



Tenant Communication and Engagement Policy

Document owner	
Document no.	
Version no.	1.0
Approved by	Board: <i>Petrol</i>
Date approved	15/6/2021
Date of next review	2024
Link to where current version is stored on shared drive	

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1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 This tenant communication and engagement policy sets out our commitments as to how we will appropriately communicate and engage with our tenants.
- 1.2 As a community-based housing association, good communication and robust engagement with our tenants is central to how we operate and deliver services.
- 1.3 We have developed this policy to direct and support service delivery in line with our vision and mission:

Cill Dara's vision is to provide the people of Kildare with a safe and supported home environment.

Our mission is to identify and meet the housing and associated support needs of members of the Kildare community who are eligible for social and affordable housing.

2.0 Scope of Policy

- 2.1 This policy applies to how we will respond to communication from all tenants and other customers.

3.0 Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 The aims and objectives of this policy are to ensure that we:
 - a) Communicate with tenants in timely, effective and accessible ways
 - b) Develop a suitable range of communication channels, appropriate to the number of homes we manage, so that tenants may communicate easily with us
 - c) Develop a range of formal and informal engagement opportunities, with the view to hearing the tenant voice and tenants being able to influence services
 - d) Improve services, increase value for money and build stronger communities by effective tenant engagement

4.0 Policy Statement

4.1 Communication

We frequently communicate with our tenants about issues that are of great importance to them; for example, repairs, ASB, rent arrears and rent. We recognise the importance of clear, effective and timely communication between landlord and tenant.

We will seek to understand each tenant's communication preferences, for example, letter or SMS. Wherever possible, we will use their preferred channel of communication.

Based on our knowledge of our current tenant cohort, we know that it is very rare that a tenant does not speak English. Recording a tenants language preference is part of our signup process; we will keep under review whether we need to provide communications in other languages, or arrange access to interpreting services.

In communicating with our tenants, we will:

- Use plain language and avoid jargon. Where it is not possible to avoid jargon, we will provide explanations of terminology used
- Publicise how tenants may contact us, including out of hours emergency repairs
- Provide a range of Service Standards that outline our key service commitments for a range of housing management services. Where appropriate, these will detail both landlord and tenant responsibilities
- Pay particular attention at the start of a tenancy to ensure that, through effective communication, a new tenant understands their rights and responsibilities as a tenant
- Communicate annually with our tenants, providing information on how we are performing across a range of housing and property management services
- Look to make good use of digital platforms to enhance communications, for those tenants who are able and willing to do so.

4.2 Response timescales

We believe that it is important to be clear about response timescales when tenants and other customers contact us so that they know what service to expect from us.

Our commitment to responding when tenants and other customers contact us is as follows:

Phone calls	Within 2 working days
Text messages	Within 2 working day
Letters and e-mails	Within 3 working days

4.3 Tenant engagement

We view “tenant engagement” through the lens of “tenant influence”. We aim to ensure that a representative cross-section of our tenants are able to influence and improve the way in which we deliver services. We recognise that this directly contributes to the tenant experience of being a tenant of Cill Dara HA.

We will:

- Develop a range of influencing opportunities, through which our tenants can meaningfully engage with us. Examples of such opportunities are taking part in transactional satisfaction surveys, annual satisfaction surveys, task and finish groups or being a tenant Board member
- Actively promote to tenants the ways in which they can engage with us to influence and improve services
- Actively seek to engage with tenants who are not engaging with us
- Identify the intended impact/benefits of tenant engagement and report on outcomes
- Regularly review the outcomes and range of ways in which tenants can engage with us to ensure that they meet the expectations of tenants and requirements of the business.

5.0 Equality and Diversity

- 5.1 We will apply this policy consistently, fairly and with professionalism. We do not discriminate against any person on grounds of their age, gender, disability, gender reassignment/transgender, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation or any other matter that may cause a person to be treated with injustice.
- 5.2 We will use plain language and make information available in different formats and languages on request.

6.0 Data Protection and Confidentiality

- 6.1 This policy will be operated in line with our Data Protection Policy.

7.0 Complaints

- 7.1 We aim to provide excellent services but recognise that we do not always get things right. We have a Complaints, Compliments and Comments Policy which we use actively to address service failures and to inform service improvements.

8.0 Compliance

- 8.1 We have developed this policy and associated procedures with due regard to Regulatory requirements.
- 8.2 As a registered Tier 2 Approved Housing Body, we work hard to ensure that we are fully compliant with the requirements of the Approved Housing Bodies Regulatory Authority.
- 8.3 Specifically in relation to the Regulatory Performance Standard, this tenant communication and engagement policy ensures that we meet the regulatory requirement to have a policy that sets out how we will engage and communicate with our tenants.

9.0 Linked Policies, Procedures and Guidance

- 9.1 There are no specific linked policies, procedures and guidance, as this policy covers how we communicate with tenants and other customers across all aspects of CDHA's operations.

10.0 Responsibilities

- 10.1 All relevant employees have a responsibility to ensure that this policy is applied as intended. Including, but not exclusively:
- a) Reporting any areas of concern or non-compliance to their manager.
 - b) Keeping accurate records.
 - c) Attend training to ensure they have the required knowledge and skills to deliver the service.
- 10.2 Board will ensure that:
- a) CDHA has an overview of this policy and reviews it in a timely manner to assess its effectiveness and appropriateness.
 - b) CDHA has the necessary arrangements and resources to implement and monitor operational effectiveness.
- 10.3 Managers will ensure that:
- a) This policy is implemented through agreed operational procedures, monitored and reported.
 - b) Resources are deployed and monitored effectively.

11.0 Key Performance Indicators

We will monitor and report on the following key performance indicators to check that our services are delivering the intended outcomes.

Performance Indicator	Performance Target (where applicable)	Measure reported to Board?
Note and learn from complaints or suggestions relating to how we communicate with tenants and other customers	n/a	No
Service improvements introduced as a result of tenant influence	n/a	Yes
Analysis of the demographics of actively engaged tenants	n/a	No

12.0 Policy Review

12.1 This policy will be reviewed at least every three years or earlier to take into account changes in legislation, regulation, service improvements and related initiatives.