



Queens
Cross
Housing
Association

(Draft for Consultation)
**Customer & Community
Engagement Strategy
2026 -2031**



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OUR VISION, VALUES & STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

Foreword

Welcome to Queens Cross Housing Association's **Customer and Community Engagement Strategy 2026–2031**, which sets out how we will involve, listen to, and work alongside our tenants, residents, and wider communities over the next five years. This new strategy replaces our previous Tenant Participation Strategy 2022–2025 and reflects our refreshed approach to engagement—one that is more empowering, more inclusive, and more firmly rooted in the everyday experiences of the people who live in our neighbourhoods.

Our new **Business Plan 2025–2030** places a strong emphasis on effective customer feedback as a driver for high-quality and responsive services. It recognises that meaningful engagement—through customer conversations, online surveys, neighbourhood planning, and many other opportunities—gives residents a powerful role in shaping how services are designed and delivered. This strategy is designed to ensure that tenant and community voices influence decision-making, investment priorities, service improvements, and how we can prioritise resources to what matters most in our neighbourhoods.

We recognise that by actively involving tenants in decisions, service design, and governance, we can strengthen trust, improve satisfaction, and ensure that our services reflect real needs and priorities. Engagement is not just a process; it is a partnership. When we listen to customers and work collaboratively, we gain insights that help us tailor our services, develop new forms of support, and respond more quickly and effectively to changing circumstances. In doing so, we also create the conditions for stronger communities, greater innovation, and long-term social and environmental impact.

We value the contribution of tenants who get actively involved with Queens Cross, and all customers who take the time to share their views and ideas with us. Your insights have shaped this strategy, and your continued involvement will be vital as we deliver it.

The Board and staff teams are committed to ensuring that this strategy drives real change. Over the period 2026–2031, we will improve our engagement, widen participation, improve accessibility, and work alongside our communities to build neighbourhoods where people feel heard, respected, and empowered.

Together, we will continue to build excellent homes in vibrant communities—where everyone has a voice and where that voice makes a difference.

Andrew Burns
Chair

Our Vision

Queens Cross Housing Associations Business Plan (*Choose to Live Here, Choose to Work Here*) sets out a vision of “Excellent Housing in Vibrant Communities” alongside organisational values of “respect”, “integrity” and “aspiration”.

Our Values

Respect

We see the positive in everyone, especially our tenants and service users. We treat everyone fairly, regardless of age, race, gender or background. We ask for opinions even if we know we might not like what we hear. And we address people’s concerns in any way we realistically can.

Integrity

What we say in public is the same as what we say behind the scenes. If we say we’ll do something, we mean it. Our tenants and customers can count on us to solve their problems and make sound decisions.

Aspiration

We seek new opportunities and welcome change. We want the best for all our current and future tenants. We’re not afraid to strive for things that won’t be easy – or try things that haven’t been done before. If it doesn’t turn out as planned, we learn and improve again. And then we try again.

Our Strategic Objectives

Our tenants’ priorities: affordable rents, safe and clean neighbourhoods, and homes they can be proud of, are at the heart of everything we do. This includes creating green spaces that bring communities together, providing support to access employment, and helping tenants live independently in their homes for longer, all while being open about what we can deliver in a challenging financial climate.

Our strategic objectives for 2025-2030 are:

1. To keep rents affordable
2. To invest in improving the quality of our tenants’ homes
3. To maintain safe and attractive neighbourhoods
4. To involve our customers in decisions that affect them
5. To attract and develop our future workforce

Links to other Strategies, Plans, Policies and Services

Queens Cross Housing Association is made up of a diverse range of services who work together with each other and external partners.

It is important that the Customer and Community Engagement Strategy links into and informs other services and their plans and strategies. This approach helps us to improve and deliver better value for money services by making the most of existing resources. Our Customer and Community Engagement Strategy links into and has very strong overlaps with:

- 1. Our Business Plan** – Our “Choose to Live Here, Chose to Work Here” Business Plan has one aim over the next 5 years, to make Queens Cross *the* place in Glasgow to live and work. We want to improve the wellbeing of our communities and the individuals within them by building on our foundations built of excellent housing, community services and accountable decision making. It is an ambitious vision to provide excellent homes in vibrant communities. We seek to do this by challenging the idea of poverty in our communities, contributing to improving health and wellbeing and life chances and delivering excellent services and value for money for all our tenants and customers.
- 2. Our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy** - The Association strives to achieve equal opportunity and treatment in all that we do, and to work in a way that values and respects tenants and customers in our communities. We aim to remove barriers to effective participation, whether they are attitudinal, physical or geographical, cultural or financial. We recognise that everyone is an individual and aim to meet their needs accordingly. The vision of Queens Cross is to create ‘**excellent homes and vibrant communities**’, and promoting equality and diversity is a key part of this. We are also committed to embedding trauma-informed practice across all of our services, ensuring that our approach to engagement recognises the impact of trauma, promotes emotional safety, and empowers tenants and customers to participate in ways that feel supportive and respectful to them.
- 3. Our Customer Service Strategy** - Our Customer Service Strategy sets out the Association’s approach to delivering excellent, person-centred services across our organisation. We want every tenant and customer to feel valued, and we use customer satisfaction and feedback as key indicators of how well we are performing. Our Customer First commitments apply whether you are a tenant, prospective tenant, factored owner, or partner agencies. They are equally important in how we work with one another as colleagues across Queens Cross—shaping the behaviours, communication, and service standards that define our internal culture as well as the experience we provide externally.

4. **Our Digital Strategy** – Our Digital Business strategy – sets out how we will develop our IT systems and digital platforms to support our staff and deliver efficient services to customers.
5. **Our People Plan** sets out how we will engage with, develop, and support our workforce to enable them to deliver our Business Plan objectives.
6. **Our Tenancy Sustainment Strategy** – sets out how we will proactively offer support, advice and assistance, to help tenants thrive within their tenancies and live independently in their homes for as long as possible.
7. **Our Asset Management Strategy** – sets out how we will invest in our housing stock to ensure it remains in good condition, continues to meet tenant needs and expectations and relevant Scottish Housing Standards.
8. **Neighbourhood Plans** – we have a plan for each of our four neighbourhoods that sets out priorities for action each year. Tenants can influence the content of these plans which can help focus resources on areas our customers want improvements.
9. **Complaints procedure** – learning from complaints can help to improve services and customers making complaints may become interested in tenant participation as they take opportunities influence changes.

Linking with key strategies, plans and services ensures tenants and customers are at the heart of our service. In practice, these strategic linkages provide a framework for delivering a joined-up approach to Customer and Community Engagement where we will:

- 1) Ensure our staff **understand and demonstrate the right behaviours** to deliver excellent customer services and adopt a positive approach in dealing with people.
- 2) **Understand who our customers are** and what requirements individuals may have so that we can tailor our services to their needs.
- 3) **Make sure our services are accessible and inclusive.**
- 4) **Actively seek the views of tenants and customers** so that we focus on ‘doing best what matters most’
- 5) **Involve tenants and customers directly** in shaping and improving our services.
- 6) **Share feedback from our customers** and be open about how we are responding.
- 7) By **learning from others** both locally and across the housing association sector.

Legal Framework

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory duty on social housing landlords to publish a Tenant Participation Strategy demonstrating how they will communicate with and consult tenants and residents on a range of housing and housing-related services.

“Tenant Participation is about tenants taking part in decision making processes and influencing decisions about housing policies, housing conditions and housing related services. It is a two-way process which involves the sharing of information, ideas and power. It aims to improve the standard of housing conditions and service “.

The 2001 Act gives tenants’ rights and sets out duties for landlords.

Tenants have the right to:

- Form Registered Tenants Organisations (RTOs)
- Access information about housing policies
- Be consulted on issues that affect them, including being consulted on decisions that affect the services tenants receive and be given adequate time to fully consider options. This includes proposals relating to policy on housing management, repairs maintenance, standards of service, the tenant participation strategy and any stock transfer resulting in a change of landlord.

Key Landlord duties are to:

- Publish a Tenant Participation Strategy containing an assessment of resources
- Make sure our Tenant Participation Strategy complies with equal opportunity requirements
- Maintain a register of tenant organisations (RTO’s) where these exist.
- Inform tenants and RTOs of any proposals for changes to housing management. This includes proposals relating to policy on housing management, repairs maintenance, standards of service, the tenant participation strategy and any stock transfer resulting in a change of landlord.

The Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR)

The SHR is an independent regulator for all social landlords in Scotland. They regulate to protect the interests of people who receive services from social landlords by assessing and reporting on how social landlords are performing. This is mainly through a self-assessment process known as the Annual Return on the Charter (ARC), which enables

the SHR to monitor and report on landlords' progress towards the standards and outcomes in the Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC).

The SSHC sets out the standards and outcomes that tenants can expect from their landlord in terms of service performance, opportunities for communication and participation in decisions that affect them.

Outcome 2: Communication

Social landlords manage their business so that...

... tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, and how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.

Outcome 3: Participation

Social landlords manage their business so that...

... tenants and other customer find it easy to participate in an influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.



The Charter encourages tenants to get involved and also to be aware of their landlord's performance, know how to compare it with others and to take up opportunities to collaborate with their landlord to influence service improvement. We will work with tenants who are interested in engaging in this constructive process. The Annual Return on Charter empowers tenants to challenge their landlord's performance in areas that are most important to them. We will ensure that our tenants are aware of the Scottish Social Housing Charter and

we will actively communicate our compliance by featuring highlights from our Annual Return on the Charter (ARC), and what this means for the services tenants receive.

Annual Assurance Statement

In October each year, we are also required to submit an Annual Assurance Statement to the SHR: www.housingregulator.gov.uk The Association needs to confirm to the SHR that it is complying with all regulatory requirements and standards. If we do not meet these requirements, we must advise the SHR and say what we are going to do to address the issues. The Association gathers evidence from various sources to assess overall compliance and this is monitored on an ongoing basis. A report is submitted to the Board for approval. Once it has been approved, the Statement is signed and submitted to the SHR and then made publicly on our website: www.qcha.org.uk

Over the next 5 years we want to build on the achievements of our last Tenant Participation Strategy and the work of our Social Regeneration Team in pursuit of our vision of continuing to deliver "Excellent housing in vibrant communities".

Independent Tenant Organisations

The Tenants Information Service (TIS) and the Tenant Participatory Advisory Service (TPAS) are independent organisations who promote good practice in tenant participation throughout Scotland by working with both tenants and landlords. These organisations offer access to expertise which help us develop key principles, best practice and aid continuous improvement to ensure we are at the forefront of engagement activities. They provide tenants and staff with opportunities to learn about tenant participation, take part in training and information sessions and will enable networking with others. They are an important resource that will help us to achieve the goals set out in this strategy.

We are members of both organisations and by working with them, we can ensure that good practice is maintained and shared. Membership of these bodies demonstrates our commitment to tenant and community engagement, enable tenant participation to become part of our organisational culture and help provide tenants with the skills and confidence they need to be actively involved.

We aim to encourage as many tenants as possible to get involved with us and will give them a range of options. We want tenants to get involved in a way that suits them and will agree timescales with tenants to make sure they can properly participate. We will make sure our tenant participation activities are accessible to all and will be responsive to tenants' individual needs. We will provide tenants with access to the services and resources they need to allow them to become fully involved.

Why a New Approach?

Recent feedback from our tenants highlights that our previous approach to tenant participation was not as effective as it could be:

- Only 3.7% were interested in becoming a member of a neighbourhood group.
- Only 3.7 % were interested in joining a tenant participation register
- Only 3.7 % were interested in the resident's task force (our former scrutiny group).

These results highlighted low interest amongst most of our customer base in being involved in the structures we had in place for participation at that time. In practice we have seen a growing uptake in digital engagement options – with 1,476 (33% of tenants) people responding to our most recent rent consultation exercise carried out via SMS and email – this represents a high response rate for a large tenant population. We also continue to see a preference for one off, community-based consultations relevant to neighbourhoods and specific interests.

Community Based Customer Engagement

To support a modern, flexible, and meaningful approach to engagement, we are developing a new participation model that will replace our previous structures such as the tenant participation register, neighbourhood groups, and traditional scrutiny groups. This new model is designed around widening access, removing barriers to involvement, and making it easier for more people to influence our services at a local and neighbourhood level.

At the heart of this new approach will be three core ways for tenants and customers to get involved:

1. Digital Engagement through CX Feedback

We will make full use of our digital engagement tools to reach more tenants quickly and conveniently. This will include themed consultation exercises, surveys, and short-notice opportunities for tenants to share their views on specific local issues which will directly affect them. Digital engagement has already led to much higher response levels than previous methods, and it will continue to form a key part of our approach.

This aligns with our commitment to using technology to broaden participation and reach more people across our communities.

2. Community-Based Engagement

We know that many people prefer informal, local opportunities to have their say. We will continue to visit community groups, attend existing activities in our facilities, and use pop-up engagement sessions to gather views from people who may not normally take part in formal participation structures.

This supports our ambition to engage with people where they already are and ensure representation from groups who may be under-represented or harder to reach. Community-based engagement will also include working with children and young people through existing connections such as youth clubs, holiday programmes and activity-based sessions delivered in Queens Cross facilities.

3. A New Tenant and Customer Forum (working title)

We are developing a new Forum that will bring together tenants and customers who want to be more actively involved. This group will act as a flexible, multi-purpose forum — operating in place of several previous participation mechanisms. Tenants will not need to make long-term commitments and can choose to take part only in the topics that interest them. This approach reflects feedback that one-off, interest-or locality specific engagement is more appealing to most tenants than permanent membership of formal overarching groups. The Forum will provide opportunities to take part in:

- Focus groups
- Themed discussions
- Service reviews
- Consultation on investment, policy or neighbourhood priorities

- Short-term working groups linked to areas such as repairs, environmental improvements or service quality
- Reviewing our Annual Return on the Charter

To ensure quality and sustainability of this model, we will limit major participation exercises — such as full tenant service reviews — to no more than one per year. This ensures that involvement remains meaningful and manageable for everyone taking part and allows us to provide the training and support required for tenants to contribute effectively. Our training commitment aligns with our wider aim to build capacity and confidence among tenants so they can influence services in a well-supported and informed way.

Key Outcomes

We have identified 5 key outcomes we want our strategy to achieve, they are supported by detailed actions, set out below, which will assist us to implement the strategy.

- **Outcome 1: Ensure all tenants and customers can easily engage with the Association, are heard, and can see how their feedback leads to change**

Actions:

- Maintain a balance of online and offline communication channels, including CX Feedback, newsletters, social media and face-to-face meetings and events.
- Provide clear, timely updates on how feedback has influenced decisions including service standards, operational changes, or investment priorities
- Develop and promote involvement options within our neighbourhoods to make it easy for tenants to participate at a level they are comfortable with.

Outcome 2: Create place-based opportunities for tenants to influence services and decisions within their own neighbourhood.

Actions:

- Go to where people are already meeting and participating in community activities within our neighbourhoods and seek their opinions and perspectives.
- Build on the trusted relationships we have with tenants already accessing local groups, projects and services, and build on this to develop local networks of engaged tenants.
- Utilise a participatory budgeting approach where appropriate to let tenants influence local spending decisions.
- Enable tenants to input into and monitor progress on Neighbourhood Plans for each of the four local areas, ensuring they can influence priorities and track outcomes.

Outcome 3: Tenants and staff work together in partnership to improve services and influence decisions.

- Develop a new Customer Experience Forum which is flexible and offers tenants the opportunity for a higher level of engagement on specific topics and service areas.

- Create specialist short life working groups (from the customer experience forum) for areas such as investment works, environmental, community-based improvements, and service quality.
- Introduce joint training opportunities for staff and tenants and access to specialist accredited learning where appropriate.

Outcome 4: Increase engagement with under-represented and hard-to-reach groups

Actions:

- Use informal, accessible, and community-based methods to reach those less likely to engage in formal settings, mainly by engaging through existing community projects and groups that already exist in the local area.
- Use engagement opportunities to help tenants and customers learn new skills and develop capacity to support positive mental health and wellbeing.
- Address barriers to participation, including mobility, mental health, language, digital access, and socio-economic factors.
- Monitor participation levels to ensure equity and inclusivity in representation across age, ethnicity, disability, and other demographics.
- We will take opportunities to work with young people engaged in our youth activities to raise awareness of tenant participation and use our connections with young tenants supported by our wellbeing service to ensure they are aware of the opportunities available for shaping services and neighbourhood priorities.
- Use youth clubs and holiday programmes as opportunities to engage young people, including consultation on community projects, neighbourhood improvements and place-based initiatives.

Outcome 5: Ensure resources and support are in place to sustain effective engagement

Actions:

- Allocate budget for training, events, digital tools, and participation activities.
- Maintain memberships with Tenants Information Service and TPAS Scotland for guidance, training, and access to sector best practice.
- Offer travel and other support to enable full participation.
- Regularly review and evaluate the effectiveness of engagement methods, ensuring continuous improvement and value for money.
- Assign staff resources to support tenant engagement activities

How we will monitor and measure performance

The Customer and Community Engagement Strategy and action plan are working documents subject to continuous review to make sure that outcomes and targets are met.

Continuous monitoring of the strategy and action plan is essential in identifying issues or areas of slow progress. The Strategy and action plan will be reviewed regularly by the Customer Engagement Working Group (TPWG) so that the milestones in the action plan are met.

Annually, a strategy update will be presented to the Board. The Board scrutinises performance information for the service and makes sure that it achieves maximum value for money and best value in service delivery.

The Customer and Community Engagement Strategy will be reviewed every 5 years.

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