

Building Safety Customer Engagement Strategy

Background

The Building Safety Act 2022 (the Act) introduced a wide range of duties relating to the management of building safety in higher risk buildings. These are defined as buildings which are 18 metres (or seven storeys) or more in height, and which contain at least two homes. Accountable Persons (APs) and Principal Accountable Persons (PAPs) are responsible for these duties.

Our overarching Building Safety Customer Engagement Strategy meets the requirements of the Higher-Risk Buildings (Management of Safety Risks etc) (England) Regulations 2023.

Under the Act, where we are the Principal Accountable Person, we are required to engage with customers to agree the most effective ways for them to raise queries about building safety, and for us to share and get their input on important building safety information and decisions.

Having consulted with customers about their preferred means of engaging, we then produce a block-specific building safety customer engagement strategy for all customers aged 16 and over.

The statutory requirement states that the Strategy should set out:

- what information we will provide to customers
- what we will ask customers about
- how we will collect and use customers' opinions and feedback
- how we will measure and review participation.

This Strategy incorporates the key principles of Riverside's customer engagement offer. It aims to provide opportunities for customers to scrutinise, influence, shape and hold Riverside to account, as outlined in the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards and the Localism Act 2011.

The Strategy supports our vision to transform lives, revitalise neighbourhoods and, as a customer-focused business, strive to become more efficient, effective and empower customers to have their say and affect positive outcomes.

Aims

This strategy sets out how the Principal Accountable Person (PAP) and Accountable Person(s) will engage customers on building safety matters in compliance with the [Building Safety Act 2022](#) and the requirements of the [Building Safety Regulator](#).

It ensures customers:

- Understand building safety risks and controls
- Can influence safety decisions
- Are supported to raise concerns safely and effectively

To ensure the strategy remains relevant and effective, we will review the strategy:

- at least every two years, and in any event within a reasonable period following any consultation.
- within a reasonable period after a mandatory occurrence report to the Building Safety Regulator.
- within a reasonable period after the completion of significant material alterations to the building.

We will maintain a formal record of all reviews of this Strategy, including the date of the review, who carried it out, the findings, and any amendments made. These records will be retained as part of our golden thread information in One Trust and made available to the Building Safety Regulator upon request.

Objectives

1. Ensure customers are informed and confident about building safety
 - Provide clear, accessible, and timely information about building safety risks, controls, and responsibilities.
2. Enable meaningful customer involvement in building safety decisions
 - Create structured opportunities for customers to influence safety policies, plans, and improvements.
 - Ensure feedback is actively considered and visibly acted upon.
3. Build trust through transparency and accountability
 - Share accurate information on safety performance, incidents, and improvement actions.
4. Support customers to raise concerns easily
 - Provide multiple, accessible routes for reporting safety concerns.
 - Ensure concerns are taken seriously, responded to promptly, and resolved fairly.
5. Reach and engage all customers, including those who are harder to reach
 - Identify barriers to communication and engagement such as language, disability, digital exclusion, or vulnerability.
 - Adapt communication methods to meet diverse needs and ensure equality of access.
6. Promote shared responsibility for building safety
 - Encourage customers to understand their role in maintaining a safe building.
 - Reinforce behaviours that reduce risk and support collective safety.
7. Embed continuous learning and improvement

- Use customer insight, complaints, and incident data to improve safety systems and engagement approaches.
- Regularly review and update engagement methods to reflect customer needs and regulatory expectations.

8. Demonstrate compliance with building safety and consumer standards

- Align engagement activity with statutory duties, regulatory guidance, and best practice.
- Maintain clear records of engagement outcomes and actions taken.

How we will communicate and ensure customers' voices are heard

Information to Customers

We are responsible for providing customers with the information they need to understand the processes, systems and features in place to keep their building safe.

As a minimum, the following information will be available to customers in a bespoke annual Building Safety Summary:

- Clear explanations of the roles and responsibilities of Riverside, the Building Safety Manager/Property Manager
- The roles and responsibilities of our customers
- Details of the measures in place to mitigate potential building safety risks, e.g. fire and structural
- Advice on how to reduce the risk of fire in individual dwellings e.g. by not storing flammable materials
- What to do in the event of a fire in the building and a clear explanation of the building's evacuation strategy
- Outcomes of fire and building safety checks
- Details of building safety inspections and planned compliance programmes taking place throughout the year
- A summary of completed or upcoming work to the building
- Contact details of the Accountable Person and Building Safety Manager.
- The process for reporting safety concerns and complaints.

Customers may wish to access more detailed information, to better understand the safety features of their building. This information should empower customers to better understand the level of risk in their buildings, to change behaviour (if necessary) and hold us to account.

Customer Communication Channels

We will actively engage with customers to understand how they prefer to receive information and engage with us on Building Safety decisions. This includes identifying preferred channels and formats to ensure information is accessible, timely and easy to understand.

We will also continue to review the effectiveness of our communications methods more widely through our Customer Influence and Accountability Framework. This may result in further tailoring and refining our approach and will ensure our building safety communications remain responsive to customers' needs.

To ensure building safety information is shared effectively and inclusively, we will use a range of communication channels. These include (but are not limited to):

- Postal and printed communications
- Emails
- Digital and communal area noticeboards
- The My Riverside App
- Social media channels
- Local customer engagement sessions

We will adopt a digital first approach to customer communications, allowing customers to make use of the accessibility tools available online. However, we recognise that not all customers are online. Where we do not hold an email address for a customer, we will continue to send communications via post. Where customers require an alternative format or reasonable adjustment to help them understand building safety information, they can request this via one of our contact methods.

In the event of an emergency building safety issue, we will use the most immediate and effective communication channels available, such as text message, digital noticeboards, email, and hand delivered notices to ensure customers receive timely-delivered notices to ensure customers receive timely and essential information.

Customer Engagement

To drive a stronger, inclusive customer voice in shaping service design and delivery at Riverside, we have co-created the **SEVEN STEPS** Customer Influence & Accountability Framework. The framework sets out how customers are involved at each stage of decision making.

Step 1: Stay Up to Date

This step ensures customers are kept informed about service offers, local plans, and priorities through multi-media, meeting the request of those who want to stay informed without active engagement.

Step 2: Make Your Voice Heard

Encourages customers to opt-in for feedback through surveys, focus groups, and engagement platforms, catering to those who want to be consulted about services.

Step 3: Join Community Conversations

Incorporates local engagement and feedback into formal groups and activities, providing opportunities for customers to shape local services and escalate community concerns.

Step 4: Improve the Customer Experience

Focuses on design influence with specialist customer groups co-creating through Task & Finish activities to drive improvements in customer experience.

Step 5: Have a Say on Services

Customer Influence Panels (Repairs, Complaints, Service Charges, and Care & Support) collaborate on key customer priorities, shaping service design and delivery.

Step 6: Help Shape the Big Decisions

The Tenant and Resident Influence Partnership (TRIP) lead the framework, providing strategic influence and assurance that a diverse customer voice has influenced service design and decisions.

Step 7: A Voice at the Table

Recognises the role of Customer Committee and Board members in influencing corporate planning and strategy development, advocating on behalf of all customers.



Decisions we will Consult on

We recognise that customers want to be consulted on decisions that are relevant to their safety and that of their homes.

Where building safety work is due to take place, we will consult with customers and provide information on:

- What work is due to take place
- Why the work is taking place
- When the work starts
- The duration of the work
- How we can minimise disruption to customers
- Key contacts for the duration of the work

Where works arising from a building safety decision will take place over more than one day and will either limit access or cause disruption, we will consult customers on the proposed days and times of the works and on how disruption can be minimised.

We scale our consultation approach based on the nature, scale and impact of each building safety decision. Decisions with greater customer impact require deeper, more meaningful engagement, whereas lower impact or statutory compliance decisions involve proportionate or informative communication only.

We will engage with customers to clearly define consultation topics, explain the process, and provide advance notice to support meaningful participation.

The table below sets out how we tailor our consultation and communication activity based on the anticipated level of customer impact and regulatory expectations:

Type of Building Safety Decision	Impact Level (Building / Floors / Individual Homes)	Consultation Depth Required	Examples of Engagement Methods
Major building wide- safety remediation (i.e. cladding remediation, signification structural risk works, whole-building fire door replacement programmes, lift replacement programmes.)	Whole building	High – Meaningful, structured and multi-stage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least, quarterly written updates until works commence • Customer meetings (in person/virtual) • Detailed consultation packs • Surveys & Q&A • One-to-one- support for vulnerable customers
Major safety works affecting multiple floors or core building systems (i.e Sprinkler installation, riser replacements, smoke ventilation system upgrades)	Multiple floors/ shared systems	Medium – Targeted and proportionate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted meetings with affected floors • Written consultation • Surveys
Block specific- planned safety works (i.e. Planned fire door renewals, communal fire alarm upgrades)	Single block or building zone	Medium – Proportionate consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter/email briefings • Surveys • Targeted drop-ins
Localised safety works affecting only part of the building i.e. (Fire stopping repair following inspection, electrical rise repairs on one floor, local smoke detector upgrades)	One floor/ cluster of homes	Low–Medium – Localised engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Targeted emails and letters

There are certain technical or statutory building safety decisions that we will not consult on where consultation would not influence the outcome. These include legally required compliance actions, specialist engineering judgements, and safety critical measures where there is only one safe or permissible option. For such decisions, we will explain the decision, its implications and why consultation was not appropriate. In such circumstances, we will maintain engagement with customers by communicating in accordance with the guidelines outlined in the table above.

There may be occasions where urgent or emergency building safety works are required to prevent a significant risk of harm to customers or the building. In these circumstances, it may not be possible or appropriate to undertake consultation in advance of works commencing. Where consultation is not undertaken due to the emergency nature of the situation, we will record the reasons for this decision and the factors that made consultation impracticable.

In cases where urgent action is required but some limited engagement can reasonably take place; we will take proportionate steps to inform and obtain views from relevant persons using rapid communication methods. These may include:

- Brief notifications to affected customers (e.g. SMS, email, door-knocking)
- Quick engagement with customer representatives
- Targeted communication to the impacted floors/areas

We will consider these views where time allows, while ensuring that risk mitigation work commences as soon as necessary.

In any emergency situation, we will take reasonable and proportionate steps to ensure that customers, particularly those with additional needs or who may be disproportionately affected, receive timely, accessible information and appropriate support throughout the urgent works.

We will give due consideration to all responses received during any building safety consultation and ensure they are reflected in our final decision-making process wherever possible. Themes, concerns and suggestions will be documented and assessed against safety requirements, legal duties, technical feasibility, and operational constraints. The final decision record will set out how customer feedback influenced the outcome or, where feedback could not be adopted, provide a clear explanation of why not.

Information on Building Safety Decisions

We are committed to communicating building safety decisions in a clear, transparent and timely way, particularly where those decisions have been informed by consultation with customers.

The way we communicate building safety decisions will follow the same tiered, proportionate approach we apply to consultation.

Decisions with significant or building wide impact will be communicated through more detailed, multichannel updates to ensure customers have clear information about the issue, the options considered and how customer feedback has influenced the outcome.

For lower impact or routine decisions, communication will be concise and proportionate, focusing on what has been decided, why, and how it affects customers.

Emergency decisions, where consultation may not have been possible, will be communicated immediately using the most direct channels. We will:

- Provide clear written communication explaining the emergency, the works undertaken, and why consultation could not take place.
- Outline any impacts on customers, expected timescales, and how we will mitigate disruption.
- Confirm how customers can raise questions or concerns about the work.

By tailoring our communication approach to the nature of each decision, we aim to ensure customers feel informed, listened to and confident that building safety decisions are being made appropriately.

How we will Measure and Review Participation

We will monitor and review customer participation in building safety engagement activities to ensure our approach remains effective, inclusive, and compliant with regulatory requirements. This will enable us to assess how well customers are informed, involved, and able to influence decisions that affect building safety.

We will assess engagement using a range of measures:

- Annual Building Safety High Rise Customer Perception Survey.
- Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- The number of customers issued with an annual Building Safety Summary
- Time taken to acknowledge and respond to safety concerns and complaints.
- The implementation of learning from concerns and complaints raised
- Number of customers engagement activities held, participation levels and feedback on the usefulness.

Questions and Concerns

We want to make it easy for customers to ask us questions and raise concerns.

We operate a service-led approach to answering queries and responding to safety concerns. Our customer-facing colleagues have the specialist knowledge needed to resolve queries quickly and effectively.

customers are welcome to have an advocate or representative speak to us on their behalf about building safety matters and can make a request via one of our contact methods.

A safety question or concern can be raised:

Verbally to a member of staff (in person or over the telephone) **0345 111 0000**

Submitted via the website [Send us feedback | Riverside Housing](#)

Or via live chat: [Talk on Live Chat - Riverside](#)

We will aim to contact the customer by telephone by 5pm on the next working day.

The time scale for resolution will depend on the risk, we will take a risk-based approach to resolution we will respond within a maximum of 5 days.

All customers, regardless of tenure or building, will still be able to raise safety concerns directly to the relevant enforcement bodies (such as their local Fire and Rescue Service or their Local Authority) via existing routes.

Complaints

If you wish to make a complaint, you should follow our normal complaints process as outlined on our [website](#).

However, under the Building Safety Act, certain escalated concerns, known as ‘relevant complaints’, are managed differently. These are complaints that relate to serious building safety risks or failures in duty by those responsible for the building.

For higher-risk buildings (as defined under the Act), relevant complaints must:

- Be investigated promptly and prioritised based on the level of risk, not the order received.
- Be handled through a process that is transparent, fair, and allows for escalation to the Building Safety Regulator if unresolved.
- Be managed by the Principal Accountable Person (PAP), who is legally responsible for ensuring compliance with these requirements.

If your complaint relates to a serious safety concern in a higher-risk building, you can raise it in the same way as a safety concern (see section above). We will still log it as a complaint, but it will be handled under the enhanced process required by the Building Safety Act.

If you remain dissatisfied with the resolution of your safety concern, you can refer the matter to the Building Safety Regulator.

Contacts

Role	Title
Duty holder Life Cycle	Chief Property Officer
Duty holder Buildings in Occupation	Director Building Safety
Accountable Person	Assistant Director Building Safety
Responsible Person	Building Safety Managers