

**Customer  
Voice**



# Customer Voice Strategy

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2024-2029

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# 01

## Foreword

*Ian Mitchell –  
Managing Director - One Vision Housing*

From the 1st April 2024 the Regulator of Social Housing introduced a revised set of Regulatory Standards applicable to all social housing landlords and a new approach to inspection that encompasses, for the first time in over decade, assessment of the ‘consumer standards’.

At One Vision Housing (OVH) we have been watching closely as the first round of Regulatory judgements have been released, following inspections and we have been inspired by a number of organisations that have achieved the top ‘C1’ gradings in response to the consumer standards.

These type of gradings demonstrate that organisations fully understand the needs of their customers, that they are given opportunity to influence service delivery / strategic direction and that their voice is heard in decision-making processes.

This is exactly where we want to be. This ethos completely matches our long-standing history of close collaboration with our customers and also represents our future path as we constantly seek to improve all aspects of our customer experience and the relationships of trust that we build.

This version of our Customer Voice Strategy continues in this vein and looks to build on the many improvements and achievements we have made over recent times in creating involvement opportunities for our customers and tailoring our services to meet individual needs.

We want to continue to use the data that we hold about our customers intelligently, so that we can do everything we can to help them sustain tenancies, providing the right forms of support where it is needed and ensuring our ongoing investment programme is targeted to deliver maximum benefit, now and into the future.

We want to continue to provide accessible opportunities for customers to have their say in how we plan and deliver services as a whole and for areas that are of special interest to them and most importantly, we want our customers to know their voice counts.

Every interaction we have with our customers, not just those who regularly get involved through our engagement structures, is important to us and is a learning opportunity to help us improve our services.

By speaking to our involved customers in developing this revised Strategy and the action plan that underpins it, we know that we have the same aspirations and goals and we look forward to continuing to work closely together to ensure they are achieved.

**Ian Mitchell**  
Managing Director – One Vision Housing



# 02 Summary of Aims and Objectives

## Summary of Aims and Objectives

One Vision Housing Customer Voice Strategy 2024-29				
Main Aim	To ensure the customer voice matters			
What we want to achieve (aims)	A detailed understanding of customers / properties / neighbourhoods	Fair and accessible services that treat customers with respect and meets their diverse needs	Accountable and transparent engagement where the customer voice influences organisational decision making	Effective redress when things go wrong and constant improvement
What we will do (objectives)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improve data collection on customers and property condition including intelligence gained from daily interactions</li><li>Work closely with strategic partner agencies</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ensure there are no barriers to accessing services and put actions in place to address any negative differentials in provision by working with impacted groups</li><li>Ensure fairness, respect and inclusion are key principles of our service standards</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improve collaboration with customers and decision-making bodies (Board and senior management team)</li><li>Provide feedback on influence</li><li>Improve information provision</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Provide effective complaints provisions and learn from mistakes</li><li>Work with customers on target setting / action plans for improvement</li><li>Use data to drive service improvement / determine investment priorities</li></ul>
Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Data driven service planning and delivery</li><li>Value for money and joined-up service provision</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improved customer satisfaction</li><li>Tenancy sustainment</li><li>Demand for services from new customers</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Regulatory compliance</li><li>Open and accountable organisational culture driven by customer priorities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Progressive and forward thinking service provider that constantly evolves</li></ul>
Monitoring and Measuring	Annual Report, Customer Satisfaction Reporting, Regulatory Returns, Regulatory Grading, Tenant Satisfaction Measures -reporting and comparison			





# 03 Introduction and Context

The new approach to social housing regulation and inspection that was introduced from April 2024 has highlighted more than ever the importance of establishing a relationship of trust and collaboration between a landlord and its customer base.

We fully support this 'reset' of the landlord and tenant relationship and the principles behind the revised consumer standards as they are in line with our own core purposes of providing excellent services and good quality, warm, safe homes that are efficient to run in sustainable neighbourhoods.

In terms of operational context, the new government that has been in place since July 2024 has given its support for the revised regulatory regime and has endorsed the new consumer standards, ensuring there will continuity of approach in this regard.

The new government have also set in train the parliamentary approvals process to press ahead with parts of the Social Housing Regulation Act 2023 that require secondary legislation / regulations to be enacted.

Through this legislative programme we know that over the period 2024-26 there will be a number of significant impacts for the social housing sector. In some cases we have already proactively started to work with our customers ahead of the legislation being introduced and in other areas we know there will be work to do, to ensure there is a smooth transition.

Subject to parliamentary approval, key areas of change include:

## The Renters Rights Bill

- Bringing an end to all 'shorthold tenancies' – (Whilst this will have little or no impact for existing customers it will mean going forward, OVH will no longer be able to use 'introductory tenancies' or any 'fixed-term tenancies' and there will be revised Grounds for seeking possession – where this required)

- Awaabs Law will be introduced mandating specified response times for investigation and remediation of hazards within properties that are potentially harmful to health e.g. where there is a presence of damp and mould
- An updated 'Decent Homes Standard' – which will have implications for OVH's investment programme and what must be place (within a time period yet to be confirmed) to ensure properties are compliant with the standard
- Customers rights to have pet, which subject to certain conditions being met cannot unreasonably be refused

## Social Tenants Access to Information Requests (STAIRS Legislation)

- This will mean social housing customers will be able to request access to certain categories of information from their landlords (similar to the Freedom of Information Legislation)

Inclusion of a 'Competency and Conduct Standard' to the Regulatory Framework

- This will require staff at specified levels achieving professional housing management qualifications and the introduction of a company-wide 'Code of Conduct' – outlining expected behaviours in service delivery

In addition to the above we know there will likely be changes to planning law and the funding regime that is available to assist our continued development programme and we will also look to keep our customers involved in our plans to reach net zero carbon emissions and any new requirements in this area.





# 04 Where are we now?

To ensure we continue to provide excellent services to our customers and so we can fulfil all of customer voice promises and expectations, we have reorganised our staffing structure to bring together in one team, several roles that are key to gathering and understanding customer intelligence, these include:

- Complaints Co-ordinator
  - Quality and Assurance Co-ordinator
  - Customer Voice Co-ordinator
  - Outbound Survey Assistants
- Customer Intelligence Assistant
  - Customer Experience Manager
  - Customer Experience Apprentice
  - Stakeholder Engagement Officer

The Customer Experience Team led by the Head of Customer and Business Transformation and reporting directly to the Managing Director for Housing, work in close collaboration with the Head of Councillor Liaison (which includes responsibilities for stakeholder engagement and the facilitation of OVH's Community Development Fund).

The Customer Experience Team produce 'triangulated' (i.e. seeing it from many sides) intelligence reports that can be used to identify areas for service improvement and provide assurance to the Board that customer intelligence has worked its way up through the business.

Through the work of the Customer Experience Team and the collective effort with all our staff and customers we have been able to deliver a number of improvements to our 'customer voice' experience, since the last revision of this Strategy. Listed below are non-exhaustive examples of activities we have undertaken and are progressing and how they relate to the most relevant Consumer Standard:



## Safety and Quality Standard

Relevant Required Outcome	Example activities we have undertaken or are progressing with our customers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Registered providers must provide an effective, efficient and timely repairs, maintenance and planned improvements service for the homes and communal areas for which they are responsible</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• In 2023 we commenced implementation plans for the recommendations to come out of the Better Social Housing Review (produced by the National Housing Federation and the Chartered Institute of Housing). The first phase of this plan has included a review with our involved customers on 'what customers would want to see from an ideal repairs service'.</li><li>• Following the journey from a customer's perspective in terms of reporting repairs, appointments being made, works being carried out and aftercare / follow-up / satisfaction monitoring, the involved customers have developed a draft 'Repairs Standard'.</li><li>• We have also worked with representatives from other local housing organisations to refine this standard and when complete this will be forwarded to the OVH Board / senior management team for OVH to implement as many of the recommendations as are possible.</li><li>• The standards / expectations of operative behaviours from this exercise were also weaved into training that was provided to OVH's main repairs contractor's staff (Sovini Property Services) early in 2024</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Registered providers must assist tenants seeking housing adaptations to access appropriate services</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We have completed three detailed 'Customer Journey Mapping' exercises to gain lived experience insights of OVH service provision, with action plans developed to overcome any barriers to service identified or deliver improvements, where required but also highlighting areas of good practice:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Furnished Tenancy Service</li><li>○ New starter tenancies</li><li>○ Aids and adaptations service</li></ul></li></ul>

## Tenancy Standard

Relevant Required Outcome	Example activities we have undertaken or are progressing with our customers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Registered providers must support tenants to maintain their tenancy or licence. Where a registered provider ends a tenancy or licence, they must offer affected tenants advice and assistance</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• We have established an internal and cross-team 'Knowing our Customers' project group – to ensure individual customers needs are captured and services are adjusted accordingly. We have established a similar working group to assess TSM performance and develop remedial plans if performance is not as expected in any area</li></ul>

Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard	
Relevant Required Outcome	Example activities we have undertaken or are progressing with our customers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Registered providers must treat tenants and prospective tenants with fairness and respect.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We have carried out a detailed 'Customer Journey Mapping Exercise' on new tenants' experience of allocations / sign-up / post-move-in support , identifying any barriers there are to accessing the service and areas where processes can be improved. All recommendations from the exercise have been implemented in full</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In relation to the housing and landlord services they provide, registered providers must take action to deliver fair and equitable outcomes for tenants and, where relevant, prospective tenants.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We have worked with our customers on developing a comprehensive Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and supporting action plan which includes a commitment to improve customer data capture and analysis and using this information to provide tailored service delivery</li><li>Working with our customers we established a Vulnerable Persons and Reasonable Adjustments Policy to ensure we make best use of every customer interaction to meet customers' needs in our service delivery and ensure this information is kept up to date</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Registered providers must take tenants' views into account in their decision making about how landlord services are delivered and communicate how tenants' views have been considered.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We have established a schedule of regular meetings with the Chair of our Scrutiny Panel and Chair of the OVH Board to improve information flow and accountability</li><li>We have improved our approach for customer involvement and input into our strategic planning process and customers contribute to the annual reviews of key front-facing strategic documents, including:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>OVH Customer Voice Strategy</li><li>OVH Strategic Plan</li><li>OVH Asset Management Strategy</li><li>Sovini Group Equality Diversity and Inclusion Strategy</li><li>Sovini Group Carbon Reduction and Environmental Management Strategy</li></ul></li><li>We have established an internal and cross-team 'Knowing our Customers' project group – to ensure individual customers needs are captured and services are adjusted accordingly. We have established a similar working group to assess TSM performance and develop remedial plans if performance is not as expected in any area</li><li>Over 100 new customers have registered as showing an interest in being involved in regular customer voice activities</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Registered providers must communicate with tenants and provide information so tenants can use landlord services, understand what to expect from their landlord, and hold their landlord to account.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We will be posting out to every customer our year end performance against the Tenant Satisfaction Measures</li><li>We have developed a monthly 'Customer Voice Newsletter' (available in preferred format) to keep our involved customers informed of all customer voice activity and opportunities for future involvement</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Registered providers must collect and provide information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in delivering landlord services.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We share detailed collated performance / satisfaction reports with our involved customers and this is used to set the scope of any Tenant Scrutiny investigations</li><li>Our TSM performance information is available on our website</li><li>We produce regular 'You said – We did' reports on our website detailing how we have taken customer feedback (in all forms) and used this to drive service improvement</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Registered providers must ensure complaints are addressed fairly, effectively, and promptly</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We have established a customer-led complaints panel to assess complaints performance and carry out complaints audits for continual improvement</li></ul>

Over 2024 we have been reviewing the regulatory gradings and reports from housing organisations that have been inspected under the revised Regulatory Standards to see how the new approach works in practice.

The learning from this analysis from these reviews is shared with our customer Scrutiny Team for any potential areas of good practice we may want to refine / adopt for our own purposes and to identify any areas where we need to make enhancements.

Our current 'involved customers' enjoy the experience of contributing via these mechanisms and in a bid to encourage others to get involved have been keen to stress that taking part does not require any specialist expertise or high degree of commitment.

The choices available for involvement mean there is something for everyone in terms of the time required or subject matters considered.

Our current involved customers describe in their own words what 'getting involved really means to them:



*"I recommend that anyone who wants to join Customer Voice should, as by joining you can help others and also OVH to improve the quality of life for yourself and other customers"*

**Bernard Blackmore**

*"I like to be involved because I am passionate about where I live, in particular the safety aspect which gives residents confidence to live in their environment"*

**Margaret Hurst**

*"I like to be involved and believe that Customer Voice helps in promoting equality and making sure that everyone's voice is heard"*

**Beryl Hall**



Detailed below in Table 1 are the current different mechanisms by which OVH customers can get involved and can express their voice to influence service delivery. As outlined in below, over 2024-2025 we will be reviewing these structures with our customers to ensure they are fit for purpose and will assist OVH in meeting its regulatory requirements.

Table 1

OVH Customer Voice Framework - Involvement Opportunities		
Type of involvement	What is involved?	Outcomes
Tenant Scrutiny Team	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Involved customers receive training to be able to carry out detailed assessments on OVH service areas identified as being a priority by dips in performance or escalations of complaints. The assessments are programmed and a minimum of two reviews will be carried out each year</li><li>The Scrutiny Team Chair will have the option to escalate any failure of OVH management to respond to customer concerns at any time (this will include work undertaken by the Scrutiny Team or any concerns that are passed to the Team by other customers. Customers wanting to raise a concern in this way should first notify OVH who will ensure confidential contact can be made with the customer and the Scrutiny Team.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Where performance information indicates there is a concern with a service area, the Scrutiny Team will carry out an investigation from a Tenants perspective and make recommendations for improvement</li><li>Scrutiny Team will have full access to back-office functions and cooperation from OVH staff in their investigative processes</li><li>Scrutiny Team will act as a conduit for concerns raised by customers or through their own work direct to the Board and will provide feedback, where required</li></ul>
Service Review Group (SRG)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Involved customers meet with OVH staff on a scheduled basis to discuss all performance information and customer feedback including complaints received and services linked to the Consumer Standards, including:</li><li>Community Safety, Customer Access, Neighbourhood Services, Independent Living, Repairs, Void Works, Compliance, Communal Cleaning, Grounds Maintenance, Home Improvement Works / Decent Homes, Buildings Safety, Carbon Reduction Measures</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Group agree and assess performance against a suite of performance indicators and service standards</li><li>The Group can expect explanation and remediation plans where performance or service delivery does not reach the expected standards or targets</li><li>The Group can recommend investigation by the Scrutiny Team for a service area</li></ul>
Tenant Inspectors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Once identified, trained involved customers will work alongside OVH Officers or independently to reality check service delivery and processes, on a programmed basis</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Feedback from the customers perspective, highlighting both examples of good practice and areas for improvement and reports are fed back via the SRG or Scrutiny Team</li></ul>
Brand Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Scheduled meetings twice a year before publication of Tenants Newsletter, 'In-Vision', Annual Report and as required by large communication projects</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>OVH tenant publications proof-red and customer approved before circulation</li></ul>

OVH Customer Voice Framework - Involvement Opportunities		
Type of involvement	What is involved?	Outcomes
Residents Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Organised groups formed to represent and promote local interests</li><li>Training and advice provided on forming a committee and adopting formal constitution documents</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Representative structures established to meet with OVH, Statutory Service Providers and other stakeholders to promote local interests</li><li>Groups that reach certain operating criteria (e.g. constituted, meeting financial rules) can access funding opportunities for local activity / improvement projects / social isolation campaigns</li></ul>
Tenant Management Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Subject to certain conditions being met (majority of members - usually a formal residents group - being in favour, training being provided and competence levels independently assessed and majority vote of all tenants in the proposed area being in favour) - OVH can grant permission for management of selected services to be transferred to the Tenant Management Organisation under a legally binding agreement</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Tenant Management Organisation (TMO) takes on responsibility (including budget control) for the management of selected services e.g. delivering repairs and maintenance for the properties covered by the agreement. If the services do not meet specified performance levels or are not cost effective OVH can end the agreement and resume responsibility for delivery</li></ul>
Customer Journey Mapping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In depth assessment of a customer's actual experience of accessing OVH services</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Detailed understanding gained of positive and negatives of service methodology and process</li><li>Identification of any barriers to access to services and formulation of actions to improve</li></ul>
Tenant Policy Review Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Periodic meetings (as required) with customer representatives to review OVH policies (no formal training required)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Customer input into policy development and review process</li><li>All customer facing policies proof-read and accessibility checked</li></ul>
Tenant High Rise Living and Building Safety Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Periodic meetings to discuss ongoing high rise block safety and maintenance issues - including consultation on any proposed investment works</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Customers play and active part in maintaining block safety and have open and accessible channels to raise any concerns</li><li>Investment decisions are informed by the customer voice</li></ul>
Customer Events	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Informal, open access events on an ad-hoc basis (at least one event will be held annually)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Opportunity to promote greater partnership working and involvement options</li><li>Link into local and national campaigns to raise awareness on issues such as social isolation</li></ul>

OVH Customer Voice Framework – Involvement Opportunities		
Type of involvement	What is involved?	Outcomes
Customer Feedback – Surveys / Market Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Telephone surveys to those that have received a specific services e.g. repairs or on random basis (to reach acceptable response rates) or on wider service delivery issues including Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) and Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's)</li><li>Short, tailored surveys on specific projects or service areas via SMS (Text) messaging</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Customer intelligence used to inform contract management, resource planning based on customer priorities and continual improvement through revised target and performance indicator setting</li><li>Compliance with national reporting requirements</li></ul>
Focus Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Meetings on specific topics or projects to meet a need within the community</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In-depth views and qualitative information gathered to shape service delivery issues</li></ul>
Community Development Fund Panel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Quarterly meetings held to assess applications for OVH Community Development Fund (£15,000 available annually)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Funding distributed to local groups that promote projects that contribute to the following themes: Support for Vulnerable or Older People, Promotion of Health and Wellbeing, Support for Local Veterans, Improved Community Safety, Community Environmental Initiatives</li></ul>
Independent Living Scheme Coffee Mornings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>General feedback and involvement in OVH service delivery (without any group involvement or commitment)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Informal feedback received on service delivery issues and used to drive continuous improvement</li></ul>
Scrutiny Chair/Chair of Board Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Quarterly meeting for Scrutiny Chair and Chair of OVH Board to discuss performance information, provide feedback and ensure a joined up approach to delivering excellent services for our customers.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In-depth views and qualitative information gathered to shape service delivery issues</li></ul>
Complaints Review Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Quarterly meeting to be held to review complaints raised and ensure compliance with OVH's Complaints, Feedback and Appeals Policy.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In-depth views and qualitative information gathered to shape service delivery issues</li></ul>
Neighbourhood Drop- In Sessions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Bi-monthly meetings held in various locations to reach customers who are digitally excluded, or wish to discuss tenancy matters face to face with their Neighbourhood Services Officer</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Informal feedback received and information shared to enable customers to sustain their tenancies and explore involvement opportunities.</li></ul>
Other Informal e.g. Suggestions, Neighbourhood Walkabouts, General Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>General feedback and involvement in OVH service delivery (without any group involvement or commitment) e.g. instant feedback via OVH website</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Informal feedback received on service delivery issues and used to drive continuous improvement</li></ul>

Through the above customer voice mechanisms and the ongoing work of dedicated Customer Voice Officer we have voluntarily adopted the ‘Together with Tenants Charter’ – developed by the National Housing Federation to demonstrate good practice in customer engagement.

This involves adhering to seven key principles, as follows:

1.

Relationships: To treat all residents with respect in all their interactions and for relationships between residents and housing associations to be based on openness, honesty and transparency.
- This is demonstrated by:

2.

Adherence by all OVH staff and those working on OVH's behalf to the commitments in the OVH ‘Customer Care Charter’ (with quarterly performance reporting)

○

OVH provides customer care training to all front-line staff to ensure they maintain effective and respectful working relationships with customers

○

Continued attainment of the Customer Service Excellence standard (a nationally recognised standard designed to drive customer-focused change)
3.

Communication: To send you clear, accessible and timely information on the issues that matter to you, including important information about your home and local community, how the organisation is working to address problems, how the organisation is run and information about performance on key issues.

This is demonstrated by:

- OVH operates numerous and accessible communication methods for contact and engagement with its customers including telephone, email, instant feedback via website, in person, SMS Text messaging, social media, written correspondence / information provision, the customer voice framework (outlined above), consultation events etc.
- OVH maintains numerous information sources and performance reporting (that are regularly customer approved) including but not exhaustive of; Tenants Newsletter, tailored communications relevant to new service areas / projects and investment decisions, Annual Reports, website news updates, media coverage, customer satisfaction performance reporting and analysis, survey results and benchmarking information

4.

Voice and influence: To seek and value the views of residents and use this information to inform decisions. Every individual resident should feel listened to on the issues that matter to them and be able to speak without fear.

This is demonstrated by:

5.

OVH provide regular feedback demonstrating how the customers voice has been taken into account and OVH have changed processes or priorities as result e.g. ‘you said – we did’ reporting, complaints / customer satisfaction analysis

○

The OVH Board receive collated customer voice intelligence reports and this information is taken into consideration when approving major expenditure programmes or projects

○

OVH act on and adopt recommendations made via various elements of the Customer Voice Framework e.g. Service Review Groups or Tenants Policy Review Group
6.

Accountability: To allow residents to collectively work in partnership to independently scrutinise and hold their housing association to account for the decisions that affect the quality of homes and services.

This is demonstrated by:

- The Tenant Scrutiny Team carry out in-depth investigations into service areas that show a dip performance or are subject to an increase in complaints at the request of the Service Review Group, at the organisations request or through their own observations. The Scrutiny Team act independently and OVH promise to allow full access to information and processes and will act on their recommendations
- The Annual Report, produced in partnership with customers provides detailed information on the organisations finances and how customers rent money is spent



- 7. Quality:** To ensure homes are good quality, well maintained, safe and well managed.

**This is demonstrated by:**

- OVH have carried out a massive programme of investment works to ensure its homes are above the basic level required to meet the governments Decent Homes Standard. OVH will continue investing in properties and updating facilities to ensure this standard is maintained in the future
- OVH encourages active feedback from customers on its repairs and maintenance services, investment work, measures to meet carbon reduction ambitions and all housing management services to ensure satisfaction with quality remains high
- OVH have established a Tenant High Rise Living and Building Safety Group to ensure safety is a joint responsibility and all queries or concerns are addressed

- 8. When things go wrong:** To provide residents with simple and accessible routes for raising issues, making complaints, and seeking redress. And for residents to receive timely advice and support when things go wrong.

**This is demonstrated by:**

- OVH is fully compliant with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code and has a variety of accessible routes for customers to raise dissatisfaction or concerns
- The OVH complaints handling service has retained external verification via the Housemark Complaints Accreditation (re-accredited in 2022)
- Customer representatives regularly take part in audits to quality check OVH's complaints handling responses and help design standard letter templates

- 9. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion:** We are fully committed to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion. We will continue to promote a positive culture of valuing and celebrating diversity and accepting and including people regardless of their personal characteristics or circumstances. Whatever your background, you can expect to be treated fairly, with respect and free from discrimination.

**This is demonstrated by:**

- OVH assesses key customer satisfaction measures against known customer profile information to identify any disparity for groups with protected characteristics and puts mitigation measures in place if any are identified
- OVH maintains a comprehensive Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and associated action plan to ensure fair access to services and where required will alter processes to mitigate any differentials that may exist
- OVH provides mandatory training (that is periodically refreshed) for all front line staff on equalities issues to raise awareness and promote good practice



# 05 Where do we want to be?

OVH wants to take the opportunity of the influencing factors in the external operating environment, namely the revised Regulatory Standards, to improve and modernise its resident engagement services and provisions to ensure it is fit for purpose and fit for the future.

To achieve this, OVH will work closely with its customers to fulfil the following aims:

- OVH aims to maintain relationships with customers in all aspects of service delivery that are open, honest, transparent and built on mutual trust
- OVH will ensure that customers are provided with comprehensive and timely information on how the organisation is performing and where applicable will provide bench-marking information against peer providers (including TSM reporting). OVH will ensure customers receive information on all major investment decisions, changes to service or the introduction of new services
- OVH will ensure that the customer voice influences the decision-making processes, strategic oversight and setting of strategic direction and that they receive timely feedback on their contributions and interactions. OVH will ensure the Board are furnished with up-to-date information on customer opinion when taking important business decisions impacting on customers and the results of these decisions are fed-back to customers
- OVH will continue to facilitate engagement mechanisms that allow customers to scrutinise service delivery and performance (specifically around the consumer standards) and where required set targets for improvement
- OVH will commit to providing quality products and services and will involve and consult customers on any major business / investment decisions that impact on resident safety within buildings that it owns and manages
- OVH will commit to finding its silences and contacting each customer including those who do not regularly access services to ensure their needs are being met and they can successfully and independently maintain their tenancies (including making referrals for additional support, where required)
- OVH will continue to provide clear and effective complaints processes and means of redress when service delivery does not reach the standards expected
- OVH will ensure it complies with the required outcomes and specific expectations of the Regulatory Standards and will strive to attain the highest regulatory gradings

We want to offer choice to customers in how and when they get involved and offer engagement opportunities about the issues that are important to them individually which will help shape our wider customer delivery.

To achieve this we intend to broaden the engagement mechanisms to allow for much greater use of technology and digital interaction webinars.

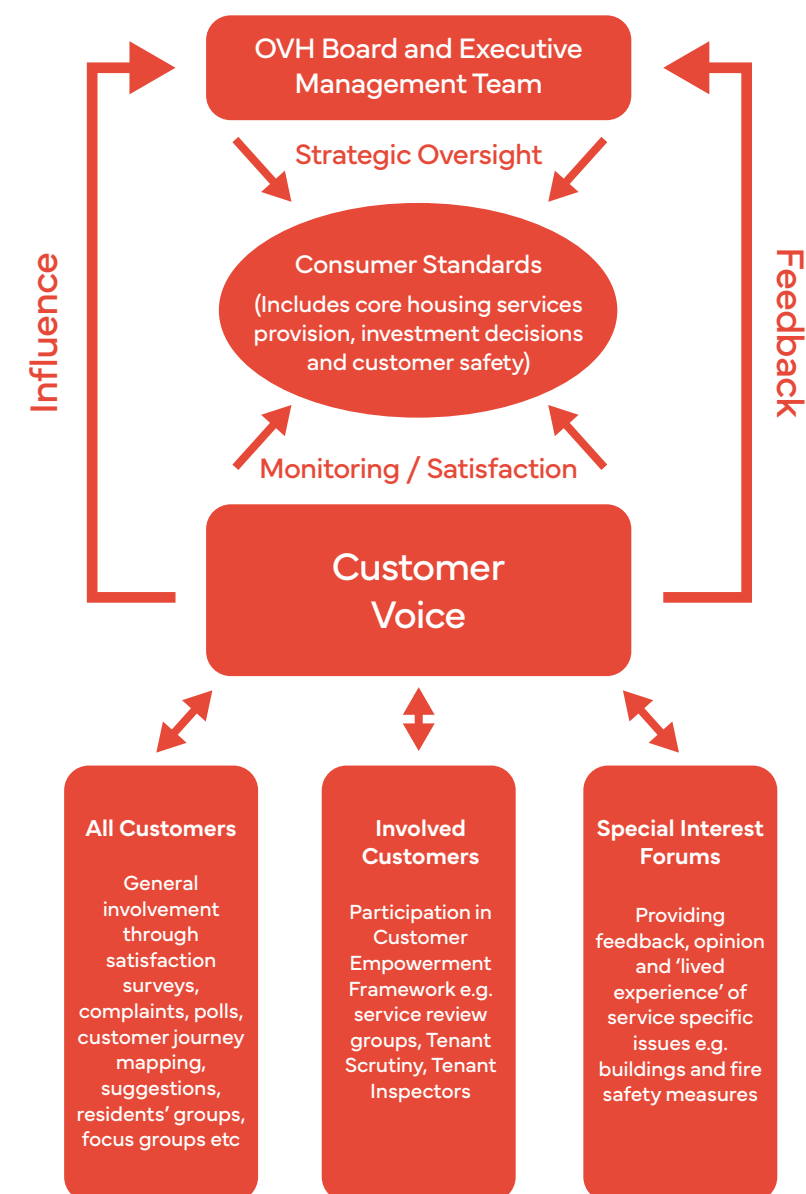
The diagram below shows how the customer voice is central to everything that we do.

It also demonstrates how the Board and Executive Management Teams will take customer opinion into consideration when making major business decisions and in maintaining oversight of the Consumer Standards of the Regulatory Framework and in providing feedback to customers.

We do, however, appreciate that we need to improve the visibility of Board decisions and want there to be a closer and more frequent working relationship with customer representatives.

To ensure there is an effective and regular dialogue between the Scrutiny Team and the Board a series of regular meetings have been scheduled between the Chair of the OVH Board and the Chair of the Scrutiny Team. Regular agenda items for these meetings will include:

- Chair of the Board's update
- Update and recommendations from any ongoing / completed Scrutiny Team investigations
- Performance updates, including TSM performance and any Service Review Group Commentary





# 06 How Are We Planning To Get There?

Many of the engagement mechanisms outlined in Table 1 have proved effective over a number of years and OVH does not intend to remove the functions they carry out or the outcomes they achieve as part of this Strategy.

Instead, we will modernise and update the way in which they are delivered, through a review of their coverage and terms of reference, to ensure we meet or exceed all legal and regulatory duties and so they are fit for purpose to meet the requirements of the external operating environment.

A key element of our improvement programme is ensuring our Board is furnished with a wide range of customer voice intelligence, to inform their decision-making processes and so that customers know their voice counts in setting organisational direction and priorities.

In fulfilling this objective our Board currently receive

- A quarterly Performance Report which includes Customer Satisfaction and Customer Care Charter Performance Indicators (going forward this will include TSM monitoring)
- A bi-annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report (as per the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code requirements), which includes performance (in meeting response targets / satisfaction with complaints handling / outcome and complaint trend analysis / remedial measures that are put in place and details of all cases referred to the Housing Ombudsman – including outcome where known (driven and directed by the Member Responsible for Complaints)

To improve this process further we have also developed an annual ‘Customer Voice Report’ which will bring together all forms of customer intelligence / feedback and this will be reported to Board.

We have also modified our standard Board Report templates to include a section on customer voice and how this impacts the subject matter for discussion or approval.

We will also introduce a feedback mechanism via our website similar to our ‘You Said – We Did’ (to show learning from complaints intelligence and customer suggestions) – where we will report back on key decisions taken by the Board on issues that impact on customer services and investment priorities.

In addition we also look to carry out the following objectives and actions;

Objective (what we will do)	Outcome (what we hope to achieve)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Over the period 2024-29 we will continue our concerted publicity and recruitment drive for our resident engagement mechanisms and structures</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Raise awareness of prevailing engagement opportunities</li><li>• Expand participation from a wider cohort of customers, to:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure a wide breath of customer opinion informs OVH service delivery</li><li>• Prevent burnout and over reliance of the existing small number of ‘involved customers’</li></ul></li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review budgets available to support customer voice activity</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure there is sufficient budget / resource available to deliver all customer voice activities and encourage wider participation</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to complete a ‘data cleanse’ exercise reviewing all current sources and systems for storage and validation of customer data throughout 2024-2025</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Ensure current customer contact details are up-to-date and that this is in format that can drive service improvement / prioritisation of programmed works</li><li>• Implement a universal EDI data capture form</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review the types of customer data that is captured ensuring there is a legitimate business need for the information i.e. it will be used to shape service delivery. This will include defining enduring customer ‘vulnerabilities’ that require a differential service provision. All customers to be contacted and records updated throughout 2024 - 25</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide tailored services that meet individual needs and prioritise actions where there is overlap between vulnerabilities / lack of contact / property condition issues</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improve methodology for ensuring property condition data is up-to-date and ensure closer correlation with customers personal circumstances e.g. health needs or other enduring conditions that can be alleviated / managed better through property investment measures</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop true customer / property 360° reporting capabilities that feed into investment programme and prioritised scheduling</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Assess all current strategic partnership arrangements including gap analysis to maximise benefits of collaborative working with external agencies e.g. local health provision and police and crime partnerships</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Provide better joined-up service provision and deliver area-wide improvements to community and place</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Continue to update customer records to capture current mobile and email contacts and preferred methods of contact</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Allow for a far greater degree of digital interaction and information exchange (including up-to-date performance information) between OVH and its customers</li><li>• Improve efficiency of customer consultation to inform decision making processes</li><li>• Fully meet equalities requirements for preferred methods of contacts</li><li>• Implement a universal EDI Form</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Consult customer base on their specific areas of interest (2024-25)</li><li>• Develop special interest engagement forums</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Develop a menu of options for receipt of information / consultation opportunities targeted at individual areas of interest and to prevent ‘consultation overload’</li><li>• New special interest groups to be established for Independent Living customers, to address customers Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) concerns, in addition to the already established High Rise Buildings Safety Group</li></ul>

Objective (what we will do)	Outcome (what we hope to achieve)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Revise delivery format of existing engagement mechanisms (expanding digital and where appropriate remote access opportunities) – (2024-25)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Increase customer engagement without having to attend meetings in person and improved convenience</li><li>Increased number of customers engaging with OVH on a regular basis</li><li>Greater use made of ‘instant feedback’ via the OVH website</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improve information availability via website and ‘My Account’ functionality (2024-29)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Making information available instantaneously and maximising the value of each customer contact</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Increased use of SMS messaging and social media - (2024-29)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improved ability to receive, collate and disseminate mass customer feedback to relevant Managers and Senior Management Teams / Board for strategic oversight</li><li>Improved ability to conduct real time customer journey mapping to drive service improvement</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Devise and deliver free to access training programme for all interested customers on use of remote technologies (2024-25)</li><li>Develop training programme according to involved customers’ needs</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improved customer confidence in use of technology enabling greater take up of engagement opportunities</li><li>Deliver Housing Ombudsman Complaints Code Training</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Improved reporting to OVH Board of collated customer insight information (from all sources including satisfaction surveys and instantaneous consultations) – (2024-29)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ensure OVH Boards decision making process is informed by the customer voice and opinion</li><li>Better accountability and transparency of decision-making process</li><li>Evidence of customer influence</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In 2024-25 establish new forums for customer quality assurance with closer links between OVH Board and customer representatives, alongside wider review of governance arrangements</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Closer collaborative working between the Board and customers</li><li>Establish an EDI Forum</li><li>Establish a Complaints Review Group</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Involve customer representatives in regulatory compliance monitoring and action-planning</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Obtain customer insight / reality checking of plans to meet regulatory compliance and any on-going inspection preparations</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Continue to explore potential for greater collaborative working with peer housing providers and external agencies such as Police and Fire Service to establish stakeholder engagement events.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Stronger regional voice for resident engagement and opportunity to share best practice and joint working on issues that impact all customers e.g. accessing funding for carbon reduction measures to properties</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>In 2024-25 we will conduct ‘Customer Journey’ mapping exercises on:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Complaints</li><li>Damp, Mould and Condensation cases</li></ul></li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>We will gain in-depth ‘lived experience’ of service delivery identifying strengths and weaknesses and putting in place remedial actions were required</li></ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Continue to implement Better Social Housing Review recommendations with customer input</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Ensure maintenance / investment contractor training is linked to service standard developed by customers</li></ul>

# 07

## How are we going to measure it?

It is anticipated that by delivering on the objectives and actions outlined above that satisfaction with service delivery and performance will increase across all areas and OVH will monitor for any universal impacts and make this information available to customers and the Board

OVH will fully comply with the reporting requirements of the national Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM's) through customer surveys and landlord information from April 2024 and will explore avenues for making the performance information available by digital means.

OVH will work with involved customers to develop specific Key Performance Indicators on the delivery of aims and objectives of this Strategy and will make this information available via the Customer Voice pages of the OVH website and in future editions of this Strategy, on its annual review.







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