



Customer Experience

Customer Engagement Policy

Regulation and Legislation	This policy links to RSH Consumer standards- Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard and National Housing Federation (NHF) <i>Together with Tenants charter</i>
Supporting documents	To be read in conjunction with: Customer Engagement Strategy (pending publication) and Customer Engagement Activity, Incentive and Expenses procedures
Scope	This policy sets out how Orbit engages with customers to shape and improve our services.
Reference to “Orbit” means Orbit Group which consists of Orbit Group Limited, Orbit Housing Association Limited, Orbit Homes (2020) Limited, Orbit Treasury Limited and Orbit Capital Plc.	

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Our aim is to ensure that customers voices drive positive change., This policy sets out Orbit’s commitment to engage, involve and empower customers to understand, evaluate and shape services we provide to customers, their homes, and neighbourhoods.
- 1.2 The policy is supported by procedures on what customers should expect when taking part in our engagement activities and how we will look to support and incentivise more customers to take part and have their voices heard.
- 1.3 Supporting the delivery of our Customer Engagement Strategy, this policy outlines how it will support the organisation to be more customer-centric and how customer’s voices influence our overall governance.
- 1.4I In providing opportunities for customers to engage with us, we will ensure that we meet our regulatory requirements and deliver commitments set out within our adoption of the National Housing Federations ‘Together with Tenants’ charter <https://www.housing.org.uk/globalassets/files/together-with-tenants/together-with-tenants-charter.pdf>

2.0 Policy Statement

- 2.1 We will provide a range of opportunities to ensure customers can:
 - Feedback on their experiences
 - Scrutinise our performance

- Shape recommendations for improvement
- Influence our future decisions.

These opportunities are developed in conjunction with engaged customers and members of our Customer Engagement Strategic committee on an annual basis.

- 2.2 We will treat all customers fairly and provide customers with the opportunity to be able to shape, prioritise and influence the topics we engage with customers on.
- 2.3 All feedback captured as part of an engagement activity is valued and no one type of activity is more important than another.
- 2.4 All of our Customer Engagement activities will be supported by senior managers within Orbit who are accountable for ensuring that agreed recommendations are implemented.
- 2.4 We will provide regular communication updates on the value and impact of our engagement activities to all customers and employees, through several different methods, which includes our annual report to customers.
- 2.5 All customers will be supported to take part and effectively engage with us in our engagement activities. We will adhere to any special requirements, where possible, and regularly promote opportunities to enhance customers skills and knowledge through training, events, or conferences.

3.0 Customer Engagement Overview

- 3.1 “Customer Engagement” describes a range of mechanisms and opportunities available to customers for them to:
- Co-create customer facing policies and strategic priorities
 - Influence decisions about how services are delivered, including the setting of service standards
 - Scrutinise of our performance and provide recommendations about how our performance could be improved
 - Engage with us on all aspects of the management of their homes and neighbourhoods
 - Support our aim of delivering our customer promise and creating a customer-centric culture with our people
 - Ensuring we deliver on value for money
- 3.2 We recognise that customers may be interested in engaging in activities and projects in different ways and influencing the things that are important to them. We have created opportunities where customers can either take part in activities and engage with us individually on an adhoc basis, or if a customer is able to provide more time there will be opportunities to become involved on projects help influence things outside of their home. This could include committing to improve their neighbourhood, community or scheme or be

involved on more strategic topics such as our approach to net-zero carbon or equality, diversity, and inclusion:



4.0 Principles

4.1 This policy sets out Orbit's commitment to embed the voice of the customer into our strategic and operational business considerations, putting customers at the heart of what we do. We will do this by:

4.2. Creating safe and inclusive spaces

4.2.1 We value diversity and will create safe, inclusive spaces where customers and employees will be empowered to be themselves and share their own individual views on the topics we discuss. We will work with customers and employees to develop their skills with training around different demographics, so we create environments which support customers to feel confident in having their voice heard.

4.3.1 Being transparent, open, and honest

4.3.2 We know that sometimes things go wrong, or actions could be perceived differently to the intention. Through our Customer Engagement activities, we will be open and honest about some of the challenges we face. We will actively share our performance information and customer insight that will enable customers to hold us to account, provide challenge and work with us to develop our communications.

4.4.1 Making engagement easy

4.4.2 We will ensure engagement activities are accessible to a wider customer base. Engagement should be easy for our customers to take part in, utilising their preferred channels (we will enable this by offering online and offline methods of engagement). We are committed to offering a seamless service in taking part in our activities.

5.0 Supporting customers

- 5.1 We strive to ensure our Customer Engagement activities are accessible for everyone so will always adhere to any special requirements requested by customers. This could include (but is not limited to) changing the times of meetings, ensuring venues are accessible and adhering to any dietary requirements.
- 5.2 To support customers to attend any meetings, we have developed an expenses procedure which covers all necessary costs incurred by taking part.
- 5.3 We recognise that some customers may be motivated to take part in our activities by developing their skills, or enhancing their CV. All non-financial incentives offered to our customers are included within our incentive procedure and will be regularly communicated to customers taking part in our activities.
- 5.4 We will not tolerate any discrimination, harassment, bullying or intimidation throughout our Customer Engagement activities and any customers or employees attending these meetings will be required to adhere to our code of conduct. Any breaches of this code of conduct will be dealt with using the necessary action.

6.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- 6.1 **Boards** – are accountable for ensuring there is sufficient evidence of customer analysis and impact on any relevant items that are presented for the Board’s consideration, and they must ensure compliance with the Regulatory Framework. We currently have 4 Tenant Board members who represent customer voices on the board and each quarter, the Orbit Housing Association Board will receive a Voice of the Customer report, identifying key themes and issues, engagement activities and agreed outcomes. Both Tenant and non-executive Board Members will be encouraged to attend Customer Engagement activities.
- 6.2 **Customer Engagement Strategic Committee** - are responsible for governing our Customer Engagement programme to ensure we are delivering upon the things that are important to customers, engaging on key aspects of the customer journey and our strategy aligns with relevant regulation and best practice.
- 6.3 **Executive Team (ET) and Senior Management Teams (SMTs)** – are responsible for ensuring that the impact and benefits to customers are clearly evidenced and considered as part of strategic and operational business plans, offers and performance monitoring.
- 6.4 **Leadership Team Directors** – as policy and project sponsors, they are accountable for ensuring that customer voices are captured to inform the development, testing and evaluation of policies, change initiatives, and other service developments that impact customers. An appropriate Equality Analysis should always be completed for relevant changes. Evidence of customer engagement should be made clear in any recommendations for change. They should also champion and recognise the value of customer engagement and be accountable for ensuring that agreed recommendations are implemented in their respective business areas.

- 6.5 **All managers** – are responsible for ensuring that they seek out, understand, and make use of customer insight to inform service improvements in their area. Managers are also accountable for demonstrating to customers how their feedback and insights have been considered as part of review and improvement projects, promoting a positive ‘you said, we did’ culture.
- 6.6 **Customer Engagement team** are responsible for the delivery of strategic engagement activities and accountable for the wider customer engagement programme. The Customer Engagement Manager is responsible for tracking improvements identified within strategic activities through to implementation and is accountable for demonstrating how customers feedback have been considered across the programme.
- 6.7 **Local Engagement teams** (Independent Living, Thriving Communities, Property Management) are responsible for the delivery of local engagement activities. Those delivering local engagement activities are responsible for capturing and evaluating all feedback to drive service improvements.
- 6.8 **Individual Engagement teams** (Digital, Corporate Communications, Complaints and Research and Insight Teams) – are responsible for collecting individual feedback on services customers receive, aggregating this into opportunities for continuous improvement and promoting a positive ‘you said, we did’ culture.

7.0 Performance Controls and Business Risk

- 7.1 Compliance within this policy will be monitored by the Customer Engagement Team and the Customer Engagement Strategic Committee who will capture evidence to test compliance with the Tenant Involvement & Empowerment Standard.
- 7.2 Performance in the delivery of the service will be assessed by the number of activities delivered across the year, customers engaged and satisfaction with views considered.
- 7.3 Performance results will be shared through Customer and Communities senior management teams (SMT).
- 7.4 Concerns regarding any non-compliance will be identified as part of ongoing reports to SMTs, Boards, and appropriate action will be taken to achieve compliance.
- 7.5 **Policy Performance Measures**

The following performance metrics are used to evaluate the performance of the policy. The policy owner is responsible for routinely monitoring the below performance metrics on an agreed basis (e.g. quarterly, monthly).

The metrics below will also be monitored as a part of Policy & Standards’ routine policy reviews, as well as during monitoring checks depending on risk mitigation activities and/or legislative changes.

Performance Indicators

PI Code	PI Title	Monitoring Frequency (Policy/Procedure Owner)
PLY006	Customer Growth Rate	Quarterly
PLY008	Number of improvements implemented	Quarterly
PLY009	Number of customer value points from improvements implemented	Quarterly
SRV022	Customer Satisfaction Rate (NPS Survey)	Quarterly

7.6 Orbit will carry out a fundamental review of this policy every three years or sooner subject to legal, regulatory changes or if internal changes require it.

8.0 Essential information

8.1 All Orbit policies and procedures are developed in line with our approach to the following, data protection statement, equality diversity and inclusion (EDI) approach, complaints policy and our regulatory and legal obligations to ensure we deliver services in a lawful manner and treat people equally and fairly. Details of these are found on the declaration document for strategy policy and procedure summary and have been an integral part of the formulation of this document. Orbit's privacy policy can be accessed on our website www.orbitcustomerhub.org.uk/publications/policies/

EA	Equality Analysis was reviewed September 2023 and is available to view.
DPIA	A DPIA was reviewed October 2023 and is available to view.
Consultation	Internal: Customer and Communities Senior Management Team
	External: Customer insight has been utilised in the development of this policy, following a strategic review of the programme. This policy has also been co-created and approved by the Customer Engagement Strategic Committee.
Applies to	All Business

Document control

Status

Approved

Date Issued

October 2023

Version

V2.0

Uncontrolled if Printed

Title	Customer Engagement Policy		ID294
Doc Type	Policy	Review Cycle	3 Year
Circulation	All Departments	Classification	Public

Doc Level 2

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Date

Approved by	OHAL Board	July 2023
Next review		July 2026

Extension date	Extension reason	Approved by

Revision History

Version Number Date Comments / Reason for revision

V2.0		Published