

## September 2024: Annual Stonewater self-assessment against 2024 Together with Tenants Charter

Stonewater is an adopter of the National Housing Federation’s Together with Tenants Charter.

Our Strategic Plan and Customer Strategy highlight our strategic objectives to deliver customer-centred services and quality homes and neighbourhoods, alongside maximising value. Ensuring customer voice shapes our services and that all customers can hold us to account is central to Stonewater’s operating model.

Our incoming 2024 Customer Voice Policy, supported by our annual Customer Communications and Engagement Plan, outlines how we will utilise Customer Insight, Engagement, learning from Complaints and Communication to involve customers in decision-making to improve services and driving customer satisfaction.

Our Customer Voice Policy commits us to maintaining compliance with the Together with Tenants Charter. This will also support us to demonstrate compliance with the Regulator of Social Housing’s Consumer Standards, particularly the Accountability, Transparency and Influence Standard.

<i>Requirement</i>	<i>Compliance</i>	<i>Evidence</i>	<i>Overview/ narrative</i>
<p>1. <b>Accountability:</b> Collectively, residents 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</p>	Yes	<p><i>Policy and delivery framework:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer Voice Policy</li> <li>• Customer Communications and Engagement Annual Plan</li> <li>• Annual outturn review of Customer Engagement and Communication delivery</li> <li>• Annual Scrutiny Panel recommendation progress report</li> </ul> <p><i>Customer voice at Customer Experience Challenge and Assurance Panel (CXCAP):</i></p> <p>Two customers are members of CXCAP, making recommendations to Board about our customer</p>	<p>Our governance framework ensures customer voice informs decisions about our services and supports customers to hold us to account. This is championed by CXCAP and Customer Scrutiny Panel.</p> <p>We’ve worked with customers to create a broad engagement offer, which provides opportunities for customers to get involved in shaping services in the ways that work for them.</p>

<p>of their homes and services.</p>		<p>experience related services. These customers are invited to attend and participate in Customer Scrutiny Panel to further ensure customer voice shapes service improvement.</p> <p><i>Role of the Customer Scrutiny Panel:</i></p> <p>Our Scrutiny Panel, undertakes formal reviews of our services and makes recommendations on improvements to CXCAP and Board.</p> <p>We monitor the completion of accepted Scrutiny Panel recommendations, reporting progress annually to CXCAP, Scrutiny Panel and customers.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny Panel terms of reference</li> <li>• Scrutiny Reviews and arising action plans</li> <li>• Scrutiny Panel Annual Review</li> </ul> <p><i>Stonewater's engagement offer:</i></p> <p>Customer Engagement Guide, which includes Scrutiny Panel.</p> <p>We support several key customer panels, linked to customer priorities and supporting legal and regulatory compliance. This includes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the Customer Building Safety Group, which brings together customers within our high-rise blocks to inform our Building Safety Resident</li> </ul>	<p>This is summarised in our Customer Engagement Guide.</p> <p>We review the impact and outcome of engagement activities, alongside customer feedback about its effectiveness, in our annual outturn reports. We also monitor and report on the impact of Scrutiny Panel recommendations.</p> <p>An internal audit in October 2024 will provide further assurance on the effectiveness of our engagement offer and how we support customers to scrutinise Stonewater.</p>
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<p><b>2. Communication:</b> Residents 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.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><i>Policy and delivery framework:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer Voice Policy</li> <li>• Customer Communications and Engagement Annual Plan</li> <li>• Resident Engagement Policy (Building Safety)</li> </ul> <p><i>Performance information:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenant Satisfaction Measure performance included in postal mailouts to all customers</li> <li>• Customer Annual Review. This is available in accessible formats.</li> <li>• Quarterly briefings for Scrutiny Panel on performance to inform their service reviews.</li> <li>• Updates on performance against our Customer Commitments, including on the Customer Hubb</li> </ul> <p><i>Service information:</i></p> <p>Numerous customer guides outlining services including repairs and damp, mould and condensation guides. These are made available in physical copies including accessible formats. We also undertake</p>	<p>Communicating effectively with customers is an organisational priority. Our Customer Voice Policy outlines how we approach customer communication, which is critical to our wider service delivery.</p> <p>This includes ensuring accessible information about performance, service standards and how Stonewater is run is made available to customers in a timely way.</p> <p>We have a roadmap in place to ensure that we can communicate with customers individually and according to their diverse needs. This includes a customer census and the adoption by 2025/26 of a new CRM to support customer communication preferences.</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Regular customer newsletters . We're consulting customers now and will make this available in accessible formats as needed.</li><li>• Programme of Live and Direct events, hosted on Facebook, themed around customers' priorities.</li><li>• Updates on Customer Hubb, social media and letters/updates on key issues, including for example, our complaints service in September 2024.</li><li>• Regular scheme and site updates and communications including newsletters, posters, events and meetings. This includes our Multi Disciplinary Team Pilot, trialling new locally based engagement and communication, including newsletters.</li></ul> <p>Specific examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Christopher Thomas Court Newsletter</li><li>• Newsletters for High Rise Buildings</li><li>• Updates for customers who receive services from Ian Williams</li></ul> <p><i>Stonewater information, including how we're run:</i></p> <p>This is provided to customers in multiple ways, including:</p>	
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<p><b>3. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:</b> Housing associations will be inclusive</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p><i>Policy and strategy framework:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social Housing Equality Framework</li> <li>• Customer Voice Policy</li> <li>• Vulnerable Persons Policy</li> </ul>	<p>Stonewater proactively demonstrates that we prioritise inclusivity and proactively seek involvement from customers from a range of backgrounds.</p>

<p>organisations which seek views from all groups. Approaches to resident involvement will be inclusive by engaging with residents from a range of backgrounds and experiences. Consultations with residents will include outreach to underrepresented communities, including through targeted communications.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• EDI Strategy</li> <li>• EDI Policy</li> <li>• Equality Impact Assessments</li> <li>• Customer Communications and Engagement Annual Plan</li> </ul> <p><i>Proactive approach to inclusive engagement:</i></p> <p>We take proactive steps to ensure our engagement is inclusive and this is a priority within our Policy and annual work plan. Progress includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting reasonable adjustments to customers in a new guide, arising from Scrutiny Panel recommendations</li> <li>• Consultation on accessible formats of the Customer Newsletter Autumn 2024</li> <li>• EDI reviews of key services e.g. complaints, engagement, lettings, anti-social behaviour and domestic abuse</li> <li>• Customer Inclusion Group</li> <li>• The new 2024 Customer Census, which will allow us to better understand customer EDI data and support more targeted involvement</li> <li>• Proactive targeting of customers to ensure all views are considered/shape our work e.g. engaging young people in Scrutiny campaign</li> </ul> <p><i>Learning and development:</i></p> <p>Ensuring our colleagues are trained and can proactively make reasonable adjustments is a priority</p>	<p>We are on track to achieve the Social Housing Equality Framework ‘Excellence’ level by 2027.</p> <p>Our approach is increasingly sophisticated as we undertake reviews to ensure key services are accessible and involve customers in improving our accessibility and inclusivity.</p> <p>We’re taking steps to improve our EDI customer data, which will support us to drive further service improvements. This includes our 2024 customer census and migrating in due course to a new CRM, which will support even more targeted communications and customer service.</p> <p>We’re also recognised nationally as leader EDI. This supports us to build effective and trust-based relationships with customers. It is also key to our social purpose and commitment to colleagues.</p>
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		<p>across all our services. In order to do this, we have put in place:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reasonable Adjustment training for all colleagues, including specific training for front line colleagues. This will soon evolve into learning for managers who have colleagues who need reasonable adjustments.</li><li>• We have a rolling EDI learning plan that we review monthly to ensure we are addressing learning needs, such as inclusive recruitment, managing/supporting Neuro-divergent colleagues and supporting customers with mental health challenges.</li><li>• We have trained a group of Customer Inclusion Champions to support colleagues who are dealing with claims of possible discrimination, ensuring we provide the right customer experience whilst ensuring colleagues feel confident to have challenging conversations.</li></ul> <p><i>Campaigning for inclusion and visibly championing EDI:</i></p> <p>This is an organisational priority and a key party of our EDI strategy. We recognise that we must ensure we are a diverse organisation to build trust with our customers. Steps to date include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 'Advanced Employer' in the Ethnicity Maturity Matrix</li></ul>	
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<p>4. <b>Quality:</b> Residents can expect their homes to be good quality, well maintained, safe and well managed.</p>	Yes	<p><i>Policy and delivery framework:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response Repairs Policy</li> <li>• Damp, Mould and Condensation Policy</li> <li>• Asbestos Policy</li> <li>• Fire Safety Policy</li> <li>• Gas Safety Policy</li> <li>• Electrical safety policy</li> <li>• Water Hygeine policy</li> <li>• Building Safety policy</li> <li>• Health and Safety Policy</li> <li>• Lifting Equipment Policy</li> <li>• Adaptations Policy</li> <li>• Homes Strategy 2024-2029</li> <li>• Decent Homes Standard reporting</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Management Policy &amp; Neighbourhood Planning Project</li> <li>• Anti-Social Behaviour Policy</li> <li>• Mount Green Housing Association’s Good Neighbourhood Management Policy</li> </ul> <p><i>Understanding customer experience:</i></p> <p>We use a number of KPIs including</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevant Tenant Satisfaction Measures</li> </ul>	<p>Our Homes Strategy (2024-2029) delivers a step-change in how we plan, target and deliver property services together with our customers. It underpins the delivery of our property services to ensure our homes are good quality, well maintained, safe and well managed.</p> <p>The strategy sets out how we use data to identify where, when and how investments need to be made. This includes incorporating qualitative and other customer feedback from multiple channels to inform where services are meeting expectations and where improvements need to be made.</p> <p>The Strategy is supported by a new communications plan which allows customers to challenge and scrutinise our plans as well as enabling us to tailor</p>



		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transactional customer satisfaction</li> </ul> <p><i>Customer voice:</i></p> <p>We capture Customer Voice relevant to repairs, investment and building safety in many ways. This includes:</p> <p>Scrutiny Panel, Customer Building Safety Group and other involved groups.</p> <p>We have co-created customer guides to key services including Estates Services, Repairs, Damp, Mould and Condensation.</p> <p>We communicate critical updates about safety, including annual fire action and evacuation information to relevant customers, bespoke information for customers in our high-rise residential blocks and a recurring seasonal fire safety customer campaign which is relevant to all customers.</p> <p>We provide extensive services to customers to support successful neighbourhoods. This includes involving customers in service design for our housing management policies and strategies, for example, Anti-Social Behaviour and Neighbourhood policies, customer guides and Multi-Disciplinary Pilot.</p> <p>We also work with customers to build successful local partnerships, including Stonewater Neighbourhood Community Day programme and the Customer Champion volunteer programme.</p>	<p>investments to suit individual requirements.</p> <p>We assess the effectiveness of our strategy and its implementation through regular 1:1 visits with customers (target is to engage with 95% of our households) to assess the quality and condition of their homes and overlay key feedback e.g. tenant satisfaction measures, transactional survey results and customer Scrutiny outcomes.</p> <p>Additionally, we work to take a holistic view understanding the importance of our role in partnership building, maintaining communal space and tackling anti-social behaviour. This includes building on our Neighbourhood Project Plan and Mount Green Housing Association's incoming Good Neighbourhood Management Strategy.</p>
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<p><b>5. Relationships:</b> Housing associations will treat all residents with respect in all of their interactions. Relationships between residents and housing associations will be based on openness, honesty and transparency.</p>		<p><i>Policy framework:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer Voice Policy</li> <li>• Vulnerable Persons Policy</li> <li>• EDI Policy</li> </ul> <p><i>Understanding customer experience:</i></p> <p>We seek customer feedback through our Tenant Satisfaction Measure performance around respect (TP08) alongside our wider KPIs, complaints and insight/</p> <p><i>Culture and performance:</i></p> <p>We emphasise the importance of respect-based relationships through our Customer Promise, which underpins:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance Development Review (PDR) objectives linked to Customer Promise, Stonewater values and professional standards</li> <li>• Use of quality assurance frameworks and other measures to ensure we treat customers</li> </ul>	<p>Our Strategic Plan highlights the importance of our Customer Promise. Delivery is underpinned through our strategies, policies and procedures, including Customer Voice, EDI and Vulnerable Persons Policies.</p> <p>Our Customer Promise is “We’re proud to make things personal. If it matters to our customers, it matters to us”. This complements our organisational values, including ensuring we always act in an ethical way.</p> <p>We understand how our customers’ view our performance on respect through annual Tenant Satisfaction Measure surveys – particularly TP08 which asks “Customers who report that they agree their landlord treats them fairly and with respect.” and have</p>

		<p>with respect in our day-to-day work e.g. check vulnerabilities as part of complaints handling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extensive training, such as : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ My Customer Promise Training – including specific training around tackling stigma in social housing</li> <li>○ My Customer Promise Training for contracting partners alongside Toolbox talks</li> <li>○ Extensive mandatory Reasonable Adjustments and EDI training in place, including for all frontline colleagues.</li> <li>○ Equality, Diversity and Inclusion colleague champions are being recruited to influence business culture.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><i>Advocacy:</i></p> <p>We are supporters of Stop Social Housing Stigma Campaign.</p>	<p>associated improvement plans in place.</p> <p>This is complemented through effective use of PDRs, training and quality assurance, as well as listening to customer voice to inform service improvements.</p> <p>We support initiatives to promote inclusive society and seek to influence decision-makers to make policy decisions to support our customers and their wellbeing.</p>
<b>Together with Tenant Charter</b>	<b>Comply</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Narrative/explanation</b>
<p>6. <b>Voice and influence:</b> Housing associations will seek and value the views of residents and will use this information to</p>	Yes	<p><i>Policy and delivery framework:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer Voice Policy</li> <li>• Customer Communications and Engagement Annual Plan</li> <li>• Resident engagement strategy (Building Safety)</li> <li>• Annual outturn review of Customer Engagement and Communication delivery</li> </ul>	<p>Our governance framework ensures customer voice shapes our decisions about our services and supports customers to hold us to account. This is championed by CXCAP and Customer Scrutiny Panel.</p>

<p>inform decisions. Every individual resident will feel listened to by their housing association on the issues that matter to them and can speak without fear.</p>		<p>Performance is monitored by CXCAP and the Board.</p> <p><i>Understanding customer experience:</i></p> <p>We seek this in a myriad of ways, including our Tenant Satisfaction Measure performance around listening and acting on customer views (TP06) and keeping customers informed (TP07) and arising improvement plans. We also undertake a survey at least once every three years to understand customers' feedback about our engagement service.</p> <p><i>Ensuring inclusive participation:</i></p> <p>This is critical to our Customer Communications and Engagement Annual Plan and examples include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual review of engaged customers by protected characteristics to identify under/over representation and associated improvement plans to drive inclusion</li> <li>• Promote training and provide equipment to support customers to get involved, including digital inclusion support</li> <li>• Customer Inclusion Group</li> </ul> <p><i>Examples of effective customer engagement supporting service improvements:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Scrutiny Panel recommendation progress report</li> </ul>	<p>Our Customer Voice Policy outlines our service offer and how we will assess our performance and the outcomes of customer engagement.</p> <p>We work to ensure our engagement offer is inclusive and all customers feel listened to, valued and able to take part. As well as taking steps to make it easy for customers to get involved, we also assess how representative our engaged customers are to allow us to identify opportunities to further promote inclusivity.</p>
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<p><b>7. When things go wrong:</b> Residents will have simple and accessible routes for raising issues, making complaints and seeking redress. Residents will receive timely advice and support when things go wrong.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Scrutiny Review</li> </ul> <p><i>Policy and performance framework:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• See annual self-assessment against the Complaint Handling Code</li> <li>• Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy</li> <li>• Compensation policy</li> <li>• Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report</li> <li>• Customer Voice Policy</li> </ul> <p><i>Complaints KPIs:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenant satisfaction measures CH01- Complaints acknowledged and responded to on time at stages 1 and 2</li> <li>• 80% resolution at stage 1</li> <li>• Tenant satisfaction measures CH02- Complaints/1000 at stages 1 and 2</li> <li>• Transactional satisfaction</li> <li>• Tenant Satisfaction Measure TP09 – satisfaction with complaint handling &amp; arising improvement plans</li> </ul> <p><i>Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS) compliance:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual self-assessment against the Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code</li> <li>• Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report</li> </ul>	<p>Stonewater’s Customer Relations Team is responsible for delivering Stonewater’s complaints service. We updated our Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy in line with the 2024 Complaint Handling Code in May 2024.</p> <p>We measure our performance against a suite of KPIs, including satisfaction, volume and complaints responded to on time which are reported as Tenant Satisfaction Measures.</p> <p>Our Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement report outlines our commitment to learning from complaints and our self-assessment against the HOS Code.</p> <p>Our customer friendly guides are available in a range of formats, including different languages to ensure every customer can complain if they need to do so. Our CCLP ensures customers shape our learning from complaints.</p>
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