

Customer Experience Strategy 2023-2025



Our Vision

We are excited to introduce our customer experience strategy. Our vision is to be one team delivering a great customer experience. Customer experience is about much more than effective customer service. It's about how customers feel about Town & Country Housing (TCH) and how we make customers feel when they're interacting with us. We want them to feel great! Great customer experience is about consistently getting it right the first time, responding within reasonable timelines and making it easy to interact with us, along with demonstrating openness, empathy, clarity of communications. It's all about a sense of doing the right thing. To achieve this, we aim to continue to transform TCH's cultural approach, becoming truly customer-centric and ensuring our motivation is always 'customer first'.

The strategy underpins this by outlining how we will achieve our aspiration to deliver a great customer experience for all our customers: our residents, future residents, our colleagues (our internal customers), and all other stakeholders. Our approach aims to be always mindful of potential equality, diversion and inclusion challenges that customers may face. We will do this by removing any barriers to accessing our services, and to give the same quality of service regardless of how people choose to interact with us. We exist to provide truly affordable homes for people who can't access market housing. We are here to provide safe and secure homes where people want to live, and we're ultimately a people business; we care about what happens to people who live in our homes and we want them to flourish.

Our aim is that our strategic priority 'We are all about people' will inform every customer interaction. We have been working hard on our journey to great customer service and our ambition is for the whole organisation's mindset to always be focussed on working with and for the customer. Policy and process is essential to bring structure and consistency, and we must never forget the human factor; behind every interaction is a person who needs information, advice, or support. To achieve a great experience for these customers we need strong leadership, well trained and equipped teams and effective, easy to use systems and data.

Key to our approach is the understanding that our colleagues are customers too; to deliver great service to external customers, internal communication and processes need to be efficient and effective and support and empower colleagues in delivering services to our customers.

We are delighted that our Epsom colleagues (formerly Rosebery Housing Association) became part of the new TCH in April 2023. As our organisation continues to grow we will all pull together to provide a great customer service. We will remain mindful that, regardless of organisational changes and external challenges, TCH exists to provide great homes and services to our customers and local communities.

This strategy complements TCH's Local Strategy (2023-25) sharing and reinforcing some of its key success measures. Like the Local Strategy it is designed to be delivered across a two-year period and objectives have been prioritised to reflect this. Both strategies are supported by and aligned with the Peabody Group's inaugural business plan 2023-25, including its purpose, values, and strategic priorities, with customer service excellence at the heart of these:

Our purpose – helping people flourish

We do this by providing great homes and services, by making a positive difference to the communities we serve and by providing an inclusive and inspiring place to work.

Our values

- We do the right thing
- We celebrate diversity
- We are kind
- We pull together
- We love new ideas
- We keep our promises

Our strategic priorities

- We are all about people
- We are focused on getting the basics right
- We are passionate about creating a sustainable TCH

Introduction

Susan Martin, Chair of Customer Experience Committee

As we come together with our Epsom colleagues, as the South Counties Region of Peabody Group, this is an ideal time to reflect on our joint approach to customer service, learn from each other, refresh our customer experience strategy, and outline our ambitions for one team delivering a great customer experience. We have common goals and values, and this strategy aims to reflect a joint approach where possible and relevant, but also allows for operating and service offer differences. We are committed to delivering great services for all residents and excellent levels of customer satisfaction. We will share best practice to ensure great customer service for our combined resident populations, while remaining responsive to local needs. We will operate in line with the Group's emerging 'Local Peabody' approach, ensuring customers and communities have access to visible and responsive local teams. We will work towards further alignment where appropriate over the course of this strategy, with the starting point being the development of a joint action plan to start to deliver the outcomes this strategy aims to achieve.

Our residents are our number one priority and TCH wants to provide a great customer experience to everyone at every point of contact. We will improve our customer service offer and do more to reflect and embed the 'resident voice' in every aspect of our organisation. This means enabling co-production of services with residents, improving information and communication, and using complaints, feedback, satisfaction data and customer insight to tangibly influence and improve services; always reporting those outcomes back to residents.

By really listening to, understanding, and acting on what our customers tell us, we will continuously improve our customer service offer, and in doing so, continue to improve the customer experience and overall resident satisfaction.

We aim to make access to local services easy for everyone, including digital options for residents who prefer to self-serve, which will also free up staff resource to focus on providing a differently tailored service for those residents who need more support.

We understand that some residents may not wish to or be able to engage digitally, but this will not be a barrier to their receiving brilliant services. We will continue to provide a wide range of other options, including through telephone contact, in writing and in person, using data to understand individual resident needs. Using resident insight, we will actively identify any potential barriers to accessing our services and will consult through our resident engagement framework about what forms of contact work best for customers.



To achieve truly accessible local services we will ensure that all colleagues are equipped with the right training, information, and systems to resolve queries promptly. Residents will receive a consistent, quality, and proactive service, with customer facing colleagues visible and accessible in our local communities.

We will continue to deliver an organisational cultural change programme, including leadership development training. These will be designed to empower managers and their teams to understand how our values translate into the behaviours needed to take people-focused, confident, ethical, decisions.

We have been delivering 'Human and Kind' training as part of our induction programme for new colleagues. We will review this to include training for all colleagues within the new TCH and relaunch it as 'Customer Experience' training, with a focus on more peer-to-peer delivery of the training.

We will also fully utilise all opportunities to access the Peabody cultural transformation programme, joining initiatives such as the 'word on the street' exercise, which was launched in April 2023; using the in-house training from Peabody Academy to facilitate colleagues and residents learning together. In time joining the cultural transformation programme fully, deciding at that point whether it should a replace or enhance our own Customer Experience programme.

Developing this strategy

This strategy has been developed using the intelligence we have gathered from a range of customer feedback. We continuously collect and analyse customer feedback, through satisfaction surveys, complaints, compliments, and our resident engagement platforms, including the resident scrutiny panel and a range of other mechanisms such as focus groups and written surveys. In addition, we continue to develop our knowledge of our residents' needs and service preferences through a wide variety of contacts and touch points while delivering our services day-to-day.

We understand that an effective responsive repairs service is one of the key drivers for customer satisfaction. In summer 2021 we carried out an extensive resident consultation exercise, for our legacy TCH properties, asking what good customer service looks like. The consultation outcomes influenced the procurement of our new joint venture repairs service, TCH Repairs (launched in partnership with Fortem Solutions in late 2022). Those consultation findings have also been used to inform this strategy.

Key findings

Through our research, consultation and regular feedback, customers have told us that they expect a consistent and seamless customer experience including:

- Clear effective communication
- Prompt, resolution focused responses to queries that are in line with published policy and service standards
- Regular updates about progress where issues cannot be resolved immediately, including clarity about how long these will take to resolve
- Clarity about who they need to contact and who is dealing with ongoing queries
- Evidence that we are listening to, and understanding, customers' views and priorities and acting on them
- Transparency about the parameters of our service offer
- TCH representatives who care about the services we provide and act professionally, and with respect and empathy
- An organisation customers can trust, that always keeps its promises
- Access to easy-to-use digital services – such as being able to report/track a repair or repairs operative or review rent accounts online
- Alternatives to digital services where in-person contact is more appropriate or customers cannot/choose not to access digital services.

This strategy aims to embed the Peabody values and associated behaviours alongside developing processes and systems that mean TCH can consistently meet these expectations.

While we always aim to gather a wide range of views through surveys and consultations, we know that we need to build on the work we did with welfare calls during the Covid-19 pandemic. Through both Epsom's Healthy Homes project, and a TCH damp and mould calls project, we continue to identify and engage with our 'silent customers' - those residents who do not actively contact us or engage when we directly seek residents' views, and are less likely to complain when something goes wrong. We are developing a new resident engagement approach to ensure that opportunities for influence are wide ranging, inclusive, and will help to identify and engage our silent customers.

The key driver for developing this strategy is to continue to improve TCH residents' customer experience. To further support this we have also researched good practice in customer service across the sector and beyond. We have considered current and emerging operating environment and societal issues that can impact on service delivery and customer perception.

Operating and policy context

We are operating in a challenging and frequently changing environment. Factors like the current cost of living crisis, inflation, and the ongoing welfare benefit reforms impact on our customers and colleagues. In turn additional issues impact on the business's resourcing and day-to-day service delivery decisions. These include: rent setting restrictions; recruitment challenges; increasingly restricted partner agency resources; and the additional costs of compliance with new building safety regulations and the requirement to reach carbon net zero by 2050.

There is an increased emphasis on the 'resident voice' that has been driven by regulation, legislation, and good practice frameworks within the social housing sector.

There is heightened government and media scrutiny following some tragic, highly publicised cases in social housing, which are seen as having been preventable if the landlords involved had been listening to residents. We are also seeing rising customer expectations and lower tolerance of poor service, reinforced by the narrative often created by the press and government about housing associations as remote, uncaring corporations.

Measuring success

In April 2023 the Regulator of Social Housing introduced a requirement for landlords to collect information for Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs). The measures are used to assess how well housing providers are doing at providing good quality homes and services. These measures include tenant perception measures and management information measures. Current performance against the measures most relevant to delivering a great customer experience, and our aspirations towards improvement, are shown below.

Performance Measure - TSMs	TCH 2022/23*	Target 2024/25
Overall satisfaction with service provided	70.4%	75%
Resident satisfaction with repairs service in last 12 months	78.2%	85%
Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair	73%	85%
Satisfaction that the home is well-maintained	72.6%	80%
Satisfaction that the home is safe	80.5%	90%
TCH listens to views and acts upon them	64.9%	70%
Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them	73.8%	75%
Agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect	79.1%	85%
Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints	37.6%	50%
Positive contribution to the neighbourhood	56.9%	60%
Communal areas are clean and well maintained	68.6%	75%
Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling ASB	66.6%	65%
Complaints responded to within Complaint handling Code Timescales	To follow	80%
Number of complaints relative to size of landlord	To follow ¹	To follow
Repairs completed within target timescale	To follow	To follow



* Combined TCH/Rosebery end of year performance

¹ To follow when combined figures available

Key themes

The key overarching themes at the heart of our Customer Experience Strategy are:

1. Listening and learning

Ensuring our customers (and colleagues) are heard, and their views acted upon.

2. Information and communication

Ensuring our customers are well informed about our service offer through proactive, transparent communication.

And colleagues are equipped with the right information to make informed decisions.

3. Always improving

To continuously improve performance (and therefore overall customer satisfaction).

4. The right tools for the job

To drive a truly customer centric approach to all our services.

To create easy to use flexible, local services informed by accurate, up to date records and data.

To provide systems that empower colleagues to give a great service.

These objectives have informed the strategy themes and will inform the delivery and outcomes of the strategy with the aim of providing a great customer experience for every customer.



Theme 1

Listening and learning

Ensure our customers are heard.

As a successful business TCH wants to better understand who its customers are, what they need and how they want to access services. When customers feel heard and understood, it can lead to trust and empowerment. This results in stronger customer relationships, a better customer experience and increased customer satisfaction. It can also lead to improved colleague satisfaction and retention, and economies for the business as time, process and resources are more effectively targeted.

Our customer facing colleagues play a vital part in listening to the resident voice; they hear our customers' views all the time. We need to ensure that they are empowered to listen and identify opportunities to create a better customer experience. Customer facing colleagues must listen to our customers and the business must listen to those colleagues.

We will empower colleagues to listen to customers and give them the tools for first point of contact problem solving and decision making.

To do this we will continue to develop effective frameworks for capturing feedback from residents and colleagues, sharing information, and implementing and evidencing service change to clearly show our customers that they have been heard and that we care:

- We have developed an organisational-wide colleague network of resident voice champions to listen to, discuss and act on resident feedback and promote service changes and to address organisational barriers to doing this
- A 'lessons learned' framework has also been developed to capture how feedback from complaints, surveys and other feedback is being used to improve services
- We are developing a new Resident Engagement Strategy for TCH residents and a new digital engagement platform to ensure that residents have a wide range of structured opportunities to share their views
- During the procurement process our new repairs joint venture partner, Fortem Solutions, also made the commitment of "actively listening to residents and operating meaningful engagement initiatives." They have pledged that their strategy will align with the Social Housing White Paper expectation "To have your voice heard by your landlord".

Listening and learning

- success measures



YEAR 1	Improve overall resident satisfaction for the new TCH to > 75%
	Improve satisfaction with the way most recent enquiry was dealt with to 90%
	Improve agreement that the landlord treats tenants fairly and with respect to 85%
	Improve satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints to 50%
	Improve TCH listens to views and acts upon them to 70%
YEAR 2	'You said, we're doing...' evidence of service improvements published quarterly in the resident newsletters and on our websites
	Quarterly reporting of lessons learned to Performance Group evidencing that these have been implemented and embedded
	A wider base of engaged residents to contribute to formal consultation processes - core group of 100+ actively engaged residents
	Ensuring previously 'silent' residents are identified through data analysis and evidence that their voices are being heard
	Evidence that our digital engagement platforms are increasing opportunities for all residents to be heard

“Be curious – not judgemental.”

Walt Whitman

Theme 2

Information and communication

Ensure our customers are well informed about our service offer.

As well as listening to our customers, it is also important that we provide clear, relevant information about our services so that customers know what they can expect and understand the parameters of our service and what is within their influence.

Many customers want to self-serve and be able to access all the information and services they need online. Others will need, or want, more support or direct human interaction to navigate our services.

We are continuing to develop our digital service offer with improvements to our MyHomeOnline customer portal, including the recently introduced upgraded repairs portal provided by Fortem Solutions.



We will ensure that the websites and resident newsletters remain relevant, reflecting the issues and information that resident feedback tells us is most important to our customers, alongside key corporate information that we need to share with customers and that may impact on them.

We will continue to develop our reputation as a local, trusted, and proactive landlord, being visible in our communities and accessible to those customers who need face to face contact, ensuring that our service offer to customers gives them access to a local team.

We will demonstrate that our service offer aligns with the evolving 'Peabody Local' approach. We will continue to be a leader in delivering local, accessible services, benefiting from the development and resource advantages of the wider Group without losing any of the local touch points and recognition within our communities.

We will also establish regular 'patch meetings' bringing operational colleagues together from across departments to discuss key issues for those communities and embed better knowledge sharing and avoid silo working.

Improved communication

We will continuously review how we communicate, remaining mindful that effective internal communication is essential for great communication with our customers.

We will:

- Ensure that the intranet and the bi-weekly staff newsletters are vehicles for positive change providing key information and celebrating innovation, good practice, and colleague successes, showing how positive customer experience benefits both customers and the organisation
- Provide non-digital information options for residents who cannot, or chose not to, engage digitally. For example, considering when hard copy newsletters/posters or flyers might be needed and looking at the written information we provide at the start of a tenancy
- Introduce more use of standardised templates for meetings and letters and a more project management approach to our work to ensure clarity of responsibilities and expected outcomes and consistency throughout different communication channels
- Ensure active use of the Peabody Writing Guide and House Style to inform communication to ensure clear and consistent messaging and tone of voice.

The Resident Scrutiny Panel 'Resident Voice' review looked at how our communication reflects what residents have told us. They made recommendations about what information should be included on our websites and in newsletters, and introducing more variety in the way we share this information to make it as engaging and accessible as possible. They suggested case studies, videos, and infographics, which could also help to overcome any language or literacy barriers. We will ensure that all these recommendations have been implemented and embedded. The scrutiny panel reviews continue to make recommendations about how we communicate, and we will continue to implement these.

Service commitments

We have developed a range of service standards - or commitments as residents have asked us to call them. These have been published on the TCH website. The intention is to provide staff with a basic template for behaviours and residents with a set of clear service standards that can be understood at-a-glance and through which they can hold us to account. The commitments were developed in initial consultation with our Resident Scrutiny Panel and then designed and co-produced with residents and colleagues.

All colleagues, whether customer or non-customer facing, will be responsible and take ownership for delivering services in line with the newly revised commitments, including the customer service commitment.



Our customer service commitment

We will:

- Always be professional and polite
- Aim to deal with straightforward queries at the first point of contact
- Aim to get back to you within five working days if we can't answer your query at the first point of contact
- Make sure it's easy for you to make a complaint, so we can put things right quickly if they go wrong
- Always let you know who you're speaking to and tell you which team or person will be in touch if your query is ongoing
- Communicate in clear and simple language
- Make adjustments to accommodate any specific communication needs and preferences that you tell us about.

Information and communication- success measures

YEAR 1	Clear, up to date, accessible 'at-a glance' Commitments (service standards)
	A range of relevant, accessible, up to date digital and non-digital information in place for our customers
YEAR 2	Satisfaction that TCH keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them - target 75%
	Performance against KPIs and LPIs that demonstrates the commitments are being met
	Satisfaction surveys and performance reporting will be aligned with the tenant satisfactions measures. We will publish performance against satisfaction measure to customers and all colleagues quarterly
	Website/digital newsletters with consistently high 'hit' and 'open' statistics when compared to similar organisations
	Increased use of repairs portal for reporting repairs and corresponding reduction in calls to repairs service centre
	Increased numbers of residents accessing MyHomeOnline, demonstrating that they find the information provided relevant and useful

“Effective communication is 20% what you know and 80% how you feel about what you know.”

Jim Rohn

Theme 3

Always improving

TCH Responsive Repairs Service

We understand that effective, responsive, services are key to achieving high levels of customer satisfaction. Getting our repairs service right is vital, as this is the service that is most used and most important to our customers. Improving and maintaining consistently high satisfaction with the repairs service is a key focus of this strategy.

In November 2022, TCH established a new repairs service, TCH Repairs (TCHR), with our successful joint venture partner, Fortem Solutions. . Residents have told us that the customer service provided by our repairs service historically was not always of a satisfactory standard.

Prior to the procurement of the new service, we asked customers what excellent repairs customer service would look like to them. They told us they wanted a responsive, reliable, and convenient service, with great communication, polite informative staff, a focus on right first time, and both digital and phone options for reporting and tracking repairs and changing appointments. Therefore, the procurement process for this service focussed throughout on the standard of customer service our joint venture partner could offer and how they would meet, and ideally exceed, customer expectations.

An excellent customer service culture is at the heart of the new repairs contract. Fortem Solutions state that their entire operational approach is founded on resident care and delivering service excellence. During the procurement process they stated: “We will instil a culture where everyone in the Joint Venture Company and Fortem Solutions understands the part they are required to play, is focused on the experience of the resident and obsessive around customer service.”

The terms of our partnership with Fortem Solutions are outlined in an in-depth term brief in which they have committed to realise service excellence in the delivery of the repairs service. Key to their offer is that they will “treat residents, their homes, and possessions with respect.”

The contract has a key focus on, and mechanisms for, ensuring quality control and performance monitoring.

Drivers to ensure customer service excellence include:

- A focus on getting it 'right first time'
- A 'my customer, my responsibility' pledge
- A commitment to 'see it, fix it' when operatives are carrying out another job at the property
- A commitment to support the resolution of complex complaints and to cascade learning to improve and embed customer service excellence into front and back-office teams
- The Repairs Service Advisors (RSA) have been incorporated into TCH's Customer Service Team to ensure consistent and high standard customer service at the first point of contact. They will continue to work closely with TCHR teams to ensure a joined-up service
- A performance focused approach using contract Local Performance Indicators and Key Performance Indicators to drive improvement
- Awareness of and commitment to comply with new regulations such as the White Paper for Social Housing and the Building Safety Act.



Digital innovations:

- An improved repairs reporting portal has been introduced, freeing up RSAs to provide a more focussed service to those who need it
- The Refer-It app which allows operatives to report safeguarding issues and other concerns
- 'Remote Assist' livestreaming software to improve repair diagnostics
- Appointment availability to the TCH contact centre to enable booking of appointments at the first point of contact
- We are also working towards implementing:
 - Self-service options including the ability to re-arrange an appointment through a link provided in our confirmation/reminder texts
 - An 'On My Way' Uber-style operative tracking app for residents.

Other performance improvement initiatives

All contractors - We will share lessons learned from our procurement exercise and good practice from the ongoing implementation of the new joint venture contract with our Epsom colleagues. In turn learn from their in-house repairs team who deliver services with high levels of satisfaction to residents in Surrey and West Sussex.

We will also use the knowledge gained in managing these contracts to further inform best practice in managing other key contracts across the organisation.



We are early signatories to the 'Building a Safer Future Charter'. This aims to create a positive culture and behaviour change. It offers building safety and offers multiple tools to support organisations to improve their approach to leadership and culture in relation to building safety.

Other recent customer service initiatives which we will continue to embed through the lifespan of this strategy include:

- We are signed up to the NHF's 'Together with Tenants' Charter and will further embed the delivery of our commitments through the design and implementation of TCH's Resident Engagement Strategies.
- Rosebery's 2021-24 Customer Engagement strategy sets out "a new customer-centric approach to involve our customers in the co-creation, monitoring and review of our services to achieve innovation and improved customer satisfaction". We will continue to align our approach to ensure we are able to actively engage with a wide and diverse range of residents to understand their views around their customer experience and how we can continuously improve it.
- We place great importance on the prompt, effective and empathetic handling of complaints. All relevant colleague inductions include an overview of our approach to complaint handling. Thorough guidance has been developed for colleagues to create resolution focussed, individual tailored, case-by-case responses. We will continue to ensure a one team consistent approach to complaints handling, redress, and reporting, and sharing of relevant good practice and lessons learned.

- Our Brilliant Basics also form part of all colleague inductions. The brilliant basics are focussed on customer service to both external and internal customers, setting out the expected basic customer service behaviours for all colleagues. Together with our new Epsom colleagues we will review and relaunch these brilliant basics and ensure that they are delivered consistently across TCH ensuring that our focus on excellent customer service is underpinned by efficient and collaborative working.
- Through our welfare calls programme implemented during the Covid-19 pandemic, we gained a better understanding of the importance to customers of maintaining our customer facing service delivery model. In response to the calls, we further developed specialised customer-facing services such as community safety and tenancy and money support to provide customer service tailored to individual needs to ensure all residents can access services and maintain successful tenancies. We will continue to develop these services to better support our residents.

Always improving - success measures

YEAR 1	Satisfaction with complaint handling to 50%
	Resident Satisfaction with last repair > 90%
YEAR 2	Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair 85%
	Fewer complaints upheld and a 10% reduction of complaints escalating to Stage 2
	Reviewed 'Brilliant Basics' that are embedded and consistently demonstrated across the organisation
	More evidence of resident influence on TCH service design and delivery

“Ask your customers to be part of the solution and don't view them as part of the problem.”

Alan Weiss

“Your most unhappy customers are your greatest source of learning.”

Bill Gates

Theme 4

The right tools for the job

Driving a values-driven culture and achieving a truly customer centric approach to all our services

We will continue to embed a values-driven culture by delivering an ongoing culture transformation training programme for all colleagues to achieve an organisation wide, customer centric mindset. In recent years we have delivered Human and Kind training as part of the new colleague induction process. This training is aimed at embedding the right customer service culture from the outset and is currently being reviewed as part of the evolving wider Peabody Group culture transformation programme. We intend to extend the training to all TCH colleagues to further embed our expectations around behaviours. The refreshed programme will be rebranded as Customer Experience training, linking in with Peabody's cultural transformation programme as opportunities arise.

We will also continue to build on approaches to ensure that:

- Recruitment always focusses on behaviours as well as skills – with consistent testing around behaviours at recruitment
- Understanding the importance of the resident voice and our values are a core element of the onboarding/induction process, including for non-customer facing roles
- As an organisation we encourage, develop and support professional curiosity, having an holistic rather than task based approach to interactions. We will help to prevent issues or identify them at an early stage to better support residents by understanding the challenges they face. We will combine this with an innovative, 'can do' culture to problem solving that really values new ideas
- Further embed equality, diversity, and inclusion so it becomes a key consideration in everything we do
- We develop and deliver a leadership training programme, initially for existing managers, that develops true leaders who welcome new ideas and can equip and empower their teams to take ownership, be accountable and resolve problems and helps to 'grow our own'
- Skills matrixes and the professional qualifications that we support colleagues to pursue recognise the importance of good customer service as a key skill alongside other technical/operational skills/ qualifications.



Creating easy to use flexible services informed by accurate, up to date, records, and data

Using customer insight and data to inform our approach we will:

- Analyse satisfaction survey data against customer segments and geographic information to show whether satisfaction levels are consistent
- Use and improve the data and customer insight we hold to improve services, exploiting the full potential of systems and technology to ensure we hold accurate data and drive efficiency through processes. This will enable colleagues to more easily access and update information to support the seamless delivery of excellent services
- Personalise data - treating every customer interaction with TCH as a data point
- Use accurate, consistent data to reduce friction - bringing services that can be accessed with ease and minimal effort
- Use data to understand customer behaviour - to further shape and enhance services, including considering extending the use of the 'wordnerds' project, piloted by the Epsom team, across the business
- Use data to target the right customers - considering how each interaction works best for customers (taking account of their needs, expectations and circumstances) to deliver a service that is as effective and low effort as possible for them
- Predict future trends - ensure that we are looking internally and externally to shape our service
- Build customer loyalty - measuring and understanding how TCH as an organisation makes an individual feel.



Digital services

Digital engagement with customers has an increased focus, but there is also a need to maintain relationships centred on empathy, understanding, and knowing there's someone to talk to when customers are worried.

We know more residents are vulnerable, but many don't see themselves in that way, so while digital services are critically important there is also a need to maintain empathetic relationships. There is a balance to be struck between technology and face to face interactions, but there is definitely a requirement for both.

We will continue to develop innovative digital services to improve the customer experience and support residents to overcome barriers to digital access. Our service will focus on being digital by choice, by empowering residents to have a digital customer journey and opportunity to self-serve, while ensuring that we continue to provide services of equal quality for non-digital customers.

We will:

- Know our customers - using segmentation, research, and analytics to understand which channels are used and where additional support is necessary
- Create a customer journey that is digitally based and offers more self-serve opportunities, freeing up colleague time to spend with customers who need one to one support
- Address barriers to inclusion including: access, skills, motivation, trust
- Deliver an increasing number of digital services and self-service options via our repairs joint venture, the TCH website and the customer portal MyHomeOnline
- Continue to work with Kent County Council on its Kent Community Wi-Fi project which aims to install free community Wi-Fi in an area within each district of the county
- Explore how we work with telecom providers in the future as they upgrade their broadband networks with high-speed fibre network, enabling residents to access affordable, reliable broadband within their homes
- Develop tools which empower colleagues to deliver great service.

YEAR 1	All relevant teams have a skills matrix in place with evidence that colleagues are effectively progressing through the matrix levels
	Tailored customer surveys to better understand how customers feel about our services and what we can improve when satisfaction levels are not meeting targets
YEAR 2	All colleagues have participated in Customer Experience/Cultural transformation training
	All managers have participated in leadership training
	Percentage of colleagues with a professional qualification increases year on year
	Resident satisfaction and customer experience measures embedded in key/ local performance indicators, team plans and appraisals targets – driving accountability, embedding understanding of expectations and the value of team/ individual colleague contributions to the wider business

“A good tool improves the way you work. A great tool improves the way you think.”

Jeff Duntemann

Delivery, monitoring and measuring outcomes.

We aim to deliver the actions outlined in this strategy as part of our day-to-day activities, ensuring that delivery of great customer experience will be central to measuring every colleague’s performance. An action plan will be in place to deliver, monitor and embed the expected benefits of the strategy. Progress reports will be given to our Customer Experience Committee and in turn to customers via our newsletters and websites and other engagement platforms. Key customer feedback themes, service changes and successes will be cascaded throughout the organisation via internal communications platforms.

The voice of the customer is the most crucial element in enhancing the customer experience. We need to be sure that our customers have real opportunities to give their views, shape and ultimately co-create the services we deliver to them, while understanding the parameters of our purpose. It is vital that our colleagues are engaged in this journey; with a proven statistical correlation between how engaged employees are on this journey and the positive outcomes that we’d expect to see in customer service.

Customer experience will ultimately be driven by our focus on and ability to deliver our key objectives including: consistently getting it right the first time, responding within reasonable timelines, making it easy to interact with us, as well as demonstrating openness, empathy, clarity of communications, and a sense of doing the right thing. It is also important to gauge how TCH as an organisation makes a person feel. We need to be ensuring that TCH exhibits the levels of trust customers anticipate from us, that customers feel services are designed with them in mind and they feel that TCH has their best interests at heart.

We need to be genuinely curious about understanding the underlying issues that impact on our residents’ lives and perceptions and show that we want to learn and improve so situations don’t arise again. We will work hard to pull together as one team for an end-to-end customer experience.



Looking forward

We are extremely proud that TCH has proactively faced the challenges of the last few years. Regardless of challenges we have become more agile while retaining our passion for doing the absolute best for our customers and for wanting to continue to grow, improve and innovate.

We continue to face a whole range of new challenges. Rapidly rising energy and food prices, along with continued goods and staff resourcing shortages, are causing living costs to rise across the country and beyond and impact everyone. Many of our customers need more support, and we need to continue to implement digital solutions alongside differently tailored approaches to meet the whole range of individual needs and priorities our customers tell us about.

It is in this environment that we need to continue to work to enhance our customers' experiences of TCH. We are confident that with the support of our excellent colleagues and through delivery of this strategy, in conjunction with the Local Strategy, we will achieve success for our customers and for TCH.





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