‘make a complaint, comment or suggestion’</p> <p>A housing specific contact tile on the housing web page has been developed which links directly to the contact us page.</p> <p><a href="#">Complain about Council Services – Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council</a></p> <p>Reassurance about making a complaint is included on complaint acknowledgement letters and the web page.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation D: Website</b></p> <p>Consider the accessibility of the website by having links at the top of the home page to allow people to adjust the settings to their needs (perhaps similar to Berneslai and Wolverhampton).</p> <p>Check and change text on the website that uses acronyms or jargon</p> <p><u>Anticipated Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved communication with tenants.</li> <li>• Improved website.</li> <li>• Website is more accessible for</li> </ul>	<p>Head of Customer Services</p> <p>Housing Heads of Service</p> <p>Communications and Marketing Manager</p>	<p>Review the content of the housing webpages with the Tenant Communications Group, to ensure language is clear and understandable including removing any acronyms.</p>	<p>September 2023</p>	<p>The bar at the bottom of the webpage has an accessibility link. The accessibility statement advises customers of what they can expect on the website, how they can make use of supportive technology to improve their own experience, and signpost people to other support formats if needed.</p> <p>This includes an option to change colours, language translation, zoom in to 300%, navigate using a keyboard or speech recognition software and listen using a screen reader.</p>

## Appendix 2 - Tenant Scrutiny Review- Improving Communication with Tenants

<p>customers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer easy read and input.</li> <li>• Digitalisation of services</li> </ul>				<p>Before information is published online it goes through a number of accessibility checks and is assessed against our agreed website style and standards.</p> <p>The Tenant Engagement Team have reviewed their web pages in collaboration with tenants. Housing Web pages will follow.</p> <p>15125 customers are signed up to housing online to self-serve.</p> <p>Tenant communications group regularly reviewing the website.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation E: Newsletter accessibility</b></p> <p>Improve the accessibility of the newsletter (Home Matters) for all customers by offering the newsletter in other formats e.g. easy read, other languages.</p> <p><u>Anticipated Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved accessibility</li> <li>• Ensuring communications available to all tenants</li> </ul>	<p>Tenant Involvement Coordinator</p> <p>Communications and Marketing Manager</p>	<p>Establish a Tenant Communications Group.</p> <p>Housing Senior Management Team and Communications to review the content and purpose of the Home Matters magazine.</p> <p>Review the existing Home Matters with the Tenant Communications Group.</p> <p>Agree a programme of work with the Group, to enable the Group to shape and influence content in future editions.</p>	<p>June 2023</p> <p>February 2023</p> <p>July 2023</p> <p>July 2023</p>	<p>Meeting with Communications and Housing Senior Management Team on 10<sup>th</sup> February for an initial discussion and to agree a review of the content for the magazine.</p> <p>The written content of the magazine can be extracted in Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) format for publishing on the website. The website then enables translation into other languages and formats through the accessibility function on the website.</p>

## Appendix 2 - Tenant Scrutiny Review- Improving Communication with Tenants

		Ensure that the Home Matters magazine is available in other formats including other languages, large font, speech recognition etc.	July 2023	Screen team met to review the last edition of home matters, made a number of suggestions for improvements, which were implemented. Improved version to be posted shortly.
<p><b>Recommendation F: Telephone calls</b></p> <p>Review the new telephone system and make sure that the target of six minutes to speak to a real person is being met. Ensure that robust measurement is in place to monitor this target and respond to shortfalls going forward.</p> <p><u>Anticipated Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved customer satisfaction</li> <li>Improved access to services.</li> <li>Digitalisation of services</li> <li>Efficiencies and use of resources.</li> </ul>	Customer Services Manager	Review the telephone system and response times.	March 2024	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Reporting on that measure to the council and the chief exec each quarter.</li> <li>Performance will be published on website, but not sure when</li> <li>Performing around 3 mins at moment, targets may change</li> <li>Chief exec runs customer experience board - ensures we're delivering consistently high quality services</li> </ul>
	Customer Services Manager	Promote and embed customer service standards.	March 2024	Customer service standards have been rolled out and lots of work done to embed including training sessions for staff, an Intranet page, requirements for Team Leaders to make this an agenda item in meetings.

## Appendix 2 - Tenant Scrutiny Review- Improving Communication with Tenants

	Customer Services Manager	Promote self-serve capabilities through Housing Online, to provide choice of service access routes.	September 2023	Digital inclusion officers have been recruited to carry out group workshops for tenants who want to understand how to get online (part of this will involve promoting council self-serve options), not just reporting repairs etc but to navigate their way around a device. Should a team of Digital Volunteer Champions be created, the team will offer training to the champions so that they can provide sustainable support across the borough. The champions will promote the council on-line services.
	Customer Services Manager	Provide periodic performance data to the Housing Involvement Panel	June 2023	HIP review underway including collaborative agenda planning. Customer Services happy to come along and present whenever needed
<p><b>Recommendation G: Complaints and Compliments</b></p> <p>Consider running an 'It's OK to complain' campaign to encourage more feedback from tenants</p> <p><u>Anticipated Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customers know when to use the complaints procedure and the benefits for doing so.</li> <li>• Improved services shaped to meet</li> </ul>	Complaints Manager	Provide a direct link from the housing webpage to the Complaints page.	May 2024	<p>Information provided in all editions of Home Matters about how to complain / pay a compliment.</p> <p>We'll also do an article for the May Home Matters edition, aimed at helping tenants to speak out if they have worries and helping them to understand who it is best to speak to with certain issues.</p>

## Appendix 2 - Tenant Scrutiny Review- Improving Communication with Tenants

<p>customer needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved customer experience and journey</li> </ul>				<p>The article will make it clear that a formal complaint is an option, and is fine to complain, but that there are other steps that can be taken first, which are better for everyone.</p> <p>The complaints team are producing a new web page for Housing complaints too, which achieve the action around the complaints tile. The page will be completed by May</p>
<p><b>Recommendation H: Newsletter circulation</b></p> <p>Improve the publicity and access to the ward e-newsletters.</p> <p>Conduct a consultation exercise to find out if tenants still like to receive their newsletter (Home Matters) by post or if they would prefer it by email.</p> <p>Possibly design a hybrid model to meet customer needs</p> <p><u>Anticipated Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Efficient model &amp; Distribution plan developed based on results of consultation.</li> </ul>	<p>Tenant Involvement Coordinator</p> <p>Communications and Marketing Manager</p> <p>Senior Communications Officer</p>	<p>Review the combination between the Tenant Involvement webpages and Ward e-newsletters.</p> <p>Review tenant communications requirements and ensure that information is being sent to tenants in a format that they require.</p>	<p>June 2023</p> <p>July 2023</p>	<p>Ward e-newsletter publicised via social media and sign up to the council website.</p> <p>Link to ward e-newsletters added to the tenant engagement web page</p> <p>Housing service committed to making home matters more accessible and Screen Team will be involved in helping with this.</p> <p>No set commitment for the consultation exercise, this will need agreement from a senior level and will involve conversations around resource and budgets before anything is agreed.</p>
<p><b>Recommendation I: Staff training</b></p>	<p>Learning and Development</p>	<p>Training course on customer service to be</p>	<p>June 2023</p>	<p>The Learning and Development</p>

## Appendix 2 - Tenant Scrutiny Review- Improving Communication with Tenants

<p>Work closely with Rotherham Federation representatives to develop training courses on communications/ customer care (This could include videos of tenant feedback/ tenant representative attendance/ listening to customer call recordings)</p> <p>Improve the handling of bereavement conversations by incorporating into training courses/ providing staff guidance.</p> <p><u>Anticipated Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staff are skilled in holding conversations where customers are experiencing grief and loss.</li> <li>• Reduction in related complaints</li> <li>• Enhanced customer service and understanding of customer needs</li> </ul>	<p>Manager</p> <p>Tenant Involvement Coordinator</p> <p>Rotherfed</p>	<p>developed which includes case studies/sound clips from tenants.</p> <p>Comprehensive housing training programme to be delivered which includes customer service and bereavement conversations.</p> <p>The following sentence is to be added to the complaint webpage 'please be assured that making a formal complaint will not affect the services you are entitled to, that are the subject of your complaint'.</p>	<p>June 2023- March 2024</p>	<p>Officer has produced train the trainer training which has been signed off by Housing Managers, it's currently with customer services who are doing some work to ensure the training is in line with new consumer stds. The training will then be tolled out,</p> <p>Housing Services have carried out a full-scale Learning Needs Analysis Activity leading to the production of a training plan. Bereavement support is embedded within this plan.</p>
<p><b>Tenant Communications Working Group</b></p> <p>Once the website development has commenced and customer advice/ testing is required, it may be useful to set up a temporary working group involving officers and tenant representatives.</p> <p><u>Anticipated Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenants voice in communications</li> <li>• Communications shaped to meet customer needs</li> <li>• Enhanced customer services</li> </ul>	<p>Tenant Involvement Coordinator</p> <p>Rotherfed</p>	<p>Establish a Terms of Reference detailing the purpose of the group and format of the meetings.</p> <p>Stimulate interest from tenant representatives.</p> <p>Establish a Tenants Communications Group.</p>	<p>April 2023</p> <p>April 2023</p> <p>June 2023</p>	<p>Screen Team in place and going well.</p> <p>Customer services team previously worked with around 8 tenants to test parts of the portal.</p>

## Appendix 2 - Tenant Scrutiny Review- Improving Communication with Tenants

<p><b>Tenants Home Matters Editorial board</b></p> <p>Consider resurrecting the Home Matters Editorial Board and looking to increase publication of tenants' voice/stories.</p> <p><u>Anticipated Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenants voice in communications</li> <li>• Communications shaped to meet customer needs</li> <li>• Enhanced customer services</li> </ul>	<p>Tenant Involvement Coordinator</p> <p>Rotherfed</p>	<p>Home Matters Editorial Board to be embedded within the Tenant Communications Working Group.</p> <p>Review the content of the Home Matters magazine to include more tenants case studies/soundbites.</p>	<p>June 2023</p> <p>July 2023</p>	<p>Screen Team in place and going well. Reviewing Home Matters is built into their forward plan.</p>
<p><b>Home Matters look</b></p> <p>Consider making the front page less cluttered.</p> <p><u>Anticipated Outcomes:</u></p> <p>Improved home matters magazine to meet customer needs</p>	<p>Communications and Marketing Manager</p>	<p>Review design of the Home Matters magazine.</p>	<p>July 2023</p>	<p>Screen Team helped to design most recent edition and Marketing are committed to working with the group to make further improvements.</p>
<p><b>Surveys</b></p> <p>Consider the use of more online and telephone surveys to consult and communicate with tenants.</p> <p><u>Anticipated Outcomes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased engagement and customer feedback</li> <li>• Services shaped to meet customer needs</li> <li>• Improved customer journey and satisfaction</li> <li>• Tenants voice representative of borough</li> </ul>	<p>Tenant Involvement Coordinator</p>	<p>Implement Tenant Engagement Framework action plan.</p> <p>Tender Tenant Perception Survey</p> <p>Undertake Tenant Perception Survey.</p>	<p>November 2022- May 2024</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>July 2023</p>	<p>As part of the new Tenant Engagement Framework, an Online Survey tool has been developed for tenants who cannot attend meetings to feedback on services and polices.</p> <p>For the new Tenants Perception Survey, we are using telephone and online options for the survey.</p>

## Appendix 2 - Tenant Scrutiny Review- Improving Communication with Tenants

wide demographics • Meeting the requirements of the Social Housing White Paper.				
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