

Customer Engagement Strategy 2021-24



Pivotal

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1.0 Introduction

Customer engagement provides the opportunity for Pivotal Housing and our customers to share information, ideas and decision making to influence the design and delivery of our services.

We aim to provide excellent services through collaboration; inviting scrutiny and creating solutions.

The recent Charter for Social Housing Residents (Social Housing White Paper) sets out clear expectations of Housing Associations in relation to engaging with, and providing transparent information for, customers. Our Customer Engagement Strategy sets out how we intend to work with you to shape our services for the better.

This strategy is our commitment to listening to what's important to you, and an invitation to get involved in helping us to become an excellent landlord. The strategy outlines our approach to customer engagement with the aim of:

- Ensuring that Pivotal remains accountable to you, and that your voice is heard.



- Adopting the principles of the Together with Tenants framework, and the 6 commitments of the Charter (further information below).
- Involving you with our services in the way that you want to be involved.
- Building a strong landlord / customer relationship.
- Enabling a diverse and representative range of customers to engage with us which reflect customers preferences and interests.
- Ensuring that customer engagement is a driver for continuous improvement and service development across Pivotal.
- Providing a wide range of engagement opportunities which reflect your preferences, and interests.
- Ensuring that you are provided with information about our performance and have a variety of methods in which to feed back to us.
- Ensuring that we are more than just a landlord; that we engage appropriately to ensure that you are happy with your home and community.
- Ensuring that you receive feedback about the difference that you've helped to make.
- Ensuring that you are provided with any training, resources or support you need to help you to engage with us.



Our purpose is to do more good for more people and, with that in mind, we have developed this strategy in collaboration with our customers, partners and colleagues.



2.0 Background

Pivotal provides almost 500 homes with tailored levels of support to meet the needs of our diverse range of customers who live in the accommodation we offer across Dorset, Gloucester, Devon and Cornwall.

We understand that our customers come from a variety of backgrounds and experiences and will have differing levels of desire to engage with us.

For this reason we listen to you and seek to provide engagement opportunities according to what you tell us.

Our purpose is to do more good for more people and, with that in mind, we have developed this strategy in collaboration with our customers, partners and colleagues.

It is based on the experiences of those contributing to it and their voices underpin our objectives and how we plan to achieve them.

Our customers are at the centre of all that we do. We are a passionate, caring and creative organisation providing sustainable homes, specialised support and compassionate care. As such we undertake to deliver a positive customer experience on a day-to-day basis.

By providing you with engagement opportunities based on what you tell us and widely promoting these, you can decide the level of involvement you want with us in addition to the individual engagement we provide.

This strategy is aligned to Pivotal's Business Plan and is underpinned by a live action plan enabling us to monitor its progress.

3.0 Together with Tenants

Together with Tenants is an initiative led by the National Housing Federation, which promotes effective working between customers and landlords.

This strategy has been created with the commitments of the charter at its heart. Housing associations that adopt the Together with Tenants charter are making six commitments:

1. Relationships

Housing associations will treat all customers with respect in all of their interactions. Relationships between customers and housing associations will be based on openness, honesty and transparency.

2. Communication

Customers will receive clear, accessible and timely information from their housing association on the issues that matter to them, including important information about their homes and local community; how the organisation is working to address problems; how the organisation is run; and information about performance on key issues.



3. Voice and influence

Housing associations will seek and value the views of customers, and will use this information to inform decisions. Every individual customer will feel listened to by their housing association on the issues that matter to them and can speak without fear.

4. Accountability

Collectively, customers will work in partnership with their housing association to independently scrutinise and hold their housing association to account for the decisions that affect the quality of their homes and services.

5. Quality

Customers can expect their homes to be good quality, well maintained, safe and well managed.

6. When things go wrong

Customers will have simple and accessible routes for raising issues, making complaints and seeking redress. Customers will receive timely advice and support when things go wrong.

4.0 Objectives of this Strategy

At Pivotal, we know the value of engaging with our customers and the contribution that your insight and ideas can bring in terms of improving the services we provide.

This strategy builds on the engagement we already have with our customers, partners and colleagues.

We have formulated the following strategic objectives in respect of further developing engagement opportunities and offering you a range of choices in how you can work more closely with us.



1. Improve customer engagement to encourage people to work more closely with us to drive service improvement.

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Providing house meetings and ad-hoc customer group meetings offering opportunities for you to provide feedback on your experiences of Pivotal services; formulating action plans and monitoring progress to help to improve our services.
- Co-producing customer surveys, providing opportunities for you to express your views, including on how you would like to engage with us.
- Developing our online services; including website and social media to enable you to engage with us digitally.
- Inviting customers who express an interest in helping to shape Pivotal services to work with us to do so, supporting with any training needed to facilitate this.
- Increasing customer data; giving us a greater knowledge and understanding of our customers.
- Continuing to monitor best practice in engaging with customers, and to adapt our approach in accordingly.

2. Offer customers a wider range of choices and opportunities to engage with us.

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Listening to what you tell us in your responses to questionnaires and during feedback sessions, and using feedback and suggestions to co-develop projects that more precisely meet your needs.

- Encouraging and supporting you to initiate and lead focus groups when you wish to.
- Assisting you to access skills, education and vocational support or other learning opportunities you may want to explore.
- Rolling out a digital inclusion project across our schemes to ensure that everyone that wishes to is able to access online services.
- Setting up a social enterprise in collaboration with customers, providing opportunities for employment and training.

3. Improve trust and confidence, working in partnership with customers to co-design our services and scrutinise our performance.

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Adopting the principles of the Together with Tenants framework and the six commitments of the charter to enable you to hold us to account.
- Developing a customer scrutiny panel; providing opportunities for you to examine our services and assist in improving them.



- Asking you to test our services through mystery shopping exercises and to provide feedback on how we did and what we could improve.
- Publishing a wide range of information relating to service standards and customer engagement and involvement opportunities to demonstrate how we are fulfilling our commitments to you.

4. To uphold a culture where customer engagement is everyone's business; ensuring that all Pivotal colleagues understand the role they play in engaging customers and providing a positive customer experience.

WE WILL ACHIEVE THIS BY:

- Ensuring colleagues are aware of the menu of involvement and engagement options available, and that they are provided with support through the Customer Engagement team.
- Requiring our colleagues to work closely with customers, listen to their views and incorporate them into future plans.
- Ensuring that we optimise the use of the wide variety of talents, skills and interests of our colleagues, customers and partners to facilitate and enhance customer engagement.
- Ensuring that colleagues have the correct skills and training to provide a high level of expertise.
- Encouraging colleagues' involvement in engagement and/or fundraising activities e.g. garden makeovers, Christmas gift appeals.

5.0 Keeping you Safe

Making sure you are safe in your home is more important than anything else. When you tell us you're concerned about the safety of your home, we are committed to ensuring this is listened to and followed up.

We want you to be confident that your home meets the standard required to make it safe; and for you to understand what that means.

We will use various ways of engaging with you to make sure your safety is given the highest priority and that you have the information you need regarding building compliance and safety.

The new Building Safety and Fire Safety Bills set out in legislation that we, as a landlord, need to foster a strong relationship with you, on building and fire safety. This, alongside the government's housing white paper emphasises the importance of being clear about:

- providing you with the information you need regarding the fire and structural protections we have in place;
- the responsibilities of both landlord and customer when it comes to fire and building safety; and
- action to take in the event of a fire.





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6.0 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Pivotal is committed to promoting a culture of equality, diversity and inclusion in respect of providing our services and as an employer.

In alignment with our purpose, doing more good for more people, our mission to provide sustainable homes, specialised support and compassionate care, and our values as a passionate, caring and creative organisation we value difference, diversity and inclusion and recognise their inter-dependence.

7.0 Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

Pivotal's Directors are responsible for the implementation of this strategy and reporting on its progress to the Pivotal Housing Association Board. Pivotal's Community Engagement Manager is responsible for monitoring and review of the Customer Engagement Action Plan and for providing updates to Pivotal Senior Leadership team on a quarterly basis.

Pivotal's Quality and Compliance Team is responsible for auditing compliance with all RSH regulatory standards, including the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment standard.

The Chief Operating Officer is responsible for providing an annual report on customer engagement to all stakeholders.

8.0 Implementing Standards and Review

Customer engagement at Pivotal will comply with the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard.

This will include providing evidence of how we have continued to seek ways to improve our engagement, in line with the new requirements set out in the Government's 2020 white paper.

We will provide you with assurance that we are accountable and are continuing to improve.

With this in mind, we will ensure the following:

- We record actions taken to meet the regulatory standard.
- We review these actions with the Customer Scrutiny Panel and include a summary of compliance in our Annual Report.
- We provide complete transparency regarding our achievements against this strategy. We will publish what we have done as a result of customer engagement, where we have achieved or where we have identified a need to improve.

The customer engagement strategy will be reviewed every 3 years.





We love seeing how the gardens at our supported living schemes can flourish with a little love and attention. Many of our customers tell us what a difference it makes to their wellbeing. As well as producing fresh produce to improve their diet and keep their bills down, it brings everyone together outdoors.

Since 1999, we've been at the forefront of providing creative supported housing.

We support vulnerable people with accommodation appropriate to their needs.

We pride ourselves on our values:
Passionate • Caring • Creative

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Pivotal