

# North Devon Homes Customer Involvement Strategy 2019 to 2021



# Putting customers at the heart of what we do

## Contents

- 1 Putting customers at the heart of what we do
- 2 What we want to achieve
- 3 Embedding co-creation and co-design
- 4 What does this look like
- 5 Our digital offer
- 6 Our community offer
- 7 How will we inform you that we have listened
- 8 How will we measure this joint working (service standard)
- 9 How can customers get involved



**Robert Stronge**  
Chair of the NDH Board

“This strategy enhances our longstanding commitment of engagement with customers and is vital in helping us shape the organisation to meet the needs, views and aspirations of those who live in our homes today and tomorrow. No-one else is better placed to have a view on our homes and services than the community we work with.”



**Martyn Gimber**  
Chief Executive

“I passionately believe that customers should be at the heart of everything we do and by working together we can create a better business that keeps us focussed on what matters and keeps us accountable to our community”



**Dawn Ash**  
Customer and Chair of C90

“This strategy puts customers right at the heart of NDH and gives them a real voice in shaping the future of their homes and the services provided. Customers will feel empowered to be involved in the decisions that affect their everyday lives and the communities that they live in.”

This Community Involvement Strategy sets out how North Devon Homes will involve customers throughout the design and implementation of our services with a shift from simply consulting, to actually co-creating solutions together.

By working together with our customers to co-design the future we will;

- Embrace modern technology and a more open culture so that we can
- Share information better and empower customers to have a voice
- Communicate back to customers the difference and influence they are making
- Create opportunities for customers to actively generate ideas, discussions and make suggestions then together decide together what happens next.



# Embedding co-creation and co-design

## What we want to achieve

We are proud of the way customers have helped co-design this strategy alongside staff, directors and board members creating fantastic opportunities for our organisation to be at the cutting edge of Customer Engagement.

Customer Engagement will support our corporate objectives and in doing so we will use our customers voice to influence sector wide issues and policies.

This strategy is about rethinking and modernising customer/community involvement with a fresh approach, tools and techniques to develop new ways for customers to be heard.

Through investment in new technologies and our IT infrastructure we will be able to offer more online options to overcome barriers such as travel and lack of time.

We recognise one size does not fit all. Within this strategy we set out how customer engagement can be accessible to all, enjoyable and opportunities for customers to build confidence or gain skills for future employment opportunities.

Through this meaningful and positive customer engagement we aim to end social housing stereotypes and stigma and build stronger communities.

### What this means

- Customers working with us in a meaningful way that allows an exchange of opinions and ideas.
- Customers feeling that their views, experiences and ideas are being listened to in designing and reviewing services in their homes and neighbourhoods.
- Customers being empowered and having the confidence to make informed decisions and suggestions knowing we will implement them and if we cant tell them why and/or when we might be able to do so in the future.

### We'll do this by

- Ensuring meaningful customer involvement at every level of our organisation.
- Getting the right balance of staff and customers within our formal engagement panels.
- Ensuring customers have the right tools, information, knowledge and understanding to make informed opinions.
- Providing relevant training for engaged customers both internally and externally with opportunities for customers to network within the sector with other engaged customers e.g. TPAS\* networking events, on-line forums and e-learning all customers can access.
- Celebrating customer led innovation within sector award schemes and sharing best practice.

### Why?

- Customer Engagement supports our strategic corporate plan and corporate values.
- Customers having a voice, being listened to and having a genuine say in how their homes and services are managed is important to us.
- We want our customers to have regional and national influence within Local Authority, County and Government policy making decisions and shared best practice within our sector.
- We want to share with customers how their voice and influence is making a real difference in shaping the services we provide to you.



**Patsy Chapple**  
Customer and  
Tenant2Tenant Advisor

"Becoming involved with NDH as a volunteer 10 years ago has changed my life. Being involved as a T2T advisor helping customers resolve their concerns or supporting them to be able to move into a smaller more manageable home is very rewarding."



**Sarah Freeman**  
Customer and  
Fresh Ideas Member

"Fresh Ideas give NDH customers a voice to which they know they will be listened to in great depth, expressing ideas from wording or designing a new layout of customer letters or brochures. It is always varied, interesting and rewarding sharing our views and ideas as a group and making friends in the process."

\*All customers can access TPAS through our NDH membership, see our website for link [www.ndh-ltd.co.uk](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk)

# What does this look like?

Digital	Improving the customer experience through embracing new technology and systems that improve communication and access to services
C90 Group	This is a strategic governance group made up of customers, board members and staff that meet every 90 days to co-create service delivery and inform the board on customers opinions and suggestions
Scrutiny Panel	A group of customers who help shape key areas of the business by taking a deep dive approach into services then offering suggesting for improvement
Fresh Ideas Group	Focus groups open to all customers to review a range of communications and policies to ensure they are written in customer friendly way
Local Conversations	Door-to-door surveys gathering information and also having conversations with customers on what they would like to improve in their neighbourhood
Journey Mapping	A research technique to capture the emotional impact of the journey by asking a customer to talk through or show how they use a service and how it made them feel offering solutions and suggestions for improvement.
Tenant 2 Tenant	Customer to customer interaction to help gain a better understanding of different perspectives held by others and to support customers.
Summer Fayre	Annual event for all customers and families to attend, meet NDH staff, have fun and provide feedback in an informal setting
Generations Together	Older and younger generations coming together in a variety of events and settings sharing learning, experience and breaking down isolation
Young NDH	A unique youth offer for young people to access, health and wellbeing support, educational support and to provide a wide range of activities all year round
Consultation and Feedback	Multiple channels and approaches so that people are given the opportunity to participate in ways that work for them.
Community Walks	Community walk-about with staff, customers and partner agencies gathering ideas and local solutions to encourage a sense of working together to build great places to live.



**Marc Rostock**  
Director of Neighbourhoods

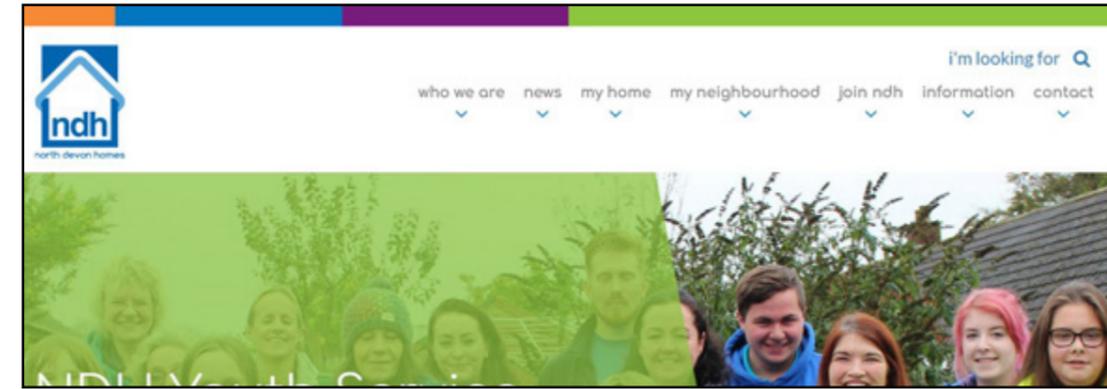
“We have worked hard to create C90 as a place the customer voices can be heard, listened to and responded to. We are engaging customers in key decisions at the right stage and improving our accountability and quality as a result. We are stronger, better and more informed as a result our customer views being heard.”



**Michelle Rigler**  
Customer and Scrutiny Panel Chair

“The close partnership between NDH and the Scrutiny Panel allows us to look in depth at various aspects of the business and this has led to changes which have had a positive impact for all customers. Our recommendations and service review reports feed into NDH at a strategic and governance level”

# Our digital offer 2019 to 2021



Digital engagement cannot replace all the functions that face-to-face customer led engagement can bring and many of our customers value face-to-face engagement.

Our digital offer will form part of a blended Community Engagement offer that will complement our governance structure and corporate plan as outlined in this strategy.

As part of our digital strategy to improve the customer experience we will develop a wide range of communication options for our customers. This will include the development of a Customer Portal (on-line customer accounts) to enable customers to contact us 24/7 at times which are convenient for differing working patterns and lifestyles.

Customers are at the heart of this digital shift being involved in design, testing and implementing throughout 2019/2020.

Customer Portals will enable direct reporting of repairs, neighbourhood issues, instant access to rent accounts and a speedier communication system.

Through our improved digital technology we will offer many new ways for customers to engage with us including:

- Online consultation using a variety of platforms for example: emailing, texting,

social media, on-line chat so we can reach out to customers who do not normally engage with us.

- Opportunities for customers to access online e-learning to increase confidence, knowledge and skills effective in customer engagement.
- Online customer forums using social media technology for example Facebook groups.
- Developing remote attendance to join meetings such as Skype.
- Social media avenues for customers to provide online feedback.
- Text messaging “quickie surveys”.

Customers will be able to access online customer information through our website, for example:

- Information leaflets designed for customers by customers
- Customer designed easy to read policies that layout what customers can expect from our service delivery
- Self help videos that explain how to do simple repairs
- Online newsletters
- Online forms

Customers will be offered training opportunities in using and understanding our new digital offer in partnership with Positive People (a Lottery funded project until 2022 managed by Cosmic and Pluss).

## Our community offer

Our Community Offer is inclusive of all our customers from the age of six in our Junior Youth Clubs right through to our oldest residents across North Devon.

We will take 'local conversations' and road shows to your neighbourhoods and homes to gather your opinions. Some of the topics we might seek your opinion on will have been suggested by customers working in our Scrutiny and C90 environments when they wish to seek a wider view on a subject or service; often these same customers will join us at these events.

We will host community based events bringing together our younger and older generations so that older people feel they are at the heart of their communities especially when they are living alone.

We will support community events such as coffee mornings, Christmas lunches, summer BBQ's, Summer Fayre and carry out 'light touch' or 'quickie surveys' to gather your opinions as well as providing customers with an opportunity to join in and have some fun and get to know our Team NDH staff.

We will run community based consultation events out in the community inviting everyone to come along and share opinions, offer suggestions and tell us how they feel about specific elements of our service offer.

We will support and equip our customer led and designed Tenant 2 Tenant offer which provides a one to one support service to help customers. We will also help to recruit more customers to this group. We will support partnership working to assist



customers to access training to become self employed or gain the skills required to undertake paid employment.

We will work with partners to provide digital training in community centres and cafes across North Devon.

We will listen to your ideas for community projects and where we can seek partners and external funding to help make them happen e.g neighbourhood tidy-up days.

We will continue working with young people and young communities providing youth clubs, informal learning and support on a pathway to employment and where we can provide Apprenticeship opportunities within NDH.

We will work with families and young people offering support and where can, access other services to help.



North Devon Homes are members of 'Tpas' all of our customers can register for free with them online to access forums and information

[www.tpas.org.uk/member-search?type=&region=&stockBand=&search=north+devon](http://www.tpas.org.uk/member-search?type=&region=&stockBand=&search=north+devon)

## How we will measure this joint working

Our promise to customers\*:

- C90 will meet every 90 days, meetings will have formal minutes, outcomes and impact that will be published on our website to demonstrate Customer Involvement at a governance level in our decision making process.
- Our Scrutiny panel will meet monthly and have formal minutes, reviews, outcomes and impact that will be reported in our newsletters and Annual Report to Tenants ("Your Local Standard").
- Fresh Ideas group will meet at least 16 times a year, outcomes and impact will be reported in our newsletters and on our website.
- We will collect 1,000 customer points of view a year reporting back to customers how these influenced our service design.
- We will carry out a minimum of four local conversations each year visiting different communities to ensure a wide range of customers have opportunities to have their voice heard.
- We will consult with 80 customers every 90 days across different geographical areas.
- We will hold six community based consultation events a year e.g. journey mapping.
- We will hold 12 community events a year and a Summer Fayre event.
- We will work with external partners to enhance our engagement offer to customers and will report on these opportunities every 90 days.
- We will collect 'Value for Money' data on the number of service changes made



by customers and report this back to customers through our website, social media and newsletters.

- We will review (and be accountable), in partnership with customers, our satisfaction/dissatisfaction levels for the services we provide every 90 days.
- We will work with customers to review and update all our local offers (service standards) and be accountable on how we are doing against these targets.
- We will run 96 weekly locally based youth clubs a year.
- We track the impact of our work using a Transformative Evaluation Framework.
- We will measure our impact with families and interventions with young people.



**Dr Debbie Hay**  
NDH Board Member

"I am passionate that customer involvement makes a difference to people's lives and is at the heart of the business. By measuring our activities and learning from working together with customers we can remain focussed on what works and make a real difference."

\*'Our promise to customers' is our Customer Engagement Local Offer

## How we will inform you that we have listened

It is important to us that we tell customers how their voice, suggestions for improvements and ideas have influenced our business objectives.

It is also important that we tell customers why we have sometimes not been able to undertake their suggestions and why not.

As well as using our digital communication platforms (e.g. social media and our website) we will publish how customers have shaped, influenced and provided points of view on how we can improve our service within our Newsletter "Home News" and our "Your Local Standard".

### C90 Group:

C90 stands for 'Customer 90 days'. This formal group is made up from a range of people from across the business and the community who are customers, managers, staff members, board members, Directors and our Chief Executive.

The Chair of our C90 group is a customer and all members work side by side on an equal basis to help deliver the vision of the company "working together to create communities where people want to live".

Through our training opportunities and work with young people we will boost our ability to attract talent into the organisation. We will share these successes with customers and celebrate our young apprentice scheme and customers achievements.

**Customer**

"Going out with Staff to help do surveys out in the community provides customers with opportunities to talk to other customers and share their thoughts, feelings and ideas about their neighbourhoods and homes"



**What does C90 do?**

- It makes sure that what we have promised customers in this strategy is being delivered.
- The group monitors and checks the quality over all of the services we provide to our customers over the previous 90 days.
- It links customers points of view directly into our board.
- The group develop new policies and changes to the way services are delivered with customers being at the heart of these changes and improvement decisions.

**Lin Hannam**  
Customer and C90 Member

"It is great to know that our ideas are listened to and that we have feedback from the board on the value of our work."

## How can customers get involved?

All of our customers will have an equal opportunity to become involved regardless of their situation

Being involved bears no cost to our customers who attend meetings and other activities (for example: conferences, training events). We will cover expenses for travel and/or provide transport and other reasonable costs to encourage everyone to get involved.

Getting involved makes a difference.

There many ways to become involved in the activities outlined in this strategy; information on events will be posted on our Facebook pages, website, online forums, newsletters and displayed in communal areas.

Our "I want to get involved form" will be available through our new digital offer so all customers can express an interest in attending events.

Where customers have told us they would like to take part in "quickie surveys" we will contact them through their preferred type of communication e.g. texting, emails, telephone.

We will develop new ways of ommunication with customers including "live chat" and virtual meetings.



**Tracey Hearn**  
Customer Scrutiny Panel

"On scrutiny I can be a voice for the customers, already we have made changes to secure tenancies for their family homes. Being a volunteer I have made so many good friends, gained confidence and learnt new skills while giving back to the community to make it better."

**Tell us what you think, share your ideas**

Help us build the future you want

This leaflet explains how customers can get involved in helping to design and review the services we provide now and in the future through our community involvement activities

For more information visit our website for the "Tell us what you think, share your ideas" leaflet

[www.ndh-ltd.co.uk](http://www.ndh-ltd.co.uk)



Want to get involved?  
Just call our Community Involvement Team:  
01271 313384 or email:  
[tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk](mailto:tracey.williams@ndh-ltd.co.uk)