

<b>Policy name:</b>	
<b>Resident Engagement &amp; Scrutiny Policy</b>	
<b>Section:</b>	Housing
<b>Exec responsible:</b>	Director of Housing
<b>Review by:</b>	Director of Housing
<b>Tenant review:</b>	Yes: Resident engagement panel
<b>Authority to amend:</b>	CEO
<b>Frequency of review:</b>	Every three years
<b>Last review:</b>	July 2026 (new policy)
<b>Next review:</b>	July 2029
<b>Responsibility for delivery:</b>	Director of Housing /Housing Customer & Engagement Manager
<b>Strategy:</b>	Customer & Communities Strategy
<b>Associated risk ID:</b>	Risk 8 - Inadequate and ineffective customer service and/or engagement
<b>Health &amp; safety:</b>	Engaging residents in health and safety matters can improve outcomes and reduce risk of harm.
<b>Equality &amp; diversity:</b>	Access to the Resident Engagement Panel must be available to all tenants wishing to become involved.
<b>Associated costs and value for money:</b>	VFM reviewing benchmarking data are integral to the Panel reviews.
<b>Associated documents:</b>	Resident Engagement Panel Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct

<b>Version number:</b>	<b>Sections amended:</b>	<b>Approved by:</b>
1.0	First issue – it replaces our Resident Engagement Panel policy and sets out further detail on our resident engagement framework, which REP is a part of.	HB

## **Resident Engagement & Scrutiny Policy**

### **Contents**

<b>1.</b>	<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>Why resident engagement matters to Cornerstone .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Our commitment to listening to and involving residents .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Our resident engagement structure .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Levels and methods of engagement .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Roles and responsibilities.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>Resident scrutiny and how it works at Cornerstone.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Linking resident voices to decision-making.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Reporting back to residents – building trust.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>10.</b>	<b>Measuring outcomes .....</b>	<b>13</b>

## 1. Introduction

This policy outlines our resident engagement framework including our commitment to listening to residents, our engagement principles, the different engagement methods available, roles and responsibilities, how we link resident voices to decision making and how feedback is acted on and reported back to residents.

## 2. Why resident engagement matters to Cornerstone

**Improves services and outcomes.** We know that residents are experts in their own lived experience. Engaging with the people who live in Cornerstone Homes helps us understand what is really working, what is not, and why. This leads to services that better reflect residents' needs and priorities, fewer unintended consequences from policies or changes and more efficient use of resources by focusing our efforts where it has the most impact.

**Builds trust and accountability.** When residents feel listened to and involved, trust increases. Engagement demonstrates transparency and shows that decisions are not being made *about* people, but with them. This strengthens relationships between us and our residents, reduces conflict, complaints, and escalation, and reinforces accountability and fairness.

**Supports safer, more resilient communities.** Residents who are engaged are more likely to look out for their neighbourhood and each other, raise concerns early, helping prevent issues from escalating, and contribute to community cohesion and wellbeing. This is particularly important in housing, where safety, standards, and quality of life are closely tied to residents' daily experiences.

**Leads to better decision-making.** Engagement brings diverse perspectives into strategy and governance. This helps decision-makers to test assumptions against real-world experience, identify risks and opportunities early, make more informed, balanced, and sustainable choices.

**Empowers residents and strengthens democracy.** Meaningful engagement gives residents a voice and influence over decisions that affect their homes, services and lives. This encourages participation and shared responsibility, builds skills, confidence, and

leadership within communities, ensures services are shaped *with* residents, not just *for* them.

**Helps us meet legal and regulatory expectations.** Resident engagement is a clear expectation set out in the Transparency, Accountability and Influence Standard of the Consumer Standards. Good engagement helps demonstrate our compliance with the standard, a resident focused culture and our commitment to continuous improvement.

### **3. Our commitment to listening to and involving residents**

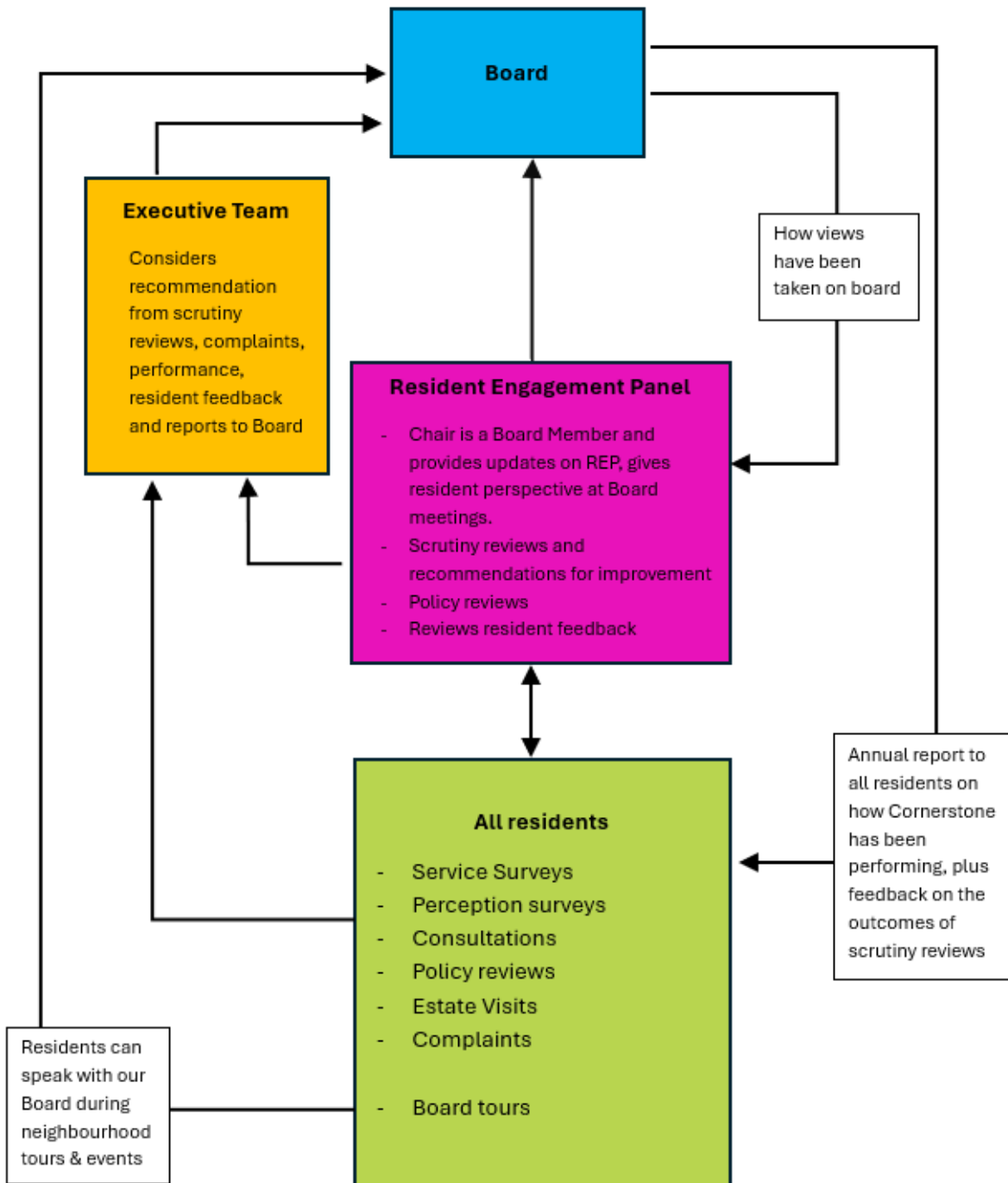
We are committed to putting residents at the heart of everything we do. We will actively listen to residents, involve them early in decisions that affect their homes and communities, and be open about how their feedback influences our actions. We will provide inclusive and accessible opportunities to engage, treat all residents with respect, and use what we hear to improve services, strengthen trust, and deliver better outcomes for everyone.

Our resident engagement principles can be summarised as.

- Inclusive – accessible to all residents
- Transparent – we will be clear about what residents can influence
- Proportionate – the right level of engagement for the decision
- Respectful – listening to and valuing residents lived experience
- Accountable – showing how resident feedback is used

#### 4. Our resident engagement structure

This diagram shows how resident engagement works at Cornerstone.



## **5. Levels and methods of engagement**

We recognise that resident engagement takes place at different levels, depending on the purpose and nature of the activity. By having different levels of engagement, we and residents are clear on the level of influence they have, and we avoid over or under promising influence.

We use a range of engagement methods to ensure residents are involved in ways that work in shaping services, influencing decisions, and holding us to account.

Set out below are the different levels of engagement with the types of methods we may use at that level.

### **Inform – keeping residents updated**

We will keep residents informed about our services, performance, priorities, and decisions. Information will be shared in clear, accessible ways so residents understand what we are doing and why. Methods we use to keep people informed include:

- Resident newsletters
- Social media and website articles
- Resident scrutiny reviews of services and policies
- Annual Report to Residents
- Quarterly and annual Tenant Satisfaction Measure reporting
- Complaints, feedback and insight loops, including “you said, we did” communications

### **Consult – asking for views**

We will seek residents’ views to inform decisions, policies, and service improvements. Feedback gathered will be considered alongside other evidence and learning. Methods may include:

- Satisfaction surveys after we have provided a service, for example after we

complete a repair or handled a complaint (transactional survey)

- Annual satisfactions surveys (Tenant Satisfaction Measures - perception survey)
- Surveys related to service reviews, for example conducted by our Resident Engagement Panel as part of a scrutiny review.
- Surveys on a specific neighbourhood issue like anti-social behaviour or parking arrangements.
- Focus groups or workshops on specific topics.
- Complaints, feedback and insight loops used to identify themes and learning

### **Involve – working through issues together**

We will involve residents in exploring issues, developing options, and understanding trade-offs. Residents' input will shape proposals and improvements. Methods may include:

- Focus groups or workshops – for example when reviewing a policy.
- Scrutiny or service improvement panels – our Resident Engagement Panel
- Community Estate Walks – where we invite residents to talk to us about issues with the community and what they'd like to see as a solution
- Co-design sessions at the early stages of service or strategy development.

### **Collaborate – shared decision-making**

We will work in partnership with residents where decisions are made together, and residents have a clear and meaningful influence on outcomes. Methods may include:

- Scrutiny or service improvement panels – our Resident Engagement Panel
- Co-design sessions where residents share ownership of decisions – an example is where we held workshops and did door to door surveys for our Big Plan and resident priorities like developing more new homes was put into the plan.
- Procurement panels where residents are involved in evaluating tenders and

appointing contractors for services that directly impact them – an example is where we procure cleaning or grounds maintenance services.

- Tenant and resident associations involved in governance or decision-making processes.

### **Empower – residents lead or control outcomes**

We will support residents to lead activity and influence outcomes where appropriate. This may include residents setting priorities, leading initiatives, or holding us to account. Methods may include:

- Tenant and resident associations where residents lead or control activities
- Scrutiny panels where recommendations are formally responded to and adopted
- Having a resident on our Board – ensuring that there is a feedback loop directly between board and the Resident Engagement Panel.

## **6. Roles and responsibilities**

Having clear roles and responsibilities ensures resident engagement and scrutiny is effective, meaningful and accountable.

### **Residents**

Residents are encouraged and supported to share their views, experiences and priorities, participate in engagement opportunities, and contribute constructively to decision-making processes.

The Resident Engagement Panel is made up of residents who are trained to undertake scrutiny. They select scrutiny topics, informed by resident feedback, performance data and risk. They review services and policies through evidence gathering, interviews and data analysis and produce formal scrutiny reports with findings and recommendations.

### **Staff**

Our staff are responsible for creating inclusive and accessible opportunities for engagement,

responding openly to resident feedback, and ensuring that resident insight informs service delivery, improvement and policy development.

Our Director of Customers and Communities has strategic responsibility for resident engagement and within their team are a Housing & Customer Engagement Manager and a Customer Engagement Lead who take responsibility for the day to day delivery of this policy. Our Governance Manager oversees the governance framework and ensures that the Board receive the information it needs.

### **Executive Team**

The Executive Team supports the scrutiny process by providing information, access and staff input. They receive scrutiny reports and recommendations and produce a formal written management response, including:

- Whether recommendations are accepted (fully or in part)
- Actions to be taken
- Responsible officers
- Timescales for delivery

### **Board**

The Board has overall responsibility for championing resident engagement, providing oversight and assurance that residents' voices are heard, considered and reflected in strategic decisions, and holding the organisation to account for delivery of this policy.

Receives scrutiny reports and the Executive Team's response and consider the robustness of the scrutiny, the adequacy of the Executive Team response and any strategic or assurance implications.

They approve or endorse actions where required and hold the Executive Team to account for delivery of agreed actions.

## **7. Resident scrutiny and how it works at Cornerstone**

Resident scrutiny is the process by which residents examine services, decisions, and

performance to ensure Cornerstone is delivering safe, effective, and value for money housing that meets residents' needs and regulatory expectations.

Scrutiny focuses on challenge and improvement, not blame. It involves reviewing policies, service outcomes, complaints, and resident experiences, comparing performance against standards (such as the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer standards), and making evidence based recommendations to strengthen accountability, transparency, and service quality.

Effective scrutiny:

- Is resident-focused, amplifying tenant voice and lived experience
- Operates with independence and objectivity
- Uses data, benchmarking, and case reviews to test assumptions
- Holds leadership to account while supporting continuous improvement

In practice, scrutiny helps Cornerstone identify risks early, address issues (such as repairs, complaints handling, or tenant safety), and demonstrate good governance and strong consumer regulation compliance.

At Cornerstone, the Resident Engagement Panel acts as our scrutiny panel. The Resident Engagement Panel has its own Terms of Reference a document that defines the purpose, scope, roles, responsibilities, and authority of the panel.

Resident scrutiny at Cornerstone is split into seven stages as follows.

Stage 1 – The Resident Engagement Panel, using performance data and resident feedback decides which service areas they would like to review and builds this into an annual programme.

Stage 2 - The Resident Engagement Panel scopes and completes a review, and makes recommendations in a written report.

Stage 3 – The report is considered by the Cornerstone Executive team who decide if the recommendations can be taken forward or not and if not, why not.

Stage 4 – The report is then considered by the Cornerstone Board and it is decided what recommendations can be taken forward or not and if not, why not.

Stage 5 – The outcomes are reported back to the Resident Engagement Panel with explanations for any recommendations that cannot be taken forward and the reasons for that.

Stage 6 – The final written report, with recommendations and feedback from the Executive and the Board is published on the Cornerstone website and shared with residents.

Stage 7 – Where recommendations are agreed they are put into actions, with expected completion dates and ownership and progress with completing these actions is monitored by the Resident Engagement Panel, The Executive and the Board.

## **8. Linking resident voices to decision-making**

We are committed to making sure that residents' views are listened to, taken seriously and used to inform decisions about services, homes and neighbourhoods.

Feedback from residents, including consultation, engagement activities and scrutiny, will be built into decision-making at all levels, including reports considered by our Leadership Team and the Board.

The Board will use this information to ensure that decisions reflect residents' priorities and experiences. This approach helps us meet our regulatory responsibilities, improve services and remain accountable to residents.

We will record in meeting minutes where resident feedback has been provided and how it has been considered.

## 9. Reporting back to residents – building trust

We know that we can build trust with our residents by reporting back to them on how we have listened to their views and acted on them and the difference they feel in services or in their homes as a result. We will report back to residents in the following ways:

- Publishing outcomes from scrutiny reviews.
- Publishing how resident feedback has influenced decisions through regular “You said, we did” updates, and where we are unable to act on feedback, we will explain why.
- In our strategies and resident facing communications we will, where possible, use actual resident voices and show how that has translated into action and positive outcomes.
- Publishing an Annual Report to residents which has information about:
  - ✓ How Cornerstone is run and how decisions are made
  - ✓ How we are performing in services delivered to residents
  - ✓ What we have spent and how we have used our resources
  - ✓ How we manage their homes and safety
  - ✓ Complaints and service standards

## 10. Measuring outcomes

The following are our main measures for how well we are doing on resident engagement.

- All our Tenant Satisfaction Measure results, as explain how resident feel about the services they receive from us and their homes.
- The percentage of residents satisfied that we listen to their views and act upon them.
- Annual review with our Resident Engagement Panel which documents the outcomes achieved through their work.