



Strategy:	Customer Engagement Strategy 2024 – 2027
Date of Approval	30 th November 2024
Owner	Director of Operations
Strategy Monitoring Body	Customer Experience Committee
Customer Input into Strategy:	Customer consultation took place on the 20 th February in person and online in September 2024.
Date for Strategy Review	September 2027
Linked to Strategy and Policies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Brighter Futures Corporate Strategy 24-27 • Asset Management Strategy • Data Management Strategy
Strategy and Legal Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard • Charter for Social Housing Residents: Social Housing White Paper • Together with Tenants • Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 • Building Safety Act 2022 • Housing Ombudsman's Complaint Handling Code • NHF Code of Governance 2020

1. Foreword

At Tuntum Housing Association (THA), our vision is to be a dynamic, community-based housing association, passionate about building brighter futures and empowering people in sustainable multi-cultural neighbourhoods.

Our approach to Customer Engagement has been informed by the work with involved customers, staff, and stakeholders during 2024 to help shape our new [Building Brighter Futures Corporate Strategy](#) which places 'Our Customers' as our Number 1 Priority.

THA is a BME-led housing association with a diverse customer base and staff team. THA was established to address a number of structural racial inequalities, particularly with regards to the Black and Caribbean community in relation to access to housing some 35 years ago.

In 2024, these inequalities sadly still exist, and we remain committed to the promotion of highlighting these issues with our partners both regionally and nationally.

THA now provides services to over 3000 customers from a wide range of demographics and lived experiences. This strategy therefore aims to ensure that the service model at THA is informed and meets the needs of all of our current and future customers, and that all voices are heard and that all customers are treated with fairness and respect in every interaction they have with THA and all who deliver services on our behalf.

2. The purpose of this strategy

Why? The purpose of this strategy is **to drive continuous organisational improvement, deliver improved customer outcomes and ensure that we are able to meet the diverse needs of our customer base.**

Building an accessible engagement framework ensures that we are able to hear from the widest range of customers. We recognise that listening to and involving customers is crucial to the way in which we deliver and improve our services for both our current and future customers.

How? By providing customers with a wide range of meaningful opportunities to **make decisions, influence** and **scrutinise** our strategies, policies and services, and ensure that their voice is heard at all decision-making levels throughout the organisation.

The guiding principles behind how we seek to fully engage and learn from the Customer Voice are set out below:

Listen: We will seek to listen and understand customer experience through complaints, feedback, compliments, all forms of customer contact, transactional and perception survey feedback, targeted focus groups, etc.

Inform: We will provide regular updates on matters that are important to our customers through our newsletter 'Engage', direct communication, our website customer engagement meetings, estate walkabouts, customer annual reports, etc.

Consult: We will consult on the development of policies and a range of service delivery amendments.

Review: We will provide opportunities for customers to review and scrutinise our service delivery and performance.

In developing this strategy, we considered how our Values are brought to life through effective customer engagement. These values were co-created with a panel of involved customers in February 2024 and guide our workforce in everything we do.

Our Values

Trustworthy	We keep our promises and operate with respect and integrity.
Understanding	We listen to our customers; understand their needs and the homes they live in and will use this insight to continuously improve our services
Nimble	Being small and community-based means that we have the ability to respond quickly and creatively.
Transparent	We operate with openness, honesty and humility
Unifying	As a BME led organisation, we exist to support and champion the multicultural and diverse needs of the communities we serve and to foster inclusivity.
Motivated	Tuntum Housing attracts and retains a staff team and Board who are eager to serve our customers and deliver against the organisation's proud history

Who? At Tuntum we provide a range of services including general needs housing, housing for older persons, homelessness and specialist support and outreach services. Throughout this document **we will refer to customers as an umbrella term to cover our tenants, leaseholders and service users**, unless prescribed through Regulatory guidance.

3. External Drivers for change

Tuntum is a Registered Provider of social housing and we are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. Our Board ensures we meet the Regulatory Standards, including the Consumer Standards. In addition to complying with the Social Housing (Regulation) Bill 2023.

The four Consumer Standards and Code of Practice, alongside the Charter for Social Housing Residents: Social Housing White Paper and the National Housing Federation's (NHF) Together with Tenants set out the case for landlords to further strengthen the relationship between residents and landlords. The standards were informed by the Chartered Institute for Housing and the NHF's Better Social Housing Review which was published in December 2022.

The four Consumer Standards are detailed below.

- Safety and Quality Standard
- Transparency, Accountability and Influence Standard
- Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- Tenancy Standard

This strategy is directly aligned with the **Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard**; however customer experience relates to all four of the standards.

Further to the Consumer Standards, the Building Safety Act 2022 gives residents more rights, powers and protections so that homes across the country are safer.

In April 2024:

- The Housing Ombudsman Service published its revised Complaints Handling Code (CHC). It was first published in July 2020 in response to the Green Paper, after consulting with the sector and using its insight. This latest code considers feedback provided by social housing providers and residents. The CHC provides landlords with a universal definition of a complaint, defines the structure of the complaints procedure, and demands that we demonstrate learning from complaints by producing an Annual Complaints Performance and Service Improvement Report.
- The Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) became a mandatory requirement for all social landlords to collect and report against in April 2024 and were brought into enhance customer scrutiny, improve accountability and improve regulatory oversight

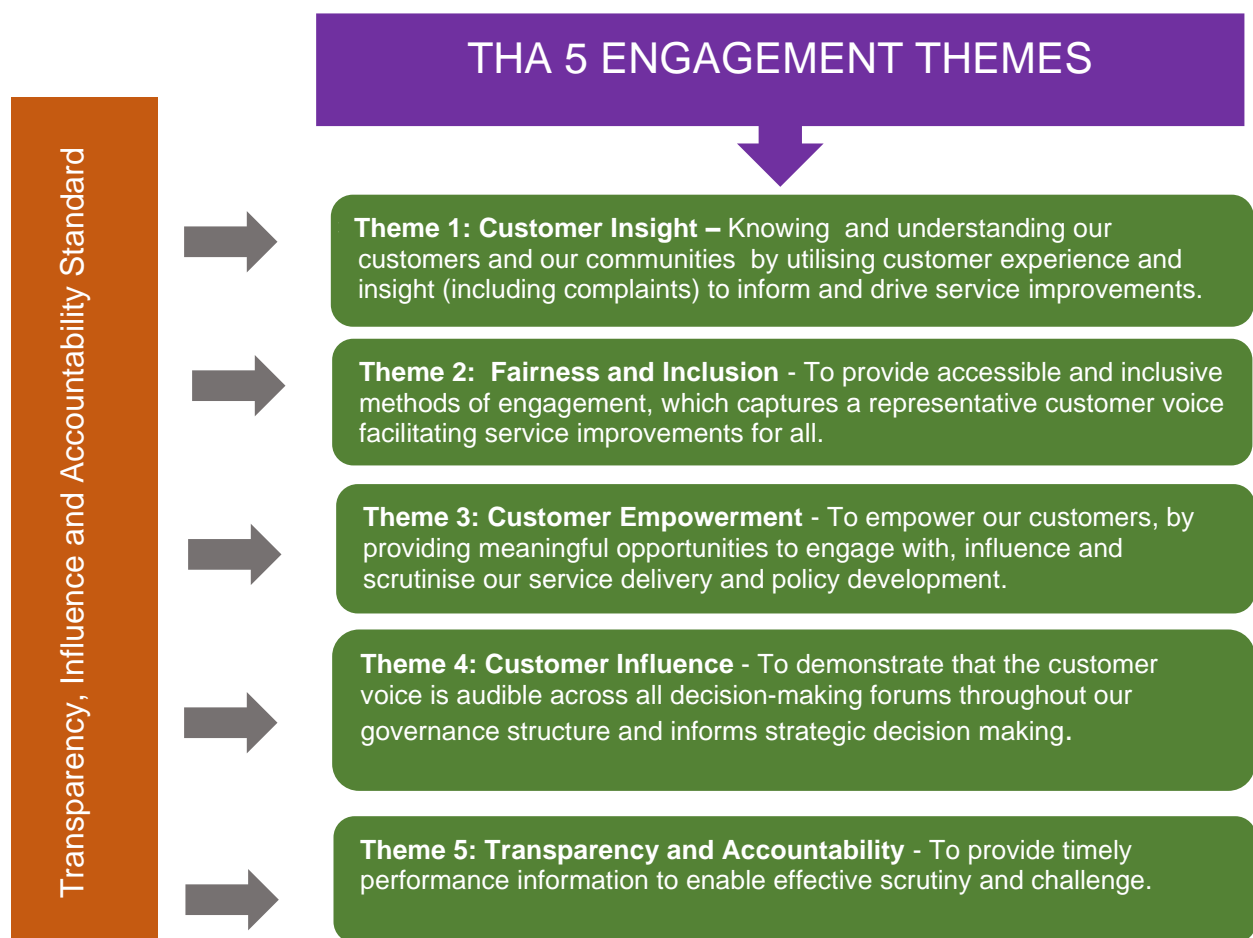
This strategy aims to position Tuntum to be able to meet and exceed the evolving requirements of the regulatory environment.

4. Our Strategic Aims

Our Corporate Strategy 2024-2027 details Our Customers as our number 1 priority. Our core objectives in line with this priority are as follows:

- To provide excellent customer-centric services, which are informed by insight.
- To actively engage with our customers; ensuring that the customer voice is heard, understood and acted upon across all key decision-making forums.
- To continually improve our customer satisfaction levels and enhance the overall Customer experience

This strategy seeks to deliver against these objectives through 5 key themes which are aligned with the Transparency, Influence and Accountability standard, as shown below:



THEME 1: Customer Insight

Knowing and understanding our customers and our communities by utilising customer experience and insight (including complaints) to inform and drive service improvements.

At THA, we enjoy thousands of contact points with our customers and potential customers every month. When analysing this data, we can better understand customer experience, demographics, expectations and aspirations which can inform and significantly improve service delivery. Throughout the lifetime of this strategy, we aim to make better use of this intelligence so that we can provide more responsive services to our customers and the communities we serve and begin to anticipate and importantly improve the customer experience over time.

We will do this by:

- We will undertake a “Knowing our Customers” initiative to ensure that our data is up-to-date, that we are providing our customers with the right level of service and to ensure that we are putting a face to the Tuntum name.
- Agreeing a ‘Golden Record’ for customers so that we are clear on ‘who our customers are’.
- Annually checking our records to ensure we are clear on those customers who we may have not had contact with for a whole year (finding our silence).
- Providing a fair, accessible and effective complaints handling process which is 100% compliant with the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.
- Improving our fleet of transactional surveys and ensuring we follow them up with the relevant teams.
- Triangulating our data sets to understand who customers are, what their preferences are, what’s good about our service, what needs to improve and where we have gaps.

THEME 2: Fairness and Inclusion

To provide accessible and inclusive methods of engagement, which capture a representative customer voice facilitating service improvements for all.

THA is a BME-led housing association with a diverse customer base. THA was established to address a number of structural racial inequalities, particularly in the Black and Caribbean community with regards to access to housing some 35 years ago. In 2024, these problems still exist, however THA now provides services to a wide range of diverse customers, including those with a protected characteristic and we need to ensure that our service provision meets the needs of all our customers and that all our customers can be heard to ensure fair outcomes for all.

We recognise that this may mean that our engagement model will, at points, need to be targeted to ensure that we ‘lean in’ to communities who we don’t typically hear from due to disability, language barriers or other perceived or actual barriers to feeling included. Throughout the timeframe of this strategy, we will therefore:

- Consult with our customers to make sure we engage with them in a way that suits them.

- Develop new ways to engage with a diverse range of customers, ensuring that involvement opportunities are inclusive.
- Reach out to underrepresented groups within our customer base through targeted communications and involvement opportunities.
- Monitor the protected characteristics of those who are 'involved' to ensure the 'Customer Voice' is fully representative.
- Ensure that we are able to analyse satisfaction results through the prism of protected characteristics so that we are able to identify any equality gaps in experience and service delivery, and work with our involved customers to investigate and deliver improvements.
- Gather feedback on the level of satisfaction with how we are engaging with our customers.

THEME 3: Customer Empowerment

To empower our customers, by providing meaningful opportunities to engage with, influence and scrutinise our service delivery and policy development.

We recognise that our engagement framework will be subject to on-going enhancement as we continue to listen and learn from those customers who may feel less able to engage with our current engagement model.

We will do this by:

- Improving our resources in this area to ensure that we can facilitate and support an enhanced engagement menu.
- We will develop digital methods of engagement to ensure we are able to provide greater opportunities for people to share their views and get involved to suit their busy lifestyles.
- We will provide training and support for those who want to be involved so that they are suitably equipped to scrutinise and challenge our services where and when necessary.
- We will make clear time commitments for any engagement opportunities we advertise.

THEME 4: Customer Influence

To demonstrate that the customer voice is audible across all decision-making forums throughout our governance structures and informs strategic decision making.

Our approach will enable customers to have opportunities to engage with Tuntum in a way that suits their life commitments and capacity with both formal and more informal avenues of involvement.

We will do this by:

- Retaining the roles of the Tenant Board Member and Customer Experience Committee members within our governance structure.
- The Board delegating that the Customer Experience Committee will provide on-going assurance that we are able to meet and exceed the Consumer Standards.

- Developing a new Customer Insight and Experience report for the Customer Experience Committee to review.
- Updating the Board on a quarterly basis on our progress against our aspirations as set out in this strategy.
- Submitting all customer-led scrutiny reports to the Customer Experience Committee and Board for consideration.
- Updating the Terms of Reference for the Board and all its committees to reflect the need to ensure that the customer experience and potential impact is a consideration during its deliberations.
- Ensuring that all Board and committee reports direct the author to articulate whether customer involvement has been sought in the compilation of the report.
- Inviting customer involvement for all key and senior appointments within the organisation.
- Presenting the Board with case studies of 'lived experience' at their strategic away days – these will involve a selection of case studies that show a range of experiences that will inform strategic debate.

THEME 5: Transparency and Accountability

To provide timely performance information to enable effective scrutiny and challenge.

We recognise that for Customers to be in a position to meaningfully scrutinise our service offer and hold us to account, they must be provided with timely and accurate information.

To do this:

- We will work with our customers to ensure that the information on our website is easy to access and understand.
- We will publish our quarterly performance information on our website.
- We will publish our latest performance results in our newsletter Engage.
- We will publish our 'lessons learnt' from our complaints.
- We will hold regular customer meetings at our specialist housing and independent living schemes.
- We will establish and support the effective administration of the Magnify Scrutiny Panel.