

Customer Engagement Policy

Policy ref:

Policy author /holder Director of Neighbourhoods

Date approved: 10 August 2023

Approved by: LiveWest Board

Effective date: August 2023

Review date: August 2026

1 Purpose and anticipated outcomes

- 1.1 The aim of this policy is to set out how we will engage with our customers to co-create the delivery of our services, scrutinise our performance and make recommendations on how performance might be improved.
- 1.2 LiveWest believes that to be a great landlord, we must actively engage with and listen to our customers. We believe that there are real benefits to working with our customers and involving them in shaping policy, defining the services we deliver and setting service standards.
- 1.3 We believe that effective customer engagement increases our accountability to both customers and the communities in which we work and can help us improve services.
- 1.4 Involving customers helps us to meet the commitments we have signed up to in the Together with Tenants charter and the expectations of Regulation including the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard.
- 1.5 Our policy sets out how LiveWest customers will be provided with a variety of opportunities to engage with us and play a constructive role in evaluating and improving our services in a way that suits them.

2 Scope and definitions

2.1 This policy applies to all customers and household members who live in a LiveWest home and receive a service from us, including our shared owners and leasehold customers.

2.2 Definitions

- **Customer Engagement:** Customer Engagement at LiveWest is about involving, listening, and responding to our customers.
- **Customer:** A collective name for anyone living in a home owned fully or in part by LiveWest and receiving a service from us.
- **Community:** A collective of households where LiveWest own homes and that self-define themselves in terms of geography and identity.

3 Policy statement

3.1 Through customer engagement we will enable customers to evaluate LiveWest's performance and share their experiences of our services to influence future policies, service standards and organisational delivery. To enable our customers to influence LiveWest priorities and how money is spent.

3.2 Our customer engagement will be based on the following policy principles:

We will

- Ensure customer engagement is a priority for us in embedding a culture of continuous improvement.
- Ensure all staff understand the benefits of customer engagement and are supported to deliver it.
- Provide a variety of ways to engage with us and support customers to do so
- Actively promote the opportunities for engagement at LiveWest through our customer and external communications.
- Undertake research to understand our customers priorities and how to make our engagement offer accessible for all, so that we can remove any barriers to engagement.
- Set and work towards engagement targets so that those who engage with us are fully representative of the demographics of all LiveWest customers.
- Listen to what customers tell us and show them how we have listened through feedback.
- Ensure that we give our customers the ability to drive and influence our strategies and priorities.
- Enable our customers to drive changes that matter to them.

- Recognise and promote the difference customer engagement has made in co-designing and shaping our services.
- Comply with the law and relevant guidance and keep up to date with new regulatory requirements.
- Provide training and development opportunities for customers so that they can effectively hold us to account including digital skills training.
- Work with sector professionals to access best practice skills and improve our knowledge on engagement.
- Use customer feedback to inform regular reviews of our engagement / involvement activity and assess whether this enables customers to have an effective voice.

3.3 We will offer a menu of engagement activities which will include:

- Surveys, consultation events, workshops, focus, and task and finish groups.
- Social media engagement including through our Your Views Facebook Group.
- Support to take part in local and national events and conversations including tenant conferences and networking events.
- Involvement at a local level through events arranged by our Community Connectors, community organisations, local resident groups and other key stakeholders including local authorities, police, and health services.
- Membership of our formal customer groups including InFocus Customer Scrutiny Group, Customer Communications Group, Estate Services Champions, and the Shared Ownership Virtual Panel.

3.4 To ensure that our engagement is accessible we will continue to enhance our digital offer which will include visual, audio, and written platforms and the use of hybrid meetings allowing customers to attend both in person and via video conferencing.

4 Recognition and Reward

4.1 At LiveWest, we recognise the exceptional contribution made by our customer groups and value their time commitment, knowledge, and experience.

4.2 We want to ensure that the costs of customers volunteering are not a barrier to engagement and do not leave them financially out of pocket.

4.3 We will recognise and thank customers for their contributions through our annual reports and customer newsletters and offer the opportunity for all of those who have supported us during the year to come together to celebrate our achievements.

4.4 We will provide out of pocket expenses to any customers who undertake engagement activity this includes reimbursement for travel, accommodation, subsistence, digital access, and care costs etc.

- 4.5 We will make IT equipment (tablets, laptops) available to those who are involved in our formal customer groups and support engagement through an annual allowance.
- 4.6 We will also consider reward vouchers for other engagement activities on a case-by-case basis.

5 Service standards, monitoring, and review

- 5.1 Our Customer Engagement principles have been created in partnership with our customers. These principles set out our approach to customer engagement and how we will continue to develop our service via seeking out best practice.
- 5.2 Quarterly updates from the InFocus Customer Scrutiny Group on customer engagement will be provided to the Customer Service Committee along with regular updates to the LiveWest Board.
- 5.3 We will report annually to the Customer Services Committee on the extent and effectiveness of our customer engagement activity.
- 5.4 This policy will be made widely available to customers and stakeholders via an appropriate range of online and printed communication platforms.
- 5.5 This policy will be reviewed every three years or earlier in line with any legislative, regulatory, or good practice changes.

6 Legal considerations

- 6.1 The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard issued by the Regulator of Social Housing Standard sets out required outcomes and specific expectations around the delivery of customer engagement and involvement. Customer Engagement within LiveWest seeks to achieve compliance with this standard.
- 6.2 Customer Engagement is a commitment made under the National Housing Federations Together with Tenants Charter of which LiveWest was an early adopter and is an official ambassador.

7 Linked / associated policies and other references

7.1 Below is a list of linked or associated LiveWest policies and procedures and to which our employees, contractors and other individuals are required to comply, as appropriate:

- Customer Service Strategy
- Customer Engagement Commitments
- Community Investment Commitments
- Compliments, Complaints and Feedback Policy
- Customer Expenses Guidance for customers
- Customer Engagement Code of Conduct
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Strategy
- Building Safety Act 2022
- Building Safety Resident Engagement Strategy
- Formal customer groups Terms of Reference