



# circle | more than housing

Tenant Communication and  
Engagement Strategy  
Summary  
2021 - 2024



# What is Tenant Engagement?

## Tenant engagement is

*“Working with tenants to co-produce effective services that meet a variety of needs; for example, building in accountability through communication, monitoring and scrutiny. It’s about empowering tenants, residents and communities to work with your organisation to achieve shared aims.”*

(Tenants Participation Advisory Service England)

Tenant communication and engagement are ways for tenants and Circle Voluntary Housing Association (VHA) to share information, ideas and to work together to improve services.

## Benefits of Tenant Communication and Engagement

**IMPROVED EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY GIVING BETTER VALUE FOR MONEY**

**IMPROVED SERVICES**    **INCREASED TENANT SATISFACTION**    **SUSTAINING COMMUNITIES**

**BUILD MUTUAL RESPECT AND TRUST**

**MEET NEW PEOPLE**

**ENHANCED COMMUNITY SPIRIT**

**BETTER QUALITY OF LIFE FOR TENANTS**

**ENSURE TENANTS HAVE A REAL SAY**

**SERVICES THAT REFLECT TENANTS' NEEDS**

**OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP NEW KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS**

**SHARE IDEAS**

**BETTER RELATIONS BETWEEN CIRCLE VHA AND TENANTS, EACH BEING MORE AWARE OF THE OTHERS POSITION**

# The Tenant Communication & Engagement Structure

Tenant communication and engagement are about how our tenants can voice what we as an organisation do. We want to empower our tenants to be involved in running their homes and communities while having a say in the shaping of the areas where they live. We want to give tenants a choice in how they take part at different levels of engagement.

We continue to put our tenants at the heart of everything we do. Working with the Tenant Advisory Group (TAG), we continue to develop new opportunities for all tenants to engage. We will take a blended approach to engagement – face to face and online. We must provide tenants with a choice of how they can become involved and see the value of their involvement through feedback and communication. We recognise the importance of offering options for people who want to get involved from the comfort of their own homes.

Below are many ways our tenants can actively participate and engage:



TENANT ADVISORY GROUP

### TENANT ADVISORY GROUP (TAG)

This group of tenants will work in partnership with Circle VHA to improve service delivery by providing feedback, keeping tenants informed, and overseeing tenant-related policies/procedures/publications. The group will also review the effectiveness of the strategy and monitor its progress against targets set.



REGIONAL TENANT ADVISORY SUB GROUPS

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Regional subgroups will be introduced when interest grows across the country. It is envisaged that each region will have a subgroup that will feed into the overall TAG.



TENANT SURVEYS

### SURVEYS

Tenant's complete surveys to give their feedback. They can reply by telephone, by post, text, or online.



IT FOCUS GROUP

### IT FOCUS GROUP

A group of tenants work with members of the staff team. Together, they will work on the website, tenant app and gave valued feedback to Circle VHA. Proposed time commitment – as and when deemed necessary. Meetings will be face to face and virtual.



TENANT ASSOCIATION

### TENANT ASSOCIATION

A group of tenants who will promote and facilitate community spirit in their area. For example, by helping with organising open days and community events.



EDITORIAL PANEL

### EDITORIAL PANEL

Tenants and staff work together to produce tenant newsletters and other publication



THE SHADOW GROUP

### THE SHADOW GROUP

The group will assist with the development and review of policies and procedures on an ad hoc basis. It may take the form of being part of a focus group to discuss and develop specific housing policies. Also, tenants may be asked to consider revised documents online.



SCHEME WALKABOUT

### SCHEME WALKABOUT

An opportunity for staff, tenant representatives and relevant agencies (e.g. OMC/management company and local authority) to walk around a scheme or neighbourhood to identify any issues and consider possible solutions.



INTERAGENCY MEETINGS

### INTERAGENCY MEETINGS

The meetings follow up on the issues highlighted at the scheme walkabout. Agencies, including management companies, meet regularly with community representation to deal with ongoing concerns.



#### BIANNUAL UPDATES

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Staff will organise face to face updates at individual schemes, providing feedback from the scheme walkabout and interagency meetings. A living document will demonstrate progress on the various issues. It will show actions that are completed and those that are still outstanding.



#### MYSTERY SHOPPING

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Tenants will be the mystery shoppers and training will be provided. This will allow tenants to examine the quality of the services provided by Circle VHA and provide customer feedback, which will help improve services. Examples would be testing the response from the office to a request for customer service, or a complaint.



#### CUSTOMER JOURNEY MAPPING

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To get the tenant's experience of a particular service provided by Circle VHA, the tenant is talked to, taken through Circle VHA's policies and procedures, and asked about their experience at each stage. The feedback is recorded, and recommendations made for improvement.



#### ENHANCING SERVICES

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A group of trained tenants assess a service area and seek a wide range of opinions regarding how the service is delivered. The group will review policies and procedures and speak to staff responsible for the service area.



#### BOARD MEMBER

### BOARD MEMBER

Carry out a process that will enable tenant representation on the Circle VHA board.

# Monitoring & Evaluation of the Strategy

Monitoring and reviewing the strategy is as crucial as setting our objectives and targets. The services follow the direction established during the planning process. Our efforts don't stop with the publishing of this strategy.

We see this strategy as a living document, informing the work we plan to do over the next three years. It is flexible to adapt to any changes in policy, legislation, or external factors, such as technology changes. If the pandemic has taught us anything, it reinforces the need to recognise the environment we live and work in.

The staff team will implement the action plan in partnership with the TAG. Responsibility for the monitoring and review of this strategy lies with the TAG with support from the Tenant Engagement Officer (TEO).

Throughout the term of this strategy, we will continue to record information about our activities on our internal systems. This will allow us to produce a variety of different reports, which will identify initiatives that produce high levels of engagement, areas of good practice and measurable outcomes.

We have developed a three-year action plan to record, monitor and evaluate the strategy. We intend to regularly report progress against the action plan targets through the below means:

**LINKS TO THE WEBSITE**

**NEWSLETTERS**

**MAIL DROPS**

**TENANT ADVISORY GROUP MEETINGS**

**TEXT MESSAGES**

**BOARD MEETINGS**

**EMAILS**

**ANNUAL REPORTS**

**TENANT APP**

**HOUSING AGENCY REGULATION OFFICE REPORTS**

**We want to hear your voice, if you would like to get involved, please contact us at [TES@circlevha.ie](mailto:TES@circlevha.ie) or call our Tenant Engagement Officer on 086 103 4833.**

