

# CUSTOMER CONNECT PANEL

## Terms of Reference

### BACKGROUND

**The following Terms of Reference for Your Housing Group's (YHG) Customer Connect Panel (CCP) will govern how this pathway to engagement will operate.**

CCP is a membership-based customer engagement group which is owned and serviced by YHG. Membership is open to all tenants and leaseholders of YHG residential properties. Members must display a level of competence and as such, are subject to recruitment and appraisal processes.

CCP is YHG's conduit engagement pathway that connects YHG's governance framework to customers and subsequent engagement activity, within our neighbourhoods.

CCP will form a clear connection between the experiences of involved tenants and the insight into tenant experience obtained by YHG through other means. It is a key component in allowing YHG to be as certain as it can be that it is picking up and acting on the experiences of tenants. It will also help YHG move further away from an over-reliance on the opinions of a narrow segment of involved tenants to help it to shape services.

CCP was formed during the financial year of 2021.

### AIMS

**The aims of the CCP are to:**

- Influence policy development for the wider customer base and consider how this is translated and achieved in our localities;
- Develop operational service plans with senior management;
- Focus on specific areas of interest and receive training and support to act as a representative customer voice for both their neighbourhood and area of interest;
- Monitor performance across operational services and make recommendations for improvement or further scrutiny;
- Investigate poor performance and focus on areas of concern and make recommendations to the Customer Services Committee (CSC);

- Engage neighbourhoods and community groups and support the development of neighbourhood plans;
- Represent the everyday voice in local areas;
- Play a leading role in customer voice;
- Assist YHG's CSC in delivering the requirements of The White Paper
- Act on insight it might receive through formal channels, and to proactively gather insight from the wider resident base to help it to provide an evidence-based challenge;
- Take a commissioning role with Customer Scrutiny Inspectors (CSIs) and Task and Finish groups, and sign off on recommendations;
- Make decisions via evidence-based reports;
- Obtain evidence of the tenants' experience through its proactive links with the wider resident base.

## **ROLE**

CCP will act as a conduit between the governance of the organisation and customers within our neighbourhoods. The Customer Engagement Framework within YHG will implement a new model of customer engagement, meaning there will be more pathways to engagement and more engaged and representative customers than ever before.

The role of CCP is to take a strategic overview of that activity and provide assurance to the CSC that the customer voice at YHG is being heard, and customers' views are being addressed within service offers.

## **REMIT**

The panel will take a strategic overview of engagement within YHG. Customer Engagement at YHG now falls into the following 3 categories:

- Resident Safety
- Strategic and assurance
- Local engagement

Via a minimum of six meetings per year as well as some additional activity outside of meetings, and by key officers reporting in at CCP, this panel will deliver its aims which are set out above.

As CCP will also adopt the role of Service Area Champions, there will be work required in between meetings to work on various services, such as policy development, service standards and generally keeping up to date with how an individual service is performing.

## MEMBERSHIP

Application to membership will be made available to all tenants and leaseholders of YHG who live in residential properties.

In year one, any outgoing members of the Customer Operations Committee (CoC), will be offered membership without the need to be selected via a recruitment process.

Membership will be limited to a maximum of 16 residents and CCP will aim to operate at all times with a minimum of 10 members.

Other than an allowance in year 1 as explained above, applicants will be subject to a recruitment process. This will involve an application form, shortlisting process (if necessary) and an interview. The interview panel will be made up of two members of the CSC and the Customer Engagement and Relationships Manager.

Once selected and inducted, members will hold a term of office for no longer than six years. However, this does not take in to account any time an individual may have spent previously as a member of the governance structure at YHG.

Each person's membership will be reviewed once every three years in conjunction with the Chair of CCP, a CSC member and the Director of Housing and Customer Services.

The Chair's membership will be reviewed once every three years in conjunction with two CSC members and the Director of Housing and Neighbourhoods.

All members have an equal voting right. The Chair of CCP will have a casting vote if a resolution cannot be reached by a majority verdict.

Recruitment to CCP must be done in the interests of achieving a fair and equal representation of our customer profile, including geography and the nine protected characteristics.

## MEETINGS

There will be at least six CCP meetings per annum; quarterly and in line with current performance reporting structures, plus an additional two, each with a specific focus.

There will also be an additional joint meeting between CCP and CSC at least once per annum.

Meetings will be scheduled for approximately two-three hours. Meetings will initially take place during traditional working hours, but this can be adapted to suit the membership.

Meetings will be held over MS Teams but will progress to meeting in person when we are able to do this in order to develop relationships and review work plans.

## **QUORUM**

Quorum will be agreed if a minimum of 60% of the membership are in attendance.

## **FINANCIAL & ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT**

YHG will support and service the group in terms of administration and costs through the Customer Engagement and Governance teams. If a need arises where a member of CCP incurs expenses as a result of CCP activity, YHG will reimburse in accordance with the Customer Engagement Expense Policy.

### **Meetings will be attended by the following officers:**

- Director of Housing and Customer Service
- Managing Director of fix360
- Head of Resident Safety
- Customer Engagement and Relationship Manager
- Support staff who will service the meeting (to be confirmed).

While the above will be invited to every meeting, CCP will also invite key officers to address and report on specific issues.

All papers will be sent out to members at least seven days before each meeting, where possible. Special dispensation may be given to this, but only if approved by the Chair of CCP.

All minutes and post meeting material will be sent out to members within 14 days of meetings taking place.

## **TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT**

A full training and development programme will be implemented against the Role Profile of the group.

Appraisals will also be carried out on an annual basis. Appraisals will be performed jointly by the Chair of CCP and the Customer Engagement and Relationship Manager.

The Chair will be appraised by the Director of Housing and Customer Services and a member of the CSC.

## **THE CHAIR**

The Chair will be selected via the same recruitment process as that of the membership.

The Chair will hold a term of office of three years initially.

A maximum of two consecutive terms can be served by any individual.

To exercise the second term of office, the CSC will approve by consulting the appraisal process.

In year one, a representative from TPAS, who are tenant engagement experts, will chair the panel. This person, whilst in post, will work with existing members to identify a potential future Chair and Deputy Chair, and support them to take over these roles when appropriate to do so.

## **RAISING AND ESCALATING CONCERNS**

If an occasion arises whereby the CCP is concerned about a particular issue, in the first instance, we expect these to be resolved internally between the staff team and CCP members.

However, in the event a resolution cannot be reached, the CCP will have the opportunity to raise an Action Needed Notice (ANN) to the CSC. The CSC will then act as an intermediary to help seek a resolution.

The details of the ANN will be developed in a separate procedure and approved by CSC during the next financial year. All members of the CCP will have to sign and adhere to this procedure.