



# Customer engagement and involvement strategy 2019 - 2021

VIVID aspires to:

- hear every customers voice, to listen to it and to act upon it
- involve 100% of customers who wish to be involved
- build a strong landlord-customer relationship based upon trust and confidence

This strategy outlines our approach towards customer engagement and involvement with an aim of:

- Ensuring customers voices are heard, listened to and taken forward by all at VIVID
- Enabling a diverse and representative range of customers to engage and to get involved which reflect customers preferences, capacity and interests
- Using customer engagement and involvement activity to influence the design and delivery of services
- Using customer engagement and involvement activity to scrutinise our performance
- Taking a proactive approach to involvement; preventing issues arising and reducing the need for reactive engagement and involvement
- Promoting transparency and honesty in our decision making, providing timely feedback about how customer voice has made a difference

This strategy provides a clear approach on how we want to:

- Improve trust and confidence through partnership working with customers to co-design our services, scrutinise our performance
- Provide a wide range of inclusive, accessible engagement and involvement opportunities which reflect customers preferences, capacity and interests
- Expand our supported engagement and involvement opportunities to improve local, community based and interest specific activities including building and fire safety
- Invest in our systems, customers and staff to ensure involvement and engagement is efficient and effective
- Ensure our engagement and involvement mechanisms are fit for purpose, providing adequate staff and other resources to support the customer involvement and engagement strategy.

This Customer Engagement and Involvement strategy will support us in achieving our ambitions, our aspirations and will maximise our involvement and engagement opportunities. The delivery of this strategy is monitored through our Board, Customer Services Committee (initially the Task & Finish Group), and departmental plans

## **1) Improve trust and confidence working in partnership with customers to co-design our services, scrutinise our performance**

The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard (Homes & Communities Agency, 2017) outlines that tenants must be given a wide range of opportunities to be involved in, including options to influence policies, services and housing management. Furthermore, the importance of working in partnership is a clear theme throughout the Neighbourhood and Community Standard (Homes & Communities Agency, 2012). A 'bottom up' customer led approach that starts with the customer, providing a voice is an essential component to help shape and influence

services which follow the Value for Money standard. The tragedy of Grenfell has highlighted a 'crisis of trust' to a national scale with residents feeling ignored, further emphasising the need to engage with and listen to customers.

We aim to do this by:

- Adopting the principles of the Together with Tenants (TWT) Framework and the eight commitments to enable more customers to hold us to account and to drive cultural change although we reserve the right to adapt and add to it as we feel appropriate.
- Considering implementation of a TWT customer council, which provides a formal mechanism by which customers can consider performance against the standards or something similar as we feel appropriate
- Implementing in-depth task and finish 'commitment review' groups with staff and customers to assess performance and make recommendations for improvements against any specific area of service and feedback
- Employing a wide range of involvement and engagement activities to enable customers to have their say, scrutinise and feedback our performance against the TWT eight commitment principles
- Providing a formal mechanism by which customers views on performance can be heard, listened to, taken forward and monitored by Board through the Customer Service Committee
- Members of the TWT council or similar provide feedback to and have representation on the Customer Service Committee
- Co-designing services with customers monitored through the joint Board and customers Customer Services Task and Finish Group/ Committee and associated working groups
- Providing a wider range of opportunities for customers to engage with VIVID at strategic, operational and local level.
- Regularly publishing, at least annually, a wide range of information, policies, services standards and customer data, alongside the results from customer involvement and engagement activities to demonstrate how we are fulfilling the commitments
- Regularly publishing and updating contributing customers with the difference the customer voice has made and the reasons for our decision making, promoting honesty and transparency.

## **2) To offer a range of methods to promote inclusive, accessible and meaningful involvement which reflects customers preferences, capacity and interests.**

Customers will have their say and get involved if they have capacity, are interested and can interact with us through their channel of choice. Our research clearly demonstrated customers preferred quick, time limited, informal opportunities, such as online polls, surveys, task and finish activities. A smaller number of customers can engage in formal opportunities which require regular physical attendance.

- Customers will be able to engage with us through their preferred communication channel on the topics that they choose
- We will offer a menu of options for engagement and involvement, which is flexible, to ensure we are inclusive and accessible; are able to engage and involve customer groups which works to ensure diversity and representativeness.
- We will improve the collection and use of customer data and insight to ensure our engagement and involvement activity reflects customer preferences and interests
- We will expand the use of digital methods of engagement to support more customers to have their say and to use technologies more widely to encourage more customers to get involved in and contribute to involvement virtually.

- There will be a formal involvement mechanism available to enable customers to engage with Board at a strategic level

We will:

- Provide timely feedback clearly showing the difference made and giving the reasons for our decisions
- Offer out of hours opportunities to engage and get involved which support physical attendance and face to face discussions.
- We will ensure there are a range of non-digital engagement and involvement activities available to customers who are unable to contribute digitally

### **3) Expand our supported engagement and involvement opportunities to improve local and community based and interest specific activities including building and fire safety**

To support meaningful engagement and involvement, particularly at a local and community level requires support from VIVID officers, partners and other stakeholders.

We will expand our:

- Neighbourhood Volunteers in numbers, geographical spread and in respect of fire safety monitoring activities
- Resident associations to enable local communities and neighbourhoods to meet and work together
- Interested in involvement resident list to enable more customers to engage in topics which matter to them
- Partnership working with external partners and stakeholders who can support us and our customers to improve their local communities and neighbourhoods e.g. through closer multi-agency working with the local Police, health service providers, voluntary and community sectors
- Pop up roadshow activities in local communities

We will continue to support:

- Ad-hoc resident group meetings where customer groups meet to present their issues to operational staff, action plan and monitor progress to improve neighbourhoods and communities
- Resident task and finish groups to act to address and improve the local neighbourhood and communities

We will continue to deliver listening exercises as required by regulation including:

- S.20 where major works are to be undertaken
- When planning developments or regeneration projects
- In respect of changes to service charges and local offers for service delivery

We will implement:

- New policies, procedures and practises to ensure customers are actively informed and involved in building and fire safety issues
- New training for neighbourhood volunteers to enable them to identify fire hazards and building safety issues

We will seek to develop new methods which can enable us to better engage and involve customer such as through the development of the online account, implementing virtual noticeboards and online community



of interest forums, webinars, informal sessions with Board and Executive

**4) Invest in our systems, customers and staff to ensure involvement and engagement is accessible, efficient and effective**

We will invest in:

- Our systems to ensure we can deliver, capture and report on other involvement and engagement activity particularly the neighbourhood volunteer activity.
- Our customers to deliver effective involvement activities through providing guidance and training and through providing the tools and resources such as digital kit and connectivity where necessary
- Our staff to encourage them to take a proactive approach to customer engagement and involvement by providing them with: clear policies and procedures, guidance, training and technology; building staff confidence and a culture of 'nothing about customers without customers'
- Our website and customer communications to ensure customers are aware of the range of opportunities to have their say and get involved, can easily express an interest and are aware of the difference the customer voice makes

**5) Ensure our engagement and involvement activities are fit for purpose**

We will ensure our engagement and involvement mechanisms are fit for purpose through:

- Continually monitoring and evaluating engagement and involvement activities undertaken, their effectiveness to engage, the impact and outcomes that they achieved including any costs and any savings made
- Ensuring involved customer volunteers have clear roles and responsibilities, understand their remits and demonstrate competencies and behaviours to enable them to be effective
- Ensuring staff are aware of the flexible menu of involvement and engagement options available and are provided with the right options and level of support through the customer engagement team

**Strategy review**

This strategy will be reviewed every three years.

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