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RESIDENT VOICE STRATEGY

Title	Resident Voice Strategy
Date Created	December 2021
Next Review Date	December 2023
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Approver	Board of Management
Applies to	General Needs social tenanted & homeowners

1 Introduction and Summary

- 1.1 Embedding the voice of our residents into all aspects of our work has become a top priority in the housing sector, as evidenced by specific requirements for meaningful resident engagement in the Together with Tenants charter, NHF Code of Governance, Building Safety Bill, Housing Ombudsman Complaints Handling Code and the Social Housing White Paper.
- 1.2 These requirements align with our mission of “helping people shape the things that matter most to them at home, in their neighbourhood or in their community”.
- 1.3 To fulfil these regulatory and legal requirements and to better align our landlord service with our mission of helping people shape the things that matter most to them, we have created a strategy for embedding resident voice throughout our work as landlords. The strategy prioritises the following principles:
- We have a **relationship** *with* our residents
 - We are **influenced** *by* our residents
 - We are **accountable** *to* our residents

2 Developing a RELATIONSHIP with our residents

- 2.1 To effectively engage residents, we need to know who they are and what matters to them.
- 2.2 We intend to radically shift our relationship with our residents, moving away from prioritising efficient property management as an end in itself, to understanding our work as customer service and using resident priorities to guide us.
- 2.3 To earn trust and develop relationships with our residents, we aim to make ourselves available, to listen and to reliably fulfil our commitments to residents.
- 2.4 We will make room to hear what residents care about through formal and informal channels and will record what we learn uniformly and consistently, so our colleagues and successors can benefit from the same information.

- 2.5 We will increase our understanding of how individual residents prefer to be contacted and will maximise communication with them using that method, be it by phone, email, text, or visit.
- 2.6 Our intention is to earn the trust of our residents by taking ownership of problems or complaints without passing them between staff members and by quickly fixing a mistake once we learn of it, maintaining proactive communication and support with our resident until the issue is resolved to their satisfaction.
- 2.7 Although our job is to provide housing management services to our residents, building a relationship requires us to go further. We will get to know our residents and will look for opportunities to share a moment with them over something that is not strictly work-related, whenever possible, whether that is a friendly salutation and query about how they're doing when passing a resident on the estate or signposting them for help on something that may not be directly related to housing.

3 Being INFLUENCED by our residents

- 3.1 Once we know what matters to our residents, we will use this information to inform our decision-making.
- 3.2 Resident priorities will be used to influence aspects of our planned works programme, the block and estate services we provide that make up the service charge, the content of our operational policies and building safety and compliance actions, to start.
- 3.3 We will continually seek out ways to increase the number of decisions residents can influence and the level of influence their views have.
- 3.4 We will report back to residents through the annual report and in resident newsletters how their feedback influenced our decisions.
- 3.5 To keep residents at the front of mind for Board members when making decisions, all reports they receive will address how residents will be impacted.
- 3.6 Resident engagement will become a standing topic for reporting to each Services Committee of the Board of Management.

4 Being ACCOUNTABLE to our residents

- 4.1 Being accountable to our residents means we are transparent about what we have done, how we spend our money and how we are performing.
- 4.2 We will regularly publish information related to our performance in key areas for residents, such as repairs, complaints and customer satisfaction in locations like:
 - The CDS website
 - Our annual report
 - Resident newsletters
- 4.3 Our annual report will also contain information about how residents influenced our decisions in the past year.

- 4.4 We aim to create a channel for residents to scrutinise our performance, via something like a resident panel or internet forum for discussion with residents. We will use feedback from interested residents to guide the exact form this group takes, but collaboration with us to scrutinise and improve performance will be its intended purpose.
- 4.5 We will continue the use of the safety@cds.coop inbox for ease of reporting for residents who have queries or concerns about the safety of their property or block. In addition to responding to every resident message and will ensure Board members hear what residents are reporting relating to property safety by reporting to Services Committee with a count and summary of resident issues raised and associated responses.

5 Timeframe

- 5.1 Recognising the importance of meaningful resident engagement, we are committed to achieving the actions listed in this strategy before April 2022 or giving a date by when it will be achieved.
- 5.2 Whilst some of the actions in the strategy are straightforward to achieve and have objectives measures for success, others are harder to evidence and will take time for the fruits of our efforts to start to show.
- 5.3 The latest date by which we would expect these actions to be achieved is the end March 2023, with consistent progress toward completing the actions between now and then.

6 Outcome

- 6.1 Combined Resident Satisfaction metric for homeowners and tenants: CDS Co-operatives listens to your views and acts on them increases from 47% at end of September 2021 to 60% at the end of March 2023.
- 6.2 Combined Resident Satisfaction metric for homeowners and tenants: I feel I can have an input into decisions that impact my housing and surrounding environment increases from 41% to 55% by March 2023.
- 6.3 Tenant Satisfaction metric: CDS provides a home that is safe and secure increases from 76% at the end of September 2021 to 85% at the end of March 2023.
- 6.4 We will begin surveying complainants following the closure of a complaint with an expectation that there is an improvement on the question: Overall, how satisfied are you with the process?
- 6.5 The CDS website will report key performance information for our landlord service from the previous quarter.
- 6.6 Our annual report contains learning from complaints and reports on how we used resident feedback to influence our decisions.
- 6.7 A resident scrutiny vehicle is created and populated with residents with scrutiny opportunities provided regularly.

7 Reporting

- 7.1 Starting at the March 2022 meeting, the Services Committee of the Board of Management will receive reporting on the following:
- **Resident Engagement Update:** This will be a new quarterly report and will include a Resident Voice Strategy progress table that will indicate progress achieving the commitments in this strategy, including required actions, due dates and updates.
 - **Resident Property Safety Report:** Outlining concerns and queries raised by resident in the previous quarter and actions/responses provided.
 - **Resident Satisfaction Update:** Quarterly reporting on resident satisfaction and actions for improvement, including the metrics listed as outcomes above.
 - **Complaints Analysis:** Quarterly reporting on complaints performance, themes of complaints and the learning from them will include the addition of satisfaction survey results following the closure of each complaint.

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