

# Customer Engagement Strategy

## 2023-2026

### Document control

<b>Strategy approval</b>	Customer Services Committee, 11 May 2023
<b>Replacing</b>	Customer Engagement Strategy 2020-2023
<b>Next review date</b>	March 2026
<b>Responsible Executive Director</b>	Executive Director – Customer Insight
<b>Author</b>	Neighbourhood Planning and Community Investment Manager
<b>Equality analysis completed</b>	March 2023
<b>Circulation</b>	Intranet; Livv Housing Group website
<b>Version</b>	2

<b>Version</b>	<b>Date of review</b>	<b>Details of review</b>
1	May 2023	Three year strategy to outline our approach to Customer Engagement from 2023 – 2026.
2	May 2024	Sections 4 and 10 updated to reference Building Safety Act requirements to produce a stand-alone Building Safety resident engagement strategy

## 1. **Executive Summary**

To be a great landlord, we need to engage well with our customers, listen to them with sincerity and respect and use their feedback to shape what we do in the communities where we work. Having a meaningful two-way dialogue with the people who live in our homes today, as well as hearing from those that will live in our homes in the future is vital in ensuring that Livv is delivering the right services in the right place at the right time.

Engaging with our customers is a regulatory requirement, but here at Livv it is a central pillar for how we shape our service priorities and how we determine the impact they are having.

Engagement will take many forms and be delivered in ways that ensures as many customers as possible can talk to us. We are seeing an increasingly diverse population moving into the places where we work, and the crucial factor is that what we do to gather feedback and insight is tailored appropriately. We need to ensure that we meet the needs of all customers; some will want to proactively engage with our policies and plans for the future. Others will simply want to know that we are thinking of them when we implement change and that we keep them informed throughout. This strategy sets out the approach to be taken from April 2023.

## 2. **Introduction**

The relationship with our customers is often long-term and one that is enhanced by us building ongoing engagement and advocacy with both the people who live in our homes and the communities that we serve.

The Board is fully committed to delivering services shaped with and for our customers, by making ongoing engagement and continuous improvement part of the way we do things. The past three years has seen us embed customer engagement across our business. Our teams and service leads are used to considering 'what does this mean for our customers' at the point at which we start thinking our policy position or where we start to consider doing something different. This means they can influence early and that their feedback and ideas are considered early. We have modernised our approach, with robust digital mechanisms and have re-energised our assurance and customer scrutiny functions to ensure representation of our communities. We have provided a range of opportunities for involvement and continue to test different approaches, learning more about what works well or not so well.

There will always be the opportunity to do more, particularly as the external environment changes so rapidly and our need to be proactive in delivering services that our customers need evolves. This strategy sets out our approach and details how the organisation will continue to meet and go beyond regulatory and legislative requirements and ensure there is a clear line of sight from what our customers tell us through to the strategic decisions that the Board makes about the future. In writing this strategy, we are building on existing, solid foundations of customer engagement with a clear commitment to

the inclusion of more people across all of our customer personas. This will ensure that what we hear is representative of and sensitive to the needs of the majority.

### **3. Strategy Vision**

Our Corporate Plan details how we will continue to review and improve our approach to customer engagement and scrutiny to make sure we achieve the right impact. This includes listening to our customer's views, encouraging challenge, and acting on feedback. Ensuring that we deliver services shaped with and for our customers, through making ongoing engagement part of our organisational DNA is a key part of our corporate vision.

By being 'Positively Open' we seek and welcome feedback to help us provide quality homes that are safe and be part of shaping communities that are great places to live. In 'Forging the Right Way' we will be creative to deliver services and approaches that others can follow.

Customer engagement will feed our continuous improvement ethos that is part of the way we do things at Livv. It provides us with the feedback and understanding of how we can be better, and this insight will influence and shape strategic and operational plans across the organisation.

### **4. National Agenda**

#### **The Regulatory Landscape**

The Regulator of Social Housing (ROSH) sets out the expectation of landlords in meeting the requirements of the Regulatory Framework. The Regulatory Framework comprises of two elements: the Economic Standards and Consumer Standards. The Regulator will soon be directed by government and given new powers to proactively regulate the Consumer Standards, where today their remit is restricted to a reactive engagement when there is a risk of harm to customers.

Pending a formal Direction from government, the Regulator is already in the process of setting a direction of travel which will see revisions to the Consumer Standards. These revisions will align with and bring to life the recommendations from the Social Housing White Paper, 'The Charter for Social Housing Residents', which seeks to address the failings seen in the Grenfell tragedy. The revised Standards will include new requirements for how landlords involve and engage customers in the development and assessment of the services they provide and how Boards use feedback from customers to inform their strategic decision making.

From April 2023, housing providers will collect data on a new set of Tenant Satisfaction Measures that will also be overseen by the Regulator. The measures are designed to give visibility to customers about how well we are performing. Importantly, Tenant Satisfaction Measure data will provide us with

insight that we can use to understand our customers and target improvements across all of our services.

### **Building Safety Act and Fire Safety Act**

We have aligned our engagement objectives to ensure we maintain compliance with the Group's statutory duties as set out in the Building Safety Act 2022. As required, a separate Building Safety resident engagement strategy for each high-rise building will be produced with the aim of empowering customers to play an effective role in ensuring their building is safe. This will outline how we will provide information about decisions, what decision we will engage customer about, how we will listen, learn and involve customers in decision making, and how we will monitor and measure the success of our engagement.

We will ensure effective assessment and management of building safety including provision of relevant information to customers. Additionally, we will ensure that customers are able to escalate complaints to the Building Safety Regulator should they feel we have not resolved their concerns.

We will also provide specific fire safety information to customers on an ongoing basis in-line with requirements set within the Fire Safety Act 2021.

## **5. Local Context**

Our ambition is to ensure that as many customers as want to can join the conversation. We are clear that we will need to consider local context, including the challenges and opportunities detailed below.

### **Geography & Social Mobility**

Knowsley is divided into four township areas, each with their own identify. There is no Borough centre and local connectivity between township areas is poor. Our approach to engagement considers these constraints to ensure representation across different communities. Our approach will be to get out into our communities and engage where our customers live. We are also growing outside of Knowsley, primarily into neighbouring Boroughs. We will need to extend our engagement practice to ensure those customers are provided with the same range of opportunities available to those in Knowsley.

### **Talking about Deprivation**

Knowsley and surrounding areas of the Liverpool City Region have some of the worst metrics, performing poorly in terms of poverty, health inequalities, low wage economy and neighbourhood safety. To provide the best services we can we need to explore these issues, learn about personal experiences, encouraging customers to speak out. To do this we will need to treat all customers with respect, actively tackle stigma and work with a range of people with different needs.

### **Digital Exclusion**

The 2022 Lloyds Bank Consumer Digital Index paints a picture of digital inclusion across the UK. Though digitalisation has accelerated rapidly, continued access, digital confidence and capability cannot be taken for granted.

By May 2022 c.35% of people shared that rising cost of living was affecting their ability to go online and 27% of people still had low digital capability.

Our use of digital engagement mechanisms will be by design, not by default. We will continue to develop our digital offer and build our customers' capacity to engage digitally whilst providing alternatives for those who do not use technology.

### **Diversity & Inclusion**

Our communities are becoming more diverse. Without making generalisations about individuals, we will need to focus on the experiences of different customers. We will need to tailor our structures and opportunities, removing barriers to involvement and creating positive opportunities for participation. We will be fluid, adaptable and willing to learn from individuals and support organisations.

### **Literacy**

In 2021 9.5% of people in Knowsley reported having no qualifications, compared to a national average of 6.6% (ONS Annual Population Survey 2021).

Our engagement methods will need to be clear, easy to understand, presented in a variety of formats and delivered in different and inclusive ways.

### **Our Homes**

We have 554 customers living in eight high rise residential buildings which will fall under the new requirements set within the Building Safety Act. We will be developing targeted building safety customer engagement plans for these blocks and have appointed a Building Safety Manager who leads this engagement.

### **Our Relationship Model**

We are visible and well-connected in our neighbourhoods. We have strong partnerships with local and trusted voluntary sector organisations, who are willing to support us in our engagement activity. In addition, our Community Investment programming provides further opportunities for us to engage broadly with customers.

## **6. Strategy Objectives**

The past three years have seen us embed a model where colleagues from across the organisation view early engagement with customers as a key part of their role. We will continue to drive this element of our culture forwards to ensure that 'what does this mean for our customers?' is the first question anyone asks.

We are committed to actively seeking the views and feedback from our customers, ensuring that customer voice is at the heart of our decision making and leads to positive improvements in the services we deliver.

The following principles will guide our approach to engagement:

- **Open and accessible** - we will ensure customers know how they can get involved, removing any barriers to engagement and providing opportunities for all customers to talk to us. Through the delivery of this strategy, we will increase the number of unique customers that are involved.
- **Fair and inclusive** – we will treat all customers with fairness and respect. We will draw on customer data and our Customer Persona segmentation model to tailor our engagement activities, ensuring they are inclusive and representative of our wider customer base.
- **Valued and influential** – we will ensure customer voice is valued and heard throughout the organisation, including at Board level, influencing both day-to-day activities and strategic decision making.
- **Accountable to our customers** – It's important that we understand how our customers feel about the changes we've made. Our feedback loop will provide us with validation that the changes we've made have made a real difference.

## 7. Strategic Approach

Over the past three years we have developed a well-structured and robust approach to engaging our customers and having a meaningful two-way dialogue that informs the services we provide and enables our Board to make strategic decisions and choices that make a real difference to the people who live in our homes. Much of what will come in the next three years is building on this and enhancing our approach to ensure that we cast our net widely and engage everyone who wants to be.

### 7.1 Our Customers Told Us

In developing this strategy, we have talked to our customers and have used the feedback to influence and shape our approach. They said:

- providing transactional feedback through our digital mechanisms was one of the best ways they could engage with us. They told us that this type of engagement was relevant, timely, convenient and for most accessible and easy to use.
- while they had real appetite to be engaged, their requirements and motivations change and are dependent on individual circumstances or interests.
- for complex issues, in-depth discussion, and opportunities to influence and produce solutions are needed.
- being together with other customers was really valuable, sharing different opinions and learning from others.

- some customers wanted much more information about how their participation and feedback had been utilised. Other told us that they simply wanted to tell us if something was wrong and trust that we would fix it.

The themes that underpin this strategy outline how we will:

- **Develop our culture of engagement**, ensuring everyone in our organisation understands engagement, the benefits it will bring and the role they can play in making it work.
- Actively evidence the **diversity of our customer voice and influence** in service improvement, policy and strategy review and key decision making.
- Extend our **communication** with customers and colleagues so they know about opportunities for engagement and how we have used engagement to shape our activity. Create long term advocacy with our customers.
- **Support and train** our customers so they can engage well and wholeheartedly and take part in scrutiny.
- **Increase the number and representation of engaged customers** through delivery of a range of engagement opportunities and structures (the 'Livv Engagement House').

## 8. Our Engagement Approach - The Livv Engagement House

Delivery of the engagement activity focuses on six key elements working alongside each other to deliver engagement opportunities that provide the insight we need to inform, improve, and scrutinise our services. Together they form the 'Livv Engagement House'. This provides a framework for engagement that is flexible to meet need but enables customers to choose how best to talk to us. The 'House' is summarised in a diagram provided as Appendix One.

Understanding our customers' different worlds through segmentation and use of customers personas allows us to identify opportunities to tailor and target delivery of the 'Livv Engagement House'. We will also seek to better understand the diversity of our customers and their communities, so that we can make sure their diverse views are listened to and used to ensure equity in the delivery of our services. The success of all the above is predicated on accurate customer data and improving the quality of our data is a priority.

We will test and learn about what works well and build on this to enable us to hear more voices and ensure that those voices are representative of our customers.

### 8.1 Customer Scrutiny and Assurance

Customer-led scrutiny and assurance about the services we provide will be provided directly to the Board by the Quality and Improvement Panel (QulP). This panel is made up of customers that is representative of our customer base, including geography, customer personas and protected characteristics.

We will also aim to maintain an element of the membership made up of people who could be customers of the future.

The Panel's Terms of Reference sit as part of the overall governance framework for the organisation. The term of office for all members will mirror that of Board members and will be upheld to ensure that we continually refresh the panel, its skills, and its representative nature.

The Panel will be supported to identify the focus of their reviews based on performance data and presenting risk. Reviews may compliment but will not duplicate internal audit by focussing on customer service and experience rather than adequacy and application of controls. The Panel will report the findings of their reviews either directly to Board or as delegated to one of the Committees.

Our responsibility to QulP will be to make sure they are not duplicating other pillars of the Livv Engagement House. The onus will be on us to bring forward good quality, up-to-date data, information and insight that provides transparency and enables QulP to reach a position of understanding.

## **8.2 Customer Feedback (including measurement)**

Capturing customer feedback and determining levels of advocacy for the organisation and the services we provide is a critical enabler for our Customer Engagement approach.

We will continue to measure perceptions of the quality of our services at a transactional level using our (new for 2023) digital feedback mechanism. We will use complaints to learn where we went wrong and embed a formal 'learning loop' to rectify service failures, determine root cause and put in place sustainable change to avoid the same failure happening again. We will gather data on customers perceptions of our services using the new Tenant Satisfaction Measurement framework, where we will take an initial baseline and use year 1 (2023-24) to begin building service improvements plans a year before we are required to formally report to the Regulator. We will establish a qualitative feedback mechanism that allows us to test these improvements through the year and track this through to the data.

## **8.3 Customer Involvement**

Customers have told us that when the issues we want to address or the services we want to improve are more complex, they want quality conversations and to provide a greater depth of insight and feedback. How we have these conversations is our key challenge. We will provide different ways for customers to be involved that match their preferences and needs and will be guided on this using the customer personas. This range of channels will include the existing customer Voice Panel and focus groups. We will ensure there is a 'richness of conversation' in our face-to-face involvement opportunities, that provide opportunity for customers to shape services through co-design or co-production.



## **8.4 Customer Consultation**

We are currently required through the existing Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard to formally consult with our affected customers in three main areas:

- Scope of local offers for service delivery
- A significant change in management arrangements
- At least every three years on the governance and scrutiny of housing management service.

The Building Safety Act also requires that we consult with customers in high rise buildings on the production and periodic review of a 'residents engagement strategy' for each building, which will promote their participation in making building safety decisions. Further details of the consultation requirement and frequency will set out in forthcoming secondary legislation and/or guidance, expected in Summer 2023.

## **8.5 Customer Communication**

We are transparent with our customers in respect of how we are performing, how we are run and how we are working to improve as an organisation.

Our performance reports detailing progress against the Key Performance Indicators will continue to be published quarterly. The measures that are reported against will continue to be determined by our customers to ensure they are relevant and based on what they want to know. This will sit alongside sharing the results of our Customer Census and follow on TSM measurement.

An Annual Report to customers will continue to be published in line with regulatory requirements by 30 September each year. The Report will continue to share our good news, with a view to building confidence in our ability to deliver and be transparent about where we know additional improvement is required. We will also outline how we have used customer feedback and engagement to improve our services. We will build on our existing approach to involving customers in the production of the Report and ensure that customers are part of the telling the story. We will also continue to provide the Report through a range of channels, including digital and interactive communication.

## **8.6 Customer-led Activity**

With the exception of the work of the Customer Scrutiny Panel, QuIP, our 'Engagement House' activity primarily focuses on Livv led or initiated opportunities for engagement. It is important that we recognise and welcome other ways that our customers may wish to participate and represent themselves. Customers may also want to shape the agenda, rather than just respond to it.

By its very nature, the mechanisms for customer-led engagement activity cannot be fully identified. However, they could include 'Tenants and Residents'

groups or customers organising themselves using a variety of mainstream digital channels, (outside of those provided for them).

The sixth pillar of the Livv Engagement House provides space for us to actively seek out, engage with and support customer-led activity ensuring we are positively open outside of the structures that we have created.

## 9. **Monitoring Success**

This Strategy covers a three-year period from 2023-2026.

Our engagement plans and site-specific building safety plans will be developed annually and remain live and are subject to formal annual review.

We will evaluate our engagement activities to allow us to develop a better understanding of the impact of different engagement mechanisms. We will identify the number of customers involved and how representative they are of our customer base and assess what changed or improved through our customer engagement. We will also identify any process benefits that may accrue to both customers and the organisation through our engagement work.

Customer satisfaction with our engagement practice will be measured through the results of our Customer Census Survey (2023) and Tenant Satisfaction Measures (2023 onwards).

Total number of customers engaged	Number of unique customers
Representation of customers engaged	Number of unique customers as a % of customer base
Customer engaged through each pillar of the 'Livv Engagement House'	Number of unique customers
Customer representation through each pillar of the 'Livv Engagement House'	% against customer base
Satisfaction that Livv Housing Group listens to customer views and acts upon them	Customer Census and TSM Tp06
Assessment of results and improvements made from engagement	Reported through the live Customer Engagement Plan

## 10. **Roles and Responsibilities**

Under the strategy a broad range of individuals, teams and groups will have a role to play and some form of responsibility. Individual responsibilities are detailed in the table below.

Customer Services Committee	Responsibility for final sign off
Executive Director's Team (EDT)	Review prior to approval from Customer Services Committee
Executive Director – Customer Insight	Leadership and accountability for customer engagement activity
Head of Compliance	Accountable Person in Relation to Building Safety Act
Neighbourhood Planning and Community Investment Manager	Strategically oversee the customer engagement approach
Customer and Community Engagement Officer	Co-ordinating the customer engagement process across the organisation.  Monitoring customer engagement across the organisation.  Arranging engagement activities  Supporting the Quality Improvement Panel
Operational Performance and Service Improvement Manager	Manage customer feedback/measurement tools.
Individual teams	Identify and scope requirements for customer engagement activities relevant to their services, policies, or processes. Ensure full involvement in customer engagement activity
Building Safety Manager	Livv's 'authorised single point of contact'. Build and promote openness, trust and collaboration with customers that is fundamental to keeping residential building safe.  Ensure duties under the Building Safety Act and Fire Safety Act are fulfilled, including delivery of the building safety resident engagement strategies.
<b>Customer Engagement is a state of mind not a function. It sits with everyone where a change will impact our customers.</b>	

## 11. Risk

The key risk impact area that this report relates to is Legal and Regulatory. The Group Strategic Risk Register identifies, 'failure to evolve service delivery in line with changing customer expectations, societal expectations, and developments in Regulatory Standards', (risk SR 17) and 'failure to maintain strategic performance in alignment with relevant law, regulation and organisational obligations including maintaining relevant strategic stakeholder relationships', (risk SR 16). Customer Engagement helps to mitigate these risks and supports the annual self-assessment of Consumer Standards, which are key control measures.

The Regulator of Social Housing is still to outline how it will put in place the changes to consumer regulation described in the Social Housing White Paper, however, there is a clear direction that landlords will be expected to build a meaningful relationship with customers, to understand their diverse needs, the outcomes of which can be clearly evidenced in service improvement. The risk of not delivering this would therefore be a direct impact on our compliance with the consumer standards.

Over and above the regulatory requirements Livv believes that this is the right thing to do to ensure that we are regarded as delivering services that benchmark with the best service providers in and out of sector. We see this as an opportunity to deliver the right things at the right time to the right people informed by the receivers of our services.

## 12. **VFM**

Economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in the context of this strategy are defined and delivered as follows:

### **Economy: minimising the cost of resources used while having regard to quality**

Engaging customers allows us to improve our services and customer experience. In turn, this reduces unnecessary customer contact, back-office processing, complaints, and remediation costs all of which improve value for money.

### **Efficiency: the relationship between the output from goods and services and the resources to produce them**

By improving the customer journey, reducing unnecessary touchpoints, and migrating to digital, where possible, we become more efficient. Less reliance on manual process improves our efficiency as there is less margin for human error.

### **Effectiveness: the extent to which objectives are achieved and the relationship between intended and actual impacts**

A comprehensive dashboard of metrics is review quarterly by our Customer Service Committee, covering performance against all stated objectives within this Strategy.

## 13. **Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion**

The Strategy is intended to be diverse in its reach and inclusive its approach. Our plans are focused around capturing the views of a strong representative sample of our customers that live in our homes and communities. We are making talking to us and engaging with us as easy as we can – we will go to our customers, rather than bring them to us. We will provide training and development to enable them to engage positively. We will use day to day

interactions as an opportunity for feedback and service improvement alongside our planned programme of activity.

We will seek ways to establish who we are and who we are not engaging with, so that we can further tailor our approach to meet any specific needs. This will focus on demographics, protected characteristics, geographies and ensuring a representative sample across our housing stock types.

In order to comply with the Equality Act 2010, an equality analysis (EA) was completed as part of the strategy review.

**Appendix One – Livv Engagement House**



<b>Livv Housing Group Board</b>						
<b>Pillar</b>	<b>Quality and Improvement Panel</b>	<b>Customer Feedback</b>	<b>Customer Involvement</b>	<b>Customer Consultation</b>	<b>Customer Communication</b>	<b>Customer Organised</b>
<b>Why?</b>	Formal Scrutiny and Assurance	Determining levels of advocacy and perceptions of quality of service and customer experience	Developing improvements to strategy, policy and services	Formal and statutory consultation	Reporting performance information to customers in a transparent manner	Recognition of other ways customers may wish to represent themselves
	Testing and bringing forward evidence for the consumer standards	Testing and bringing forward evidence for the consumer standards	Testing and bringing forward evidence for the consumer standards	Testing and bringing forward evidence for the consumer standards	Testing and bringing forward evidence for the consumer standards	Testing and bringing forward evidence for the consumer standards
<b>How?</b>	Performance and service in-depth reviews	Transactional surveys Complaint data Customer Census/ Tenant Satisfaction Measures	Multi-channelled customer engagement that encourages maximum involvement and representation. Examples include; Customer Voice Panel Focus groups and co-creation activity	Multi-channelled customer engagement that encourages maximum involvement and representation.	Publication of our annual report Publication of performance data 'You Said We Did' and 'You Said We Are Doing'	Engagement with customer-led methods of engagement such as local residents groups or social media mechanisms
<b>Who</b>	QiIP members	All customers	All customers	Affected customers	All customers	All customers