

CUSTOMER INVOLVEMENT & ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Department Policy Name – Customer Involvement and Engagement

GENERAL - EXTERNAL

Policy Approval Date:	1 Dec 22	Date of next review:	1 Dec 25
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1. Purpose

Riverside is committed to delivering excellent, customer focussed services that achieve high levels of customer satisfaction. Riverside is also committed to achieving above and beyond compliance with the existing standards and regulations on customer involvement.

In order to meet this commitment, the organisation will ensure that customers have a strong and influential voice across all service areas.

This policy gives an overview of how we will achieve a strong customer voice and the clear principles underpinning our customer involvement and engagement work. It will give an overview of how customers will be involved in the design, delivery and improvement of services, policy and strategy and how customers can be involved in and influence decision-making.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all customers of Riverside, including Riverside Social Housing, Care and Support and Riverside Home Ownership. Customers include tenants, leaseholders, licensees and floating support customers.

This policy does not apply to Riverside Scotland, which has its own policy on this area.

This policy applies to all staff as it is the expectation that all staff understand and play a role in customer involvement and engagement activity.

This policy is guided by the existing standards and regulations on customer involvement within social housing, namely the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard 2017, the Together with Tenants Charter and the Charter for Social Housing Residents.

3. Principles

Inclusive and Flexible Opportunities

Riverside aims to ensure that it provides a range of opportunities for all its customers to be engaged and involved within the organisation by ensuring it provides a customer involvement menu that is varied, inclusive and flexible.

We aim to be inclusive of customers who face barriers to involvement and engagement due to protected characteristics, as well as barriers such as digital exclusion and time availability.

We aim to include all customers in customer involvement and engagement regardless of tenure type and including our customers receiving floating support.

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We aim to offer a spectrum of engagement and involvement opportunities that offers the customer a full choice on how much to be involved and for how long. We will support involvement opportunities at a local and national level. We will offer opportunities that enable short term and one-off involvement as well as enable long term involvement. We will offer a range of methods to be involved and engaged, including face to face, digital, surveys and via multi-channels.

Riverside is committed to a creative approach to customer involvement that offers tailored opportunities that are inclusive of its broad and diverse customer base and tenure type.

Voice and Influence

Riverside is committed to working in partnership with a strong customer voice to support us in shaping decisions, services and policies to ensure that we achieve excellent customer experience for all our customers.

We are committed to the involvement and influence of our involved customers in our governance structure, policy review and development process, scrutiny and continuous improvement, strategy and planning and external communications. For customers who live in our Care and Support services, we are committed to the principle of coproduction of support services.

In order for customers to be involved in a meaningful way, staff will inform and involve customers in policy reviews and any significant changes at the outset. Customers will be given the opportunity to collaborate alongside staff to influence and shape the services they receive.

A strong customer voice includes feedback and insight from our customers from transactional surveys, perception surveys, Tenant Satisfaction Measures, engagement analytics, complaints and compliments, and other feedback channels.

Riverside recognises the value of lived experience as a source of knowledge and expertise and is committed to involving customers who can share the knowledge gained from those experiences and choices to help us co-create inclusive services.

Impact and Outcomes

Riverside is committed to regularly communicating to customers the impact of involvement and engagement on its services and performance. We are committed to communicating the learning and changes as a result of customer engagement and feedback. We aim to do this in a way that is open, accessible and transparent.

Riverside is committed to facilitating a clear feedback loop, demonstrating 'insight to action' by gathering feedback and acting on it; implementing and evaluating improvements; and communicating back to customers

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Empowerment

We aim to empower our involved customers to develop the skills and knowledge to scrutinise Riverside’s performance and services and hold us to account. We aim to do this through providing training opportunities and support with learning development.

Riverside is committed to publicly sharing information on its performance and processes to enable customers to hold us to account.

Riverside is committed to independent customer scrutiny of services and performance and to the positive and responsive cooperation of Riverside colleagues in enabling access to the information needed.

4. Further Information & Support

Riverside is committed to the following involvement roles and opportunities:

- Riverside Customer Voice Executive
- Care and Support Committee
- Customer Experience Committee
- Group Development Committee
- Customer Group Board Observer
- Customer Group Board Member
- Local Customer Voice Groups
- Regional Customer Voice Hubs
- Customer Inspectors
- Customer Complaint Panel
- Scrutiny Panel, both strategic level and local scrutiny
- Digital surveys and other forms of digital engagement
- Scheme based groups in Care and Support services
- Specialist customer involvement groups based on protected characteristics or tenure type.

Customer Journey Mapping activity will involve a wide range of customer views in understanding customer experience and influencing service design and continuous improvement.

Specialist customer involvement groups based on protected characteristics will help diversify the customer voice to strengthen its representation of our diverse customer base and ensure all services are inclusive.

The iCommunity as a channel for digital surveys provides an online and accessible method of engagement for those customers for whom meetings and availability are a barrier. The iCommunity will offer quick and simple online methods of giving feedback and will be a method of keeping informed about Riverside’s involvement and engagement activity.

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Riverside will continue to explore its digital engagement offer to ensure it offers engagement opportunities to as many customers as possible.

Our customer engagement framework and strategy will remain under review with the ability to evolve and flex appropriately to reflect the customer feedback received.

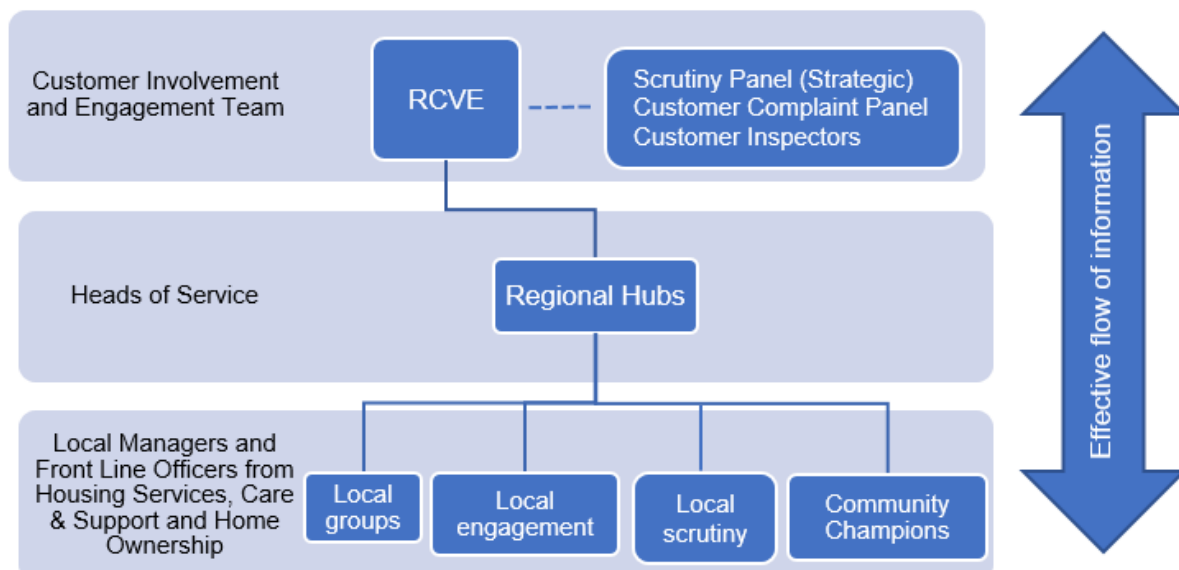
Customer Involvement and Engagement Team

The Customer Involvement and Engagement team are a dedicated team within Riverside who are responsible and accountable for customer involvement and engagement activity across the business. The team are committed to continually improving and diversifying the involvement menu to ensure they continue to deliver a best practice customer involvement and engagement service.

They will support involved customers to enable them to have a voice and influence at a strategic level. They will provide support to key teams throughout the business to enable them to deliver local and regional involvement and engagement activity. They will collaborate with other teams to ensure all customers across the business are reflected and included in the work of involvement and engagement.

They will work closely with the Riverside Customer Voice Executive (RCVE) to support them in their role as 'critical friend' to Riverside. They will provide support to the Customer Engagement Framework to enable its resilience and growth and to support the RCVE to represent customer views at a national level.

Split of responsibility of Customer Engagement Framework



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The Customer Involvement and Engagement Team will support the delivery of the Customer Communication Strategy and will work closely with the following teams:

- Marketing and Communications on all its external communications.
- Complaints team to support the role of the Customer Complaint Panel.
- Care and Support to support the role of the customer inspection programme.
- Strategy and Planning in its response to national customer involvement and engagement strategy, regulations and standards.
- Governance to support the participation of customers in our governance structure.

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5. Roles and Responsibilities

Riverside Governance Committees

- Responsible for reviewing customer involvement activities and ensuring compliance with the Regulatory Framework.
- Work closely with the Customer Involvement and Engagement Team to ensure the effective involvement of the Riverside Customer Voice Executive in the governance structure.
- Seek assurance that customers have been involved in key policy and service development.

Executive Directors

- Provide leadership to ensure a culture that promotes the involvement of customers.

Leadership Team

- Inform and involve customers from the outset in policy reviews and significant changes to services.
- Ensure the customer voice and customer insight informs and influences decision making.
- Facilitate continuous improvement that is led by the customer voice.
- Provide leadership to ensure a culture that promotes the involvement of customers.

All Managers

- Understand and make use of customer insight tools to inform service improvements in their area.
- Accountable for evidencing the impact of customer feedback and involvement on policies and services and keeping the Customer Involvement and Engagement team informed.
- Ensure front line staff promote opportunities and signpost customers to the Customer Involvement and Engagement team.
- Ensure relevant front line staff have good links with local customer voice groups and participate in local involvement and engagement activity.

Specialist teams

- Business Insight and Information– provide performance data for customers, for customer experience insights and mapping.
- Strategy & Planning– policy review guidance and facilitate customer involvement and consultation activities.
- Customer Involvement and Engagement–the central hub for the menu of our customer involvement and engagement activity. Will monitor performance and impact measures.
- Equality and Diversity Manager–for Equality Impact Assessment Support, where required.
- Marketing and Communications for assistance with external communications with customers.

Riverside Customer Voice Executive

- Scrutinise Riverside's performance and services.
- Work alongside Riverside to build up and support the Customer Engagement Framework.
- Fulfil the roles of the customer complaint panel, scrutiny panel and customer inspector role.
- Uphold the Riverside Customer Voice constitution including the Code of Conduct.

Riverside Customer Voice

- Involved customers are expected to engage with Riverside staff in a respectful way and in line with the Code of Conduct and Equalities Policy.
- Involved customers will provide constructive feedback and work in the spirit of partnership and collaboration with Riverside staff.
- The Riverside Customer Voice includes any involvement and engagement activity recognised by Riverside or the RCVE as within the Customer Engagement Framework.
- Riverside recognises that all customers have a role to play in shaping and improving the customer experience. Customer Insight, Customer Journey Mapping and digital surveys are key components of the Riverside Customer Voice.

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6. Risk Thresholds

By having this policy in place, Riverside demonstrates it is committed to compliance with the relevant regulatory standards (Tenant Involvement and Empowerment), the Charter for Social Housing Residents and demonstrates we are ensuring customers are part of our decision-making processes, as required by the Code of Governance 2020

7. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

Riverside is committed to Equality, Diversity & Inclusion. We strive to be fair in our dealings with all people, communities and organisations, taking into account the diverse nature of their culture and background and actively promoting inclusion. This policy aligns with Riverside's [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#) and has been subject to an Equality Impact Assessment.

8. Further Information & Support

For more details on the Customer Involvement and Engagement and the regulations and standards, please see the RIC.

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