

Resident Influence Strategy November 2024 to April 2026



Introduction

In 2025, CDS turns 50. We have always been about community-led housing – so that more people can shape the things that matter to them – and that’s just as true today as it was in 1975.

This strategy is our promise to you for the next 18 months based on the feedback you’ve given us over the past year. Most of your comments were positive and we’re glad you have good experiences with us. We’re focusing here on those that were negative so we can learn from them to make things better.

You’ll find four aims we want to achieve to improve our services based on what you’ve told us is important. They are also designed to build a strong foundation for how you can influence what we do and how we do it in the years to come.

Resident influence and engagement is not *just* about events and meetings. We want to use everything you tell us from surveys, complaints, compliments, focus groups and your day-to-day contacts with us, to make sure we’re hearing your voices and making changes to improve things that could be working better.

Over the past year we have tried to contact everyone that lives in our homes to understand what it’s like for you. We’ve done this through Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs), and our Neighbourhood Calling Campaign. We’re using what you told us there, as well as what you’ve told through our formal complaints to prioritise our first actions towards building that resident influence foundation, so that it becomes part of our culture from now on.

We want to co-operate with you by jointly designing services that work best for all of us.



Our Tenant Satisfaction Measure Results

Between April 2023 and March 2024 every landlord in England has been gathering the same information from their residents about their services. 289 of you took part in our surveys and a summary of the results are below. You also told us the kinds of things that mean you're either very satisfied, very dissatisfied or anything in between. That means we now have a wealth of detail we can use to improve things, and we've used it to help shape this strategy.

Measure	Percentage of CDS Residents Satisfied
Overall satisfaction	55%
Well maintained home	58%
Safe home	70%
Quality of home	67%
Communal areas	65%
Repairs in the last 12 months	58%
Time taken for repairs	52%
Overall repairs satisfaction	49%
Neighbourhood contribution	57%
Approach to anti social behaviour	48%
Listens to views and acts on them	47%
Treats you with fairness and respect	67%
Keep you informed	63%
CDS are easy to deal with	58%
Complaints handling	28%
CDS are friendly and approachable	66%
You can rely on staff	45%
Decision making	40%
Value for money from rent	77%
Value for money from services charges	51%

The table above shows the percentage of residents that are satisfied with each of the measures listed on the left.

Across the country satisfaction levels have fallen, partly influenced by things like the cost-of-living crisis, Government and political changes, and pressures on Local Authority (Council) funding.

However, we also know some of these satisfaction levels are directly impacted by the way we do things, such as how we handle your complaints and requests, how we treat you as individuals and how well we keep you informed.

We know from what you told us from the Tenant Satisfaction Measure surveys that your overall satisfaction with us is heavily shaped by whether you feel your home is well maintained, and how well you feel we listen to your views and act on them.

We've already started doing things differently from what you've told us before, and the positive impacts of that are starting to show in the TSM measures so far this year.

Our Neighbourhood Calling Campaign

Earlier this year we tried to contact everyone who lives in one of our homes to take part in our calling campaign. 164 of you (23%) took part and gave us some really helpful feedback. We asked you for more detail about some of the areas in the TSMs, and we wanted to check whether you were experiencing any harassment in your area, or whether we could help with any financial support. The graph below shows the feedback you gave us.

The nearer the centre of the graph, the more improvements we need to make. The campaign has given us new information as well as giving us more detail about where we can make a difference. This supports what you’ve told us in our TSMs and complaints (see next page) so we can be confident we are acting on consistent feedback from a wide range of methods and residents.



Measure	Campaign Score	TSM Score
Residents can rely on staff to do what they say they will	43%	45%
CDS listen and act on resident views	44%	47%
Residents feel safe in their homes	90%	70%

The three areas above match the TSMs and while the figures are slightly different (because we spoke to different people), the trend is the same.

We know from these two campaigns we need to focus on our repairs service and the way we deal with your queries when you contact us.

Because we recorded your feedback by area (as below), we know which issues are more important and can focus on those with you.

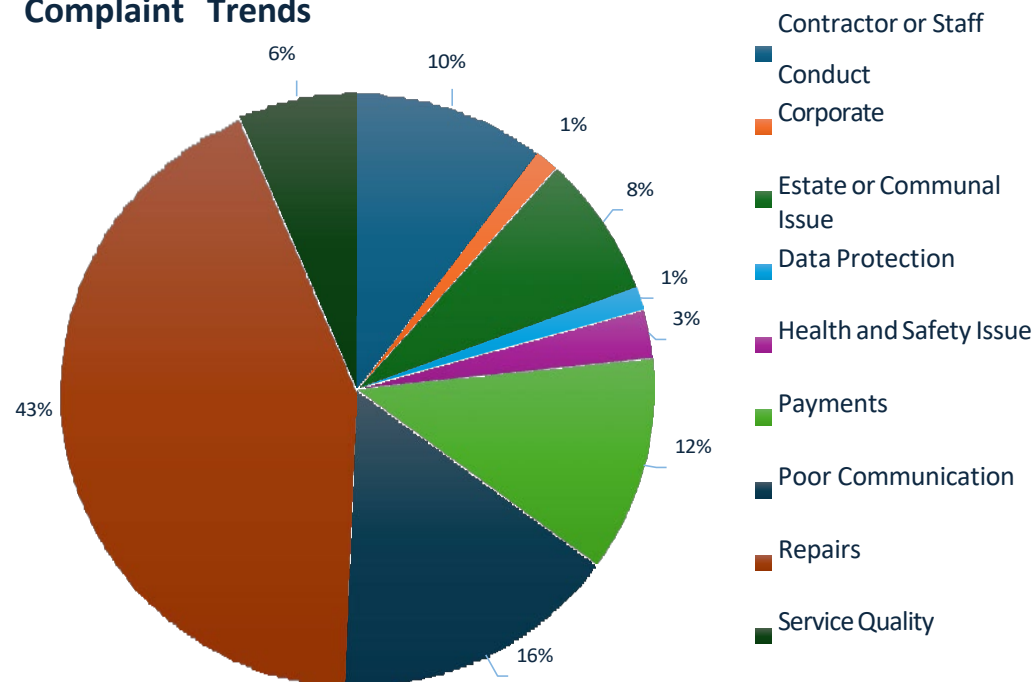
Phoenix Place
The Halt
Harold Campbell Court
Riverdale & Stiles Close
Heayfields - Harding
Grove Hill
Atwell Close
Forrabuy & Leasowe
Elliot Close
Hollymeadow
Greendale
Foster Close
Shellons Street
Tower Hamlet
Forge Close
Benbow and Burchard
Crescent
Hauksbee Gardens
Moat Farm Close
Camden Street Properties

Our Formal Complaints Themes

The below pie chart shows you the areas we received complaints about in the past year (at stages 1 and 2). There were 77 cases in total. The high percentage of repairs complaints supports what you've told us in the TSMs and our Calling Campaign. Poor communication and service quality make up 26% of cases, which also matches the feedback you've given us.

The graph on the right shows you the sorts of things people are asking us to do to put things right for them. We've used this feedback to help shape our first-year promises, too.

Complaint Trends



How you asked us to put things right



Our Promises

Promise One:

We promise to work with you to improve our repairs service

We're doing this because:

We know repairs are the most common reason you contact us. The condition of your home is really important to you, and it's the service we receive most of our complaints about – just like most other landlords.

You've told us about a range of things that stop the service working well. The most common of these were:

- The time it takes for repairs to be scheduled and completed
- The quality of our repairs is inconsistent and many of you told us about having to report it again because the repair didn't last
- It's not easy to contact us, and we don't always keep you updated on what's happening which means you have to chase us

What we're aiming to achieve:

We want to make sure our repairs service is as effective as possible with reliable communication and information. We want to understand your expectations and build in choice wherever we can.

“Repairs take a month of being pushed from pillar to post before anyone takes responsibility. They have so many different contractors it's always someone different.”

Promise Two:

We promise to review our customer service standards with you to make sure we're delivering what we promise in a fair and respectful way.

We're doing this because:

Just over half of you feel you can't rely on us to do what we said we would, and just over a third of you don't find us easy to deal with. You told us this is because you can't get hold of the people you need, you don't always hear back from us, so you need to chase us again, or when we do get back to you it takes a longer time than you'd expected. A handful of you also said you had an experience where the person you spoke to wasn't helpful or respectful, leaving you feeling like we didn't care. This shouldn't be anyone's experience, and we want to change that.

What we're aiming to achieve:

We want to give you a smoother, more reliable customer service across all our teams so we are easier to deal with. We want to rebuild your trust in us by demonstrating that we do care and you can rely on us to do what we said we would.

“They take too long and it's difficult to get in touch with people. When you do leave a message on voicemail, they don't get back to you.”

Our Promises

Promise Three:

We promise to use your feedback to improve our formal complaints process and focus on how we resolve your service requests

We're doing this because:

Only 28% of you are satisfied with the way we handle our complaints. While we define complaints in line with the Housing Ombudsman's definition, we know most residents include what the Ombudsman calls "service requests" as complaints too, and so we'll focus on both to make sure we're doing it as well as we can.

We'll speak to those of you that made a formal complaint to understand how that experience was for you, and we'll record your service requests more reliably so we can see trends and be proactive about improving things.

What we're aiming to achieve:

The outcomes here are like our customer service outcomes. We want you to be able to trust us, rely on us, and feel confident in asking us to help you resolve an issue.

"They do not help us and they do not listen. They know our issues but they do not help."

Promise Four:

We promise to work with you to create options for everyone to give us their feedback and hold us to account, wherever they want to.

We're doing this because:

It's always been our aim as a co-operative to have you shape the things that matter to you. Every resident has the right to hold us to account and at the moment we don't have a structure for you to do that formally. We know different people prefer telling us things in different ways and on different subjects so we want to understand what would work and how you'd prefer to do that. We want everyone to have a choice about how they can influence our services.

What we're aiming to achieve:

We want to give you choices about how you tell us things, and how you hold us to account for delivering what we promise.

"Registered providers must take tenants' views into account in their decision making about how landlord services are delivered (regulator of Social Housing)"

How We'll Do It

We would love to find a group of 12 to 15 tenants and residents to help us work on all these promises over the next 18 months. It's important that the mix of people in the group represent all our tenants and residents as much as possible so we'll make sure we recruit a fair balance of people.

We'll start with repairs because we know this is a really important service to get right. We've already started making some changes which we can see are starting to make a difference, and there's much more we want to do with your input.

We know the repairs work will touch on our wider customer service issues, so we'll move on to our service standards, communication and complaints as stage two of this project.

Our final promise will focus on how we can encourage residents to work with us in the future so this group will help us to create a range of ways people can influence our services. While we're doing the first three promises above, we'll try different ways of working together so we can see what works best for us all and which methods have the biggest impact.

We'll use what we learn and achieve from this work to shape a 3-year Resident Influence strategy with more promises to improve our services based on what you continue to tell us.

We also intend to recognise the time and effort you give if you decide to take part in this project. We'll contact everyone by the end of January 2025 to invite you to take part and tell you more clearly what it will involve and what we can offer you in return for your time and commitment.



When We'll Do Things

January 2025

We'll recruit our group of tenants and residents

February 2025

March 2025

We'll work with the new group on our repairs service

April 2025

May 2025

June 2025

July 2025

We'll work with the new group on our customer service standards, communication and complaints

August 2025

September 2025

October 2025

November 2025

December 2025

We'll work with the new group on our future engagement and influence options, and promises for the new strategy

January 2026

February 2026

March 2026

We'll promote our new influencing opportunities

April 2026

We'll start working on the promises in our new strategy

We'll start to put the repairs recommendations in place

We'll continue with the repairs recommendations and start with the new customer service standards, communications and complaints recommendations too

How to keep track of what we're doing

The promises we've made here are based on your reasons for not being satisfied with the way we do some things. Not everyone was dissatisfied though, we had some really positive feedback that helps us see where we're also doing things well.

Whether you're happy or frustrated with our services or somewhere in between, we want you to have the chance to hold us to account for delivering what we've promised here. We will update our website every three months with progress, and we'll also include updates in our newsletter. This is also where you will be able to find out how you can influence the promises we've made here.



Why it is important to us



“We want to work with you to provide a unique and transparent service tailored to your needs and target areas for improvement, while also celebrating positive experiences. This approach is rooted in our commitment to doing what’s right. By working together, we can build strong, positive and supportive communities.” **Kristell Marcantoni, Operations Director.**

“CDS was created 50 years ago to build homes for communities through co-operation. It was true then and it's true now that the people who know best about what's right for their homes, are the people who live there. Our job at CDS is to co-operate so that homes and communities work for local people. This strategy helps us get there, hand in hand with CDS residents”. **Tom Bremner, Chief Executive.**

“I welcome this strategic approach to resident influence and engagement. Tenant perspectives and views need to be central to the services we provide if we are to deliver the best possible improvements”. **Juliet Lack, Chair of our Board.**

For more information, email talktous@cds.coop

