

# Compliance with Regulatory Consumer 2022



Housing People

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## 1. Introduction

1.1. The Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) sets out five consumer standards; Home, Tenancy, Tenant Involvement & Empowerment, the Neighbourhood & Community standard and the Tenant Satisfaction Measure Standard. The standards relate specifically to the services that we provide to tenants. The Regulator of Social Housing's role is to intervene where failure to meet the standards has caused, or could have caused, serious harm to tenants.

1.2. The Tenant Satisfaction Measures Standard is a new standard which comes into effect from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023.

## 2. Self-assessment process

2.1. Our self-assessment against the consumer standards has involved a staff review of the standards and the evidence of compliance.

2.2. The self-assessment has been shared with our Tenant Performance Panel who have had an opportunity to challenge us on the evidence of compliance. The Panel has confirmed that they believe us to be compliant with the standards and has asked for evidence of staff training to be provided, which has been done.

## 3. Summary of compliance

3.1. The table below is a summary of our compliance with the standards, we are compliant with all four current standards and we are working on ensuring compliance with the TSM standard from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. The pages that follow set out the standards and evidence of compliance and details of any further actions.

## Compliance with the Regulatory Consumer Standards 2022

| Consumer standard                | Compliant | Further actions |
|----------------------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Home Standard                    | Yes       | Yes             |
| Tenancy Standard                 | Yes       | Yes             |
| Tenant Involvement & Empowerment | Yes       | Yes             |
| Neighbourhood & Community        | Yes       | Yes             |
| Tenant Satisfaction Measures     | Not yet   | Yes             |

## Compliance with the Regulatory Consumer Standards 2022

### 4. HOME STANDARD

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/725826/Home\\_Standard\\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/725826/Home_Standard_2015.pdf)

#### Required outcomes - 1.1 Quality of accommodation

Registered providers shall:

- a. ensure that tenants' homes meet the standard set out in section five of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance and continue to maintain their homes to at least this standard
- b. meet the standards of design and quality that applied when the home was built, and were required as a condition of publicly funded financial assistance, if these standards are higher than the Decent Homes Standard
- c. in agreeing a local offer, ensure that it is set at a level not less than these standards and have regard to section six of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance

#### Specific expectations - 1.1 Quality of accommodation

#### Evidence of compliance

#### Specific Actions

2.1.1 Registered providers may agree with the regulator a period of non-compliance with the Decent Homes Standard, where this is reasonable. Providers shall ensure their tenants are aware of the reasons for any period of non-compliance, their plan to achieve compliance and then report on progress delivering this plan.

Continued investment of £2m+ per year in existing stock via planned investment, cyclical and responsive works.

Stock condition surveys completed to 96%\* stock to date and monitored with regular reporting to the Health & Safety (H&S) Committee.

*\* Stock condition completions increased in 2022 due to hybrid method of completion using trade staff to collect data and photographs to allow desktop survey completions. Following stock condition validation project in Autumn 2022 surveying to return to normal using 50/50 internal external delivery providing constant validation.*

Deep dive stock condition validation survey completed by RAND associates Nov/Dec 2022.

Create a Cornerstone Standard, in consultation with tenants, to provide a local offer.

Learning from new component programs integrated into standard. Review by Performance Panel required before launching in April 2023 to coincide with new TSMs.

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|  | <p>Annual Asset Management Strategy update to board completed Nov 2022.</p> <p>Decent Homes Guidance met and monitored across all stock. Now reported to H&amp;S committee on a monthly basis.</p> <p>100% Decent Homes compliance reported in annual SDR Tenant's consulted on choices during component replacement works and satisfactions surveys implemented.</p> <p>Continued provision of minimal lettable standard for all void properties including component replacements where applicable.</p> <p>Satisfaction with quality of home is 83%(annual perception survey November 2022)</p> <p>Agreement and delivery of a healthy homes policy specifically detailing how Cornerstone deals with case of damp and mould.</p> <p>"You said, we did". Triangulation of customer comments and complaints to influence planned maintenance ensuring VFM and investment in the 'right work on the right property'.</p> |  |
| <b>Required outcomes - 1.2 Repairs and maintenance</b>   |   |  |
| <p>Registered providers shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. provide a cost-effective repairs and maintenance service to homes and communal areas that responds to the needs of, and offers choices to, tenants, and has the objective of completing repairs and improvements right first time</li> <li>b. meet all applicable statutory requirements that provide for the health and safety of the occupants in their homes.</li> </ul> |   |  |

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| Specific expectations - 1.2 Repairs and maintenance  | Evidence of compliance  | Specific Actions  |
|--|---|---|
| <p>2.2.1 Registered providers shall ensure a prudent, planned approach to repairs and maintenance of homes and communal areas. This should demonstrate an appropriate balance of planned and responsive repairs, and value for money. The approach should include: responsive and cyclical repairs, planned and capital work, work on empty properties, and adaptations.</p> | <p>100% Gas servicing compliance record.</p> <p>100% of properties with a valid Electrical safety check (inc. domestic properties &amp; communal areas)</p> <p>Monthly compliance report detailing all areas of risk and presented at H&amp;S Committee.</p> <p>Adoption of CDMS Compliance Workbook software for compliance management and monitoring.</p> <p>Monthly monitoring of incidents, accidents and near misses adopting lessons learned at H&amp;S Committee</p> <p>External Fire Risk Assessor in place and 100% of FRA's in date with actions addressed promptly.</p> <p>Asbestos Management Plan adopted and contractor procured.</p> <p>In house repairs service providing repairs and maintenance to Cornerstone customers maintaining consistent transactional Customer satisfaction of 90%+</p> <p>Cyclical decoration program completed to Cornerstone properties.</p> <p>Regular compliance testing by our internal auditors.</p> | <p>Implement actions required in H&amp;S action plan.</p> <p>Continued reporting to H&amp;S committee and board as required.</p> <p>Feedback of reassurance using reporting from CDMS software.</p> |
| <p>2.2.2 Registered providers shall co-operate with relevant organisations to provide an adaptations service that meets tenants' needs.</p>  | <p>Continued £20k budget provision for Aids and Adaptions to Cornerstone properties.</p>  | <p>Promote service to ensure that budget is spent and</p>   |

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|  | 75 aids and adaptations completed in 2021/22 to resident's homes, 100% of customers were satisfied that our staff were polite and helpful though the process and the quality of the work carried out. | customers are signposted to help.<br><br>Monitor satisfaction with service. |
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### 5. TENANCY STANDARD

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/725828/Tenancy\\_Standard\\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/725828/Tenancy_Standard_2015.pdf)

#### Required outcomes – 1.1 Allocations and mutual exchange

1.1.1 Registered providers shall let their homes in a fair, transparent and efficient way. They shall take into account the housing needs and aspirations of tenants and potential tenants. They shall demonstrate how their lettings:

- (a) make the best use of available housing
- (b) are compatible with the purpose of the housing
- (c) contribute to local authorities' strategic housing function and sustainable communities

There should be clear application, decision-making and appeals processes.

| Specific expectations – Allocations and mutual exchange   | Evidence of compliance  | Specific Actions |
|---|---|------------------|
| 2.1.1 Registered providers shall co-operate with local authorities' strategic housing function, and their duties to meet identified local housing needs. This includes assistance with local authorities' homelessness duties, and through meeting obligations in nominations agreements. | <p>We let our homes through a Devon wide choice based lettings scheme called Devon Home Choice (DHC) <a href="http://www.devonhomechoice.com">www.devonhomechoice.com</a>. This is a common allocation policy with a common housing register.</p> <p>We have a place on the Devon Home Choice Board which also includes representation from all the local authority areas in which we work. This Board works together with other RP partners to ensure the DHC policy is effective in meeting local housing need. We make use of additional preferences to meet the housing need of different groups and work flexibly with local authorities.</p> <p>Our partnership with Julian House, where we have leased eleven properties to use as trainer tenancies for young people or for those needing move on from homeless accommodation, is an example of meeting local housing need. The allows move on from temporary accommodation allowing the local authority to support homeless applicants into those places freed up.</p> <p><a href="http://www.cornerstonehousing.net/trainer-tenancies-success-story/">www.cornerstonehousing.net/trainer-tenancies-success-story/</a></p> |                  |

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| <p>2.1.2 Registered providers shall develop and deliver services to address under-occupation and overcrowding in their homes, within the resources available to them. These services should be focused on the needs of their tenants, and will offer choices to them.</p>  | <p>Overcrowded tenants have access to DHC and Homeswapper to find a more suitable home.</p> <p>We have a downsizing policy which support tenants financially and practically to downsize to smaller homes, the financial amounts offered were reviewed by our resident performance panel in 2022. Customer information about downsizing and support available is on our website and in a customer leaflet. <a href="http://www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenancy-information/downsizing/">www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenancy-information/downsizing/</a>.</p>  |  |
| <p>2.1.3 Registered providers' published policies shall include how they have made use of common housing registers, common allocations policies and local letting policies. Registered providers shall clearly set out, and be able to give reasons for, the criteria they use for excluding actual and potential tenants from consideration for allocations, mobility or mutual exchange schemes.</p> | <p>We let our homes through a Devon wide choice based lettings scheme called Devon Home Choice (DHC) <a href="http://www.devonhomechoice.com">www.devonhomechoice.com</a>. This is a common allocation policy with a common housing register.</p> <p>Information about how we let our homes is available on our website and in our Lettings Policy <a href="http://www.cornerstonehousing.net/find-a-home/rent/">www.cornerstonehousing.net/find-a-home/rent/</a>.</p> <p>Our Lettings and Mutual Exchange policies set out the circumstances where we would refuse a potential tenant, the application, decision making and appeals process.</p> | <p>Review our Lettings Policy (Head of Housing – April 2023)</p> |
| <p>2.1.4 Registered providers shall develop and deliver allocations processes in a way which supports their effective use by the full range of actual and potential tenants, including those with support needs, those who do not speak English as a first language and others who have difficulties with written English.</p>   | <p>Throughout our allocations process we take into account the needs of actual or potential tenants by completing a detailed verification processes which considers support needs, health &amp; wellbeing needs, communication needs, affordability. Actions taken include translating tenancies in different languages, the use of translation services, communicating in preferred formats such as email, liaison through support workers or advocates.</p>   |  |
| <p>2.1.5 Registered providers shall minimise the time that properties are empty between each letting. When doing this, they shall take into account the circumstances of the tenants who have been offered the properties.</p>   | <p>We have voids and lettings procedures which are aimed at minimising void periods, we have monitoring tools in place and we measure performance against targets monthly (quarterly to the Board).</p> <p>We take into account the needs of tenants in the way we complete works, e.g. additional painting for those that need additional support, leaving items that will help them to set up home e.g. carpets and allow</p>   |  |



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|  | extra time where there are additional needs that require it, e.g. where a tenant is disabled.  |  |
| 2.1.6 Registered providers shall record all lettings and sales as required by the Continuous Recording of Lettings (CORE) system.  | All lettings and sales are recorded as required by the Continuous Recording of Lettings (CORE) system.   |  |
| 2.1.7 Registered providers shall provide tenants wishing to move with access to clear and relevant advice about their housing options.   | Tenant housing options are set out on our website <a href="http://www.cornerstonehousing.net/find-a-home/rent/">www.cornerstonehousing.net/find-a-home/rent/</a> and in our Lettings Policy, these are conveyed through individual interactions with tenants in various ways e.g. phone calls, visits, emails.   |  |
| 2.1.8 Registered providers shall subscribe to an internet based mutual exchange service (or pay the subscriptions of individual tenants who wish to exchange), allowing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(a) a tenant to register an interest in arranging a mutual exchange through the mutual exchange service without payment of a fee</li> <li>(b) the tenant to enter their current property details and the tenant's requirements for the mutual exchange property they hope to obtain</li> <li>(c) the tenant to be provided with the property details of those properties where a match occurs</li> </ul> | <p>We subscribe to Homeswapper which is an internet based mutual exchange service which is a signatory to an agreement under which tenants can access matches across all (or the greatest practicable number of) internet based mutual exchange.</p> <p>Our subscription to Homeswapper provides free membership to tenants looking to find a mutual exchange.</p> <p>Our customer performance panel has reviewed our HomeSwapper membership in 2022 and due to a large local landlord moving to an alternative we are considering a move to House Exchange in 2023.</p> |  |
| 2.1.9 Registered providers shall ensure the provider of the internet based mutual exchange service to which they subscribe is a signatory to an agreement, such as HomeSwap Direct, under which tenants can access matches across all (or the greatest practicable number of) internet based mutual exchange services.   | Homeswapper and House Exchange meet this criteria.   |  |
| 2.1.10 Registered providers shall take reasonable steps to publicise the availability of any mutual exchange service(s) to which it subscribes to its tenants.   | We advertise Homeswapper on our website <a href="http://www.cornerstonehousing.net/find-a-home/mutual-exchange/">www.cornerstonehousing.net/find-a-home/mutual-exchange/</a> , in tenant newsletters and on Facebook.  |  |

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| 2.1.11 Registered providers shall provide reasonable support in using the service to tenants who do not have access to the internet.   | We offer advice and support over the phone, appointments with customers in their homes and we can provide support by appointment in our office. This includes with both Homeswapper and Devon Home Choice.   |                         |
| <b>Required outcomes - 1.2 Tenure</b>  |  |                         |
| <p>1.2.1 Registered providers shall offer tenancies or terms of occupation which are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of their housing stock.</p> <p>1.2.2 They shall meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements or terms of occupation. 2.1 Registered providers shall offer tenancies or terms of occupation which are compatible with the purpose of the accommodation, the needs of individual households, the sustainability of the community, and the efficient use of their housing stock.</p> <p>1.2.2 They shall meet all applicable statutory and legal requirements in relation to the form and use of tenancy agreements or terms of occupation.</p> |  |                         |
| <b>Specific expectations - Tenure</b>  | <b>Evidence of compliance</b>  | <b>Specific Actions</b> |
| <p>2.2.1 Registered providers shall publish clear and accessible policies which outline their approach to tenancy management, including interventions to sustain tenancies and prevent unnecessary evictions, and tackling tenancy fraud, and set out:</p> <p>(a) The type of tenancies they will grant.</p> <p>(b) Where they grant tenancies for a fixed term, the length of those terms.</p> <p>(c) The circumstances in which they will grant tenancies of a particular type.</p> <p>(d) Any exceptional circumstances in which they will grant fixed term tenancies for a term of less than five years in general needs housing following any probationary period.</p> <p>(e) The circumstances in which they may or may not grant another tenancy on the expiry of the fixed term, in the same property or in a different property.</p>    | <p>Our Tenancy Policy <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Tenancy-Policy.pdf">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Tenancy-Policy.pdf</a> sets out how we meet all requirements of this section of the standard.</p> |                         |

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| <p>(f) The way in which a tenant or prospective tenant may appeal against or complain about the length of fixed term tenancy offered and the type of tenancy offered, and against a decision not to grant another tenancy on the expiry of the fixed term.</p> <p>(g) Their policy on taking into account the needs of those households who are vulnerable by reason of age, disability or illness, and households with children, including through the provision of tenancies which provide a reasonable degree of stability.</p> <p>(h) The advice and assistance they will give to tenants on finding alternative accommodation in the event that they decide not to grant another tenancy.</p> <p>(i) Their policy on granting discretionary succession rights, taking account of the needs of vulnerable household members.</p> <p>2.2.2 Registered providers must grant general needs tenants a periodic secure or assured (excluding periodic assured shorthold) tenancy, or a tenancy for a minimum fixed term of five years, or exceptionally, a tenancy for a minimum fixed term of no less than two years, in addition to any probationary tenancy period.</p> <p>2.2.3 Before a fixed term tenancy ends, registered providers shall provide notice in writing to the tenant stating either that they propose to grant another tenancy on the expiry of the existing fixed term or that they propose to end the tenancy.</p> <p>2.2.4 Where registered providers use probationary tenancies, these shall be for a maximum of 12 months, or a maximum of 18 months where reasons for extending the probationary period have been given and where the tenant has the opportunity to request a review.</p> |  |  |
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2.2.5 Where registered providers choose to let homes on fixed term tenancies (including under Affordable Rent terms), they shall offer reasonable advice and assistance to those tenants where that tenancy ends.

2.2.6 Registered providers shall make sure that the home continues to be occupied by the tenant they let the home to in accordance with the requirements of the relevant 4 tenancy agreement, for the duration of the tenancy, allowing for regulatory requirements about participation in mutual exchange schemes.

2.2.7 Registered providers shall develop and provide services that will support tenants to maintain their tenancy and prevent unnecessary evictions.

2.2.8 Registered providers shall grant those who were social housing tenants on the day on which section 154 of the Localism Act 2011 comes into force, and have remained social housing tenants since that date, a tenancy with no less security where they choose to move to another social rented home, whether with the same or another landlord. (This requirement does not apply where tenants choose to move to accommodation let on Affordable Rent terms).

2.2.9 Registered providers shall grant tenants who have been moved into alternative accommodation during any redevelopment or other works a tenancy with no less security of tenure on their return to settled accommodation.

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### 5. TENANT INVOLVEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT STANDARD

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/725831/Tenant\\_Involvement\\_and\\_Empowerment\\_Standard.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/725831/Tenant_Involvement_and_Empowerment_Standard.pdf)

#### Required outcomes - 1.1 Customer service, choice and complaints

1.1.1 Registered providers shall:

- a. provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants in the delivery of all standards

1.1.1 Registered providers shall have an approach to complaints that is clear, simple and accessible that ensures that complaints are resolved promptly, politely and fairly.

| Specific expectations - Customer service, choice and complaints  | Evidence of compliance   | Specific Actions |
|--|--|------------------|
| <p>2.1.1 Registered providers shall provide tenants with accessible, relevant and timely information about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. how tenants can access services</li> </ul> | <p>Our website <a href="http://www.cornerstonehousing.net">www.cornerstonehousing.net</a> and Tenants Handbook <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenant-handbook/">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenant-handbook/</a> set out how customers can access services, communicate with us, provide feedback. We also provide information in our customer newsletters.</p> <p>We completed a tenant census in 2021 which gathered a range of diversity information for customers, this includes any specific communication needs or preferences. This information is stored and used when communicating with customers.</p> |                  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. the standards of housing services their tenants can expect</li> </ul>  | <p>Our Tenants Handbook <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenant-handbook">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenant-handbook</a> sets out what customers can expect from us and our Customer Standards explain the standard of customer care that can be expected <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/customer-service-standards/">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/customer-service-standards/</a></p>   |                  |

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| c. how they are performing against those standards  | The Annual Tenant Report <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenant-annual-report/">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenant-annual-report/</a> tells customers how we are performing.   |  |
| d. the service choices available to tenants, including any additional costs that are relevant to specific choices | <p>We provide choices in the way that tenants communicate with us and access information including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Customer Portal (MyTenancy) provides tenants with access to their accounts 24/7</li> <li>○ A text service for communications such as balances, reporting repairs, consultation, surveys and other ad hoc uses</li> <li>○ Telephone service at office hours where tenants can talk to us about housing or repair related issues. We also offer an out of hours emergency service for repairs.</li> <li>○ Emails widely used by tenants</li> <li>○ Information available in alternative formats to suit their needs such as large print, different languages and tenants can choose a preferred method of contact.</li> <li>○ Information provided during the allocation, tenancy sign up and tenancy monitoring interactions.</li> <li>○ Communication through our customer newsletter and regularly updated website.</li> </ul> <p>Our Equality &amp; Diversity Policy sets out our commitment to respecting and valuing differences, treating people fairly and adapting our communication to see the needs of tenants. Staff training takes place regarding this, last completed December 2022 and the PP and a group of staff took part in training from the Housing Diversity Network in January 2023.</p> |  |
| e. progress of any repairs work   | Repairs are tracked using our housing management system and customers are kept updated. Our perception and transactional surveys on repairs helps us to identify customer satisfaction levels with our work in this area.   |  |

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| f. how tenants can communicate with them and provide feedback  | This is set out in our Customer Standards <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/customer-service-standards/">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/customer-service-standards/</a> and on our website <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/have-your-say/">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/have-your-say/</a> and is communicated at tenancy sign up and interactions with customers, and in customer newsletters and our website.   |  |
| g. the responsibilities of the tenant and provider   | The Tenancy agreement, the rules and regulations and the Tenant Handbook set out the responsibilities for the tenant and us. This is easily accessible on our website <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenant-handbook/">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenant-handbook/</a>   |  |
| h. arrangements for tenant involvement and scrutiny.   | <p>Our arrangements for tenant involvement and scrutiny are in the Tenants Handbook and on our website <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/have-your-say/">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/have-your-say/</a></p> <p>Our Tenant Performance Panel (PP) includes communication as a key part of all Performance Panel reviews and reviews and minutes from meetings are available on our website <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/performance-panel/">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/performance-panel/</a>.</p> <p>Specific members of the housing management team hold responsibility within their agreed job description for tenant involvement and scrutiny management.</p> <p>The Chair of our Performance Panel, a resident, is also on our Board and we are launching a new Youth Panel in 2023.</p> <p>We take all customer related self-assessments to our PP for review.</p> |  |
| 2.1.2 Providers shall offer a range of ways for tenants to express a complaint and set out clear service standards for responding to complaints, including complaints about performance against the standards, and details of what to do if they are unhappy with the outcome of a complaint. Providers shall inform tenants how they use complaints to improve their services. Registered providers shall publish information about complaints each year, | <p>We have a clear, accessible Complaints Policy with supporting customer leaflet which is available on our website. <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/how-we-deal-with-complaints/">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/how-we-deal-with-complaints/</a></p> <p>This information is also provided to new customers during tenancy sign up process.</p>  |  |

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| <p>including their number and nature, and the outcome of the complaints. Providers shall accept complaints made by advocates authorised to act on a tenant's/tenants' behalf.</p>  | <p>We publish information about the number and nature of complaints in the Annual Tenant Report<br/> <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenant-annual-report/">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenant-annual-report/</a></p> <p>We publicise complaints in our monthly customer newsletter, example can be found here on page 6<br/> <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/November-2022-pages.pdf">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/November-2022-pages.pdf</a></p> <p>Complaints can be made via various routes, including from advocates as set out in our policy.</p> <p>Information about complaints is monitored by the Board on a regular basis.</p> <p>We are signed up to the Housing Ombudsman complaint handling code and complete regular self-assessments<br/> <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Housing-Ombudsman-Complaints-Code-Self-Assessment-October-2022.pdf">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/wp-content/uploads/2022/11/Housing-Ombudsman-Complaints-Code-Self-Assessment-October-2022.pdf</a></p> <p>Our complaints process was reviewed by the PP in 2021 with recommendations made and accepted. A new policy was implemented.</p> <p>Staff training on complaints takes place regularly and was last completed December 2022.</p> |  |
| <b>Required outcomes - 1.2 Involvement and empowerment</b>   |  |  |
| <p>1.2.1 Registered providers shall ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. the formulation of their landlord's housing-related policies and strategic priorities</li> <li>b. the making of decisions about how housing-related services are delivered, including the setting of service standards</li> </ul> |  |  |



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- c. the scrutiny of their landlord's performance and the making of recommendations to their landlord about how performance might be improved
- d. the management of their homes, where applicable
- e. the management of repair and maintenance services, such as commissioning and undertaking a range of repair tasks, as agreed with landlords, and the sharing in savings made, and
- f. agreeing local offers for service delivery.

| Specific expectations - Involvement and empowerment  | Evidence of compliance  | Specific Actions |
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| <p>2.2.1 Registered providers shall support their tenants to develop and implement opportunities for involvement and empowerment, including by:</p> <p>a. supporting their tenants to exercise their Right to Manage or otherwise exercise housing management functions, where appropriate</p> | <p>We don't have any tenants with the Right to Manage, but should this change we would welcome and support opportunities.</p> <p>We encourage residents to form Tenant Associations, this would include where customers have expressed an interest in taking over management of communal green spaces.</p>  |                  |
| <p>b. supporting the formation and activities of tenant panels or equivalent groups and responding in a constructive and timely manner to them</p>   | <p>We have a Tenant Performance Panel (PP) which is widely promoted on the website, Tenants handbook, annual reports and in tenant newsletters.</p> <p>The PP is a consultation forum for various strategies and policies and it undertakes scrutiny reviews of service areas. Their main focus in 2022 has been on answering the question: How is Cornerstone listening to customer voices and taking them into account?</p> <p>An Estates Champion role has been created and recruitment is planned for 2023, offering customers the opportunity to report directly regarding the services provided on their estates.</p> <p>Our youngest panel member proposed a Youth Panel in 2022 and this is being supported and launched in 2023.</p> |                  |

## Compliance with the Regulatory Consumer Standards 2022

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| <p>c. the provision of timely and relevant performance information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in a form which registered providers seek to agree with their tenants. Such provision must include the publication of an annual report which should include information on repair and maintenance budgets</p> | <p>Our Annual performance statistics are reviewed by the PP and they use this as one of the factors when deciding their programme of panel reviews.</p> <p>Our Performance Panel receives our annual STAR survey, including all individual comments from residents, trend data and areas for improvement suggested by residents and they use this to formulate their scrutiny timetable.</p> <p>The annual STAR survey (soon to be Tenant Satisfaction Measures) results are also published in our website in our Annual Tenant Report which includes budget information.</p>  |  |
| <p>d. providing support to tenants to build their capacity to be more effectively involved.</p>   | <p>Our Tenant Handbook, website <a href="http://www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenancy-information/get-involved/">www.cornerstonehousing.net/tenancy-information/get-involved/</a> and Tenant newsletters tell tenants about how they can get involved and our Performance Panel Policy sets out how we will build capacity in the form of training and coaching. We have a training budget and training plan for the Performance Panel.</p> <p>We are members of Involvement Devon a focus group of Housing Providers in Devon that shares best practice on tenant involvement and we support our panel to engage with other panels to learn best practice.</p> <p>We provide IT and offer IT support to help them engage in different ways. We promote this to our wider tenant group. We are supporting with a new Youth Panel.</p> <p>Over 100 hours have been given by tenants for tenant involvement in the last 12 months.</p> <p>We have dedicated members of the housing management team who provide tenant and community engagement support.</p> |  |

## Compliance with the Regulatory Consumer Standards 2022

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| 2.2.2 Registered providers shall consult with tenants on the scope of local offers for service delivery. This shall include how performance will be monitored, reported to and scrutinised by tenants and arrangements for reviewing these on a periodic basis.  | We use our Annual Tenant Survey to ask key questions about performance and priorities for tenants, these are used in conjunction with our PP to form our annual tenants charter (local offers). We provide feedback on these to tenants in our Annual Report to Tenants and in our tenant's newsletter. |  |
| 2.2.3 Where registered providers are proposing a change in landlord for one or more of their tenants or a significant change in their management arrangements, they shall consult with affected tenants in a fair, timely, appropriate and effective manner. Registered providers shall set out the proposals clearly and in an appropriate amount of detail and shall set out any actual or potential advantages and disadvantages (including costs) to tenants in the immediate and longer term. Registered providers must be able to demonstrate to affected tenants how they have taken the outcome of the consultation into account when reaching a decision. | We have not proposed any change in landlord or any significant change in our management arrangements. We would consult on this as required should that arise.   |  |
| 2.2.4 Registered providers shall consult tenants at least once every three years on the best way of involving tenants in the governance and scrutiny of the organisation's housing management service.   | We consulted tenants in the development of our Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Strategy and our Housing Management Strategy. Which are due for review, we also consulted customers on our new Customer Strategy.   | Consult and review in 2023 (Head of Housing) |

### Required outcomes - 3. Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants

Registered providers shall:

- a. treat all tenants with fairness and respect
- b. demonstrate that they understand the different needs of their tenants, including in relation to the equality strands and tenants with additional support needs.

## Compliance with the Regulatory Consumer Standards 2022

| Specific expectations - Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants  | Evidence of compliance   | Specific Actions |
|---|--|------------------|
| <p>2.3.1 Registered providers shall demonstrate how they respond to tenants' needs in the way they provide services and communicate with tenants.</p> | <p>We completed a customer census in 2021 and mapped this against our STAR survey data. We shared this information with our Performance Panel (PP) and Board.</p> <p>We have used the census data to update customer communication needs and preferences. We provide customers with communications in a format and/or language they prefer.</p> <p>In our 2022 customer survey 87% of customers said we were easy to deal with. 80% said we keep them informed on things that matter to them.</p> <p>The PP recognised that they needed to improve diversity on the panel and have been attempting to recruit and engage with residents from a variety of backgrounds. This has involved attending community events, holding meetings in the community and specifically engaging with our less satisfied and harder to reach residents identified from our census and satisfaction data. They have also been using these interactions to support their customer voices review, the outcomes of this review along with any recommendations will be published in 2023.</p> <p>We seek feedback on resident communications from our Performance Panel, this includes our website content, articles and leaflets and policies.</p> <p>In 2023 we are launching customer Estate Champions and mystery shopping roles to further enhance our customer feedback.</p> <p>Our Equality &amp; Diversity Policy and our code of conduct sets out our approach to fairness and respect and all staff completed EDI training in December 2022 with an enhanced session from the</p> |                  |

## Compliance with the Regulatory Consumer Standards 2022

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|  | <p>Housing Diversity Network for some staff and our PP in January 2023.</p> <p>In December 2022 we completed all staff training on several other key areas including complaints, damp and mould and difficult conversations, all had a focus on empathising with customers.</p> <p>We provided Mental Health Awareness training for staff and have five Mental Health First Aiders in the organisation, 3 of which are on the frontline in the housing team.</p> <p>Customer satisfaction data (perception and transactional) is used to review and adapt services where needed.</p> <p>We provide an outsourced dedicated money matters service through Homemaker Southwest and have a customer hardship fund. We are also a Foodbank Vouchers issuing organisation. We have a generous budget for aids and adaptations to support customers in their homes.</p> |  |
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## Compliance with the Regulatory Consumer Standards 2022

### 6. NEIGHBOURHOOD AND COMMUNITY STANDARD

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/725830/Neighbourhood\\_and\\_Community\\_Standard\\_2015.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/725830/Neighbourhood_and_Community_Standard_2015.pdf)

#### Required outcomes - 1 Neighbourhood management

1.1 Registered providers shall keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes that they own clean and safe. They shall work in partnership with their tenants and other providers and public bodies where it is effective to do so.

| Specific expectations - 1 Neighbourhood management   | Evidence of compliance  | Specific Actions  |
|--|---|---|
| 2.1 Registered providers shall consult with tenants in developing a published policy for maintaining and improving the neighbourhoods associated with their homes. This applies where the registered provider has a responsibility (either exclusively or in part) for the condition of that neighbourhood. The policy shall include any communal areas associated with the registered provider's homes. | <p>Satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live is measure annually via our STAR survey and shared with tenants in the annual report, in 2022 77% of customers were satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.</p> <p>We have a dedicated Neighbourhood Management Policy which includes how we maintain and improve neighbourhoods. We are reviewing the findings of the Housing Ombudsman 'Spotlight on: Noise Complaints Time to be heard' report and will be completing the self-assessment.</p> <p>The Housing Team conduct regular estate visits and the Property Services Team conduct monthly health &amp; safety checks of blocks with internal communal areas. Actions are logged, risk assessed and reported to our Health &amp; Safety Committee.</p> <p>Our Health &amp; Safety Committee is chaired by the Chief Executive and attended by managers from the Housing and Property Services Team and our Health &amp; Safety consultants SSG. The committee considers any and all relevant matters which includes those associated with communal areas and neighbourhoods.</p> | Complete self-assessment against Housing Ombudsman Spotlight on: Noise Complaints Time to be heard (Head of Housing - April 2023) |

## Compliance with the Regulatory Consumer Standards 2022

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|  | <p>We have a dedicated in-house grounds maintenance team and have procured external contractors to cover some sites. 66% of customers are satisfied with these services, in January 2023 we are launching our new Estate Champions role for customers and report outcomes of this back to our PP.</p> <p>Our communal area cleaning services are provided by a combination of in-house and procured services, 63% of customers are satisfied that their communal areas are clean and safe. In 2022 we introduced a QR code feedback form in communal areas where we provide services to seek more regular feedback. This will be monitored by the PP.</p>              |                         |
| <b>Required outcomes - 1.2 Local area co-operation</b>   |  |                         |
| 1.2 Registered providers shall co-operate with relevant partners to help promote social, environmental and economic wellbeing in the areas where they own properties.  |  |                         |
| <b>Specific expectations - 1.2 Local area co-operation</b>   | <b>Evidence of compliance</b>  | <b>Specific Actions</b> |
| <p>2.2 Registered providers, having taken account of their presence and impact within the areas where they own properties, shall:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identify and publish the roles they are able to play within the areas where they have properties</li> <li>• co-operate with local partnership arrangements and strategic housing functions of local authorities where they are able to assist them in achieving their objectives</li> </ul> | <p>Cornerstone is represented in and co-operates with the following partnership arrangements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Credit Union Sustainability Partnership which supports a south west credit union to provide ethical, responsible lending and savings services to tenants</li> <li>• Partnership Board of Devon Home Choice, our choice based lettings scheme</li> <li>• Child in Need and other family conferences relative to specific tenants</li> <li>• Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) in relation to domestic abuse cases</li> <li>• Anti-Social Behaviour Action Team and Community Tasking Group (ASBAT)</li> </ul> |                         |

## Compliance with the Regulatory Consumer Standards 2022

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Safeguarding and Housing Best Practice Involvement Devon (Tenant involvement focus group)</li> <li>• Devon Tenancy Fraud Forum which focuses on all forms of social housing fraud.</li> <li>• Distribution point for foodbank vouchers</li> <li>• Exeter Wellbeing through Community Builders and community engagement work.</li> <li>• Julian House in relation to trainer tenancies for young people and move on from emergency housing for homeless.</li> </ul>   |                         |
| <b>Required outcomes – 1.3 Anti-social behaviour</b>   |   |                         |
| Registered providers shall work in partnership with other agencies to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour in the neighbourhoods where they own homes.   |   |                         |
| <b>Specific expectations - 1.3 Anti-social behaviour</b>   | <b>Evidence of compliance</b>   | <b>Specific Actions</b> |
| 2.3.1 Registered providers shall publish a policy on how they work with relevant partners to prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour (ASB) in areas where they own properties.  | We have a dedicated ASB Policy, which was reviewed in 2022 and is published on our website. It has supporting procedures for staff and sets out how we work in partnerships with other relevant partners.   |                         |
| 2.3.2 In their work to prevent and address ASB, registered providers shall demonstrate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. that tenants are made aware of their responsibilities and rights in relation to ASB</li> </ul> | <p>Tenancy agreements and Tenants Handbook have clear grounds on tenants' rights and responsibilities around ASB.</p> <p>Further information for customers on ASB along with an on-line reporting tool is also available on our website <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/anti-social-behaviour/">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/anti-social-behaviour/</a> , in our customer leaflet <a href="https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Anti-social-behaviour-leaflet.pdf">https://www.cornerstonehousing.net/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Anti-social-behaviour-leaflet.pdf</a></p> <p>Tenant Newsletter articles and in our annual report to tenants.</p> <p>Customers are advised of the Community Trigger.</p> |                         |



## Compliance with the Regulatory Consumer Standards 2022

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| <p>b. strong leadership, commitment and accountability on preventing and tackling ASB that reflects a shared understanding of responsibilities with other local agencies</p>                                    | <p>We work with ASBAT, the local authorities, the Police and other support agencies to prevent and tackle ASB.</p> <p>Case review meetings take place regularly and performance, satisfaction with case handling is monitored regularly by the Executive and Board, 79% in December 2022.</p> <p>Staff have been provided with training relevant to their role including ASB case management.</p> |  |
| <p>c. a strong focus exists on preventative measures tailored towards the needs of tenants and their families</p>   | <p>Our ASB Policy has a specific section on ASB prevention.</p>   |  |
| <p>d. prompt, appropriate and decisive action is taken to deal with ASB before it escalates, which focuses on resolving the problem having regard to the full range of tools and legal powers available</p>     | <p>Our ASB Procedure provides clear guidance for staff about effective case management to avoid escalation and legal powers available.</p> <p>We have good in-house mediation skills but we will also draw on external resources where required.</p> <p>We make use of early tenancy enforcement escalation procedures, acceptable behaviour contracts and neighbourhood agreements.</p>          |  |
| <p>e. all tenants and residents can easily report ASB, are kept informed about the status of their case where responsibility rests with the organisation and are appropriately signposted where it does not</p> | <p>Tenants can report ASB in a number of ways including using our online reporting tool.</p> <p>In 2022:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 97% of complainants said it was easy to report ASB.</li> <li>- 88% were satisfied that they were kept up to date</li> <li>- 97% would report ASB to us again.</li> </ul> <p>Customers are signposted to other agencies where relevant.</p>  |  |

## Compliance with the Regulatory Consumer Standards 2022

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| <p>f. provision of support to victims and witnesses.</p> | <p>The ASB Policy has sections specifically covering support for victims and perpetrators.</p> <p>Our ASB policy and procedures adopt a risk assessment and vulnerability matrix.</p> <p>Training for staff has included county lines and cuckooing direct from Police colleagues.</p> <p>We are signed up to the Corporate Housing Partnership Information sharing agreement with Devon and Cornwall Police which allows us to appropriately gather information relative to ASB cases.</p> <p>We have a separate Domestic Abuse Policy and procedure, we are signed up to Devon Registered Providers Domestic Abuse Code of Good Practice and take part in Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) groups for victims.</p> |  |
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## Compliance with the Regulatory Consumer Standards 2022

### 6. TENANT SATISFACTION MEASURES STANDARD (Effective 1<sup>st</sup> April 2022)

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/1104237/20220913\\_Annex3\\_TSM\\_Standard.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1104237/20220913_Annex3_TSM_Standard.pdf)

#### Required outcomes – 1. Tenant Satisfaction Measures

1.1 Registered providers must collect and provide information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in managing their homes and neighbourhoods.

| Specific expectations – 1. Tenant Satisfaction Measures  | Evidence of compliance   | Specific Actions  |
|--|--|---|
| 2.1 Registered providers must meet the regulator's requirements in relation to the tenant satisfaction measures set by the regulator as set out in Tenant Satisfaction Measures: Technical Requirements and Tenant Satisfaction Measures: Tenant Survey requirements.  | Our plans for collection of data and how we will meet the requirements will go to Board in March 2023.                                 | Consult and advise on how we will meet the requirements and our approach (Head of Housing – March 2023) |
| 2.2 Registered providers must:<br><br>a. collect and process information specified by the regulator relating to their performance against the tenant satisfaction measures. The information must be collected within a timeframe set by the regulator and must meet the regulator's requirements in Tenant Satisfaction Measures: Technical Requirements and Tenant Satisfaction Measures: Tenant Survey requirements. | Our process for collecting and measuring results and how we are meeting the requirements will be subject to an internal audit in 2023. | Internal audit on collection and process (Head of Housing - October 2023)                               |
| 2.2 Registered providers must:<br><br>b. annually publish their performance against the tenant satisfaction measures. This should include information about how they have met the regulator's requirements set out in Tenant Satisfaction Measures: Technical requirements and Tenant Satisfaction Measures: Tenant survey requirements.   | These will be published on our website and will include our summary of approach. We will consult with our PP on how best to do that.   | Consult with PP and publish results as required (Head of Housing 2024)                                  |

## Compliance with the Regulatory Consumer Standards 2022

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| This information must be published in a manner that is timely, clear, and easily accessed by tenants.   |  |   |
| <p>2.2 Registered providers must:</p> <p>c. annually submit to the regulator information specified by the regulator relating to their performance against those measures. The information must be submitted within a timeframe and in a form determined by the regulator.</p> | Results will be provided to the regulator as set out in the requirements.  | Submit results (Head of Housing – Summer 2024)                            |
| 2.3 In meeting paragraphs 2.1 and 2.2 above, registered providers must ensure that the information is an accurate, reliable, valid, and transparent reflection of their performance against the tenant satisfaction measures.   | Approach to be agreed, our collection measures and how we are meeting the requirements will be subject to an internal audit in 2023. | Internal audit on collection and process (Head of Housing - October 2023) |