Appendix 1

City of London Corporation

Department of Community & Children's Services – Housing

Communications and Engagement Strategy 2027-2031

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1. Welcome to the Housing Communications and Engagement Strategy

This strategy sets out how City of London Corporation Housing will communicate and engage with residents across our estates about our services, policies, strategies, projects and other important updates.

This strategy applies to communications with tenants, resident leaseholders, non-resident leaseholders and other households or stakeholders affected by Housing services, projects and decisions. The channel and content used will reflect the relevance of the matter, and the communication needs of the affected audience.

Communication with residents is of utmost importance to us and is reflected in our Corporate Plan (2024-2029), Housing Strategy (2024-2029) and Resident Involvement Strategy (2025-2029). The strategy also contributes to meeting the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing's Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard by promoting clear communication, resident influence, openness and accountability.

This strategy sets out:

- How communications and engagement support our shared goals
- Our communications and engagement vision
- How we shaped this strategy together
- Our audiences and communications channels
- Our communications and engagement objectives
- Measuring our communications and engagement impact

This strategy is supported by a Delivery Plan, Housing communications standards and guidelines, and the Housing communication channels schedule.

1.1 How this strategy supports our shared goals

This Housing Communications and Engagement Strategy is part of a wider commitment to improving our services and how we communicate for those who live on the estates we manage. It supports the ambitions and priorities set out in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan (2024-2029), Housing Strategy (2024-2029), and Resident Involvement Strategy (2025-2029).

Corporate Plan (2024-2029)

Three of the Corporate Plan's key outcomes are relevant to this strategy:

- **Diverse Engaged Communities:** We want to reach people of all ages and backgrounds to build engaged communities on our estates and provide opportunities to co-create Housing services and deliver better outcomes.

- **Providing Excellent Services:** Communicating our policies, strategies, projects and service updates to residents is an integral part of Housing services and your engagement helps us improve these services.
- **Vibrant Thriving Destination:** Our communications regularly promote the Square Mile as a safe, secure and dynamic location to attract people to this vibrant and thriving destination.

Housing Strategy (2024-2029)

This strategy also supports the five priorities in our Housing strategy, which aim to make a real difference to your homes and communities.

- **Improve the quality of housing services** – by communicating policies, strategies, projects and service updates with residents and communities, promoting our Housing Service Standards; and demonstrating transparency, accountability and learning by sharing complaints learning, resident feedback outcomes, regulatory improvement activity and service improvements, showing resident views influence decision-making and shape our services.
- **Engage and listen to residents** – by providing opportunities for engagement and feedback through our established communication channels.
- Increase the supply of housing – by building support and engaging with residents and communities about our new developments, supporting our New Development and Special Projects team.
- **Improve housing quality** – by communicating and engaging with our residents about improvements to their homes and estates, supporting our Major Works team.
- **Improve building safety** – by communicating important health and safety, including fire safety, information to residents, supporting our Health and Fire Safety team.

Resident Involvement Strategy (2025-2029)

The strategy supports four objectives in our Resident Involvement Strategy, which aims to ensure that every resident is listened to and has an opportunity to influence and to work with us to create great services, homes, and places.

- **Inclusive and accessible engagement** – by ensuring our communications materials are accessible for all audiences and by promoting engagement opportunities.
- **Consistent and timely communication** – by ensuring that we are communicating the right way, at the right time and to the right people.
- **Strengthen and champion resident influence** – by ensuring opportunities for residents to get involved and scrutinise our services are well advertised and in ways that suit residents.

- **Build a resident involvement culture** – by ensuring feedback is captured and considered throughout our communication channels to ensure that everyone has a chance to be involved and heard.

Transparency, Accountability and Learning

In line with the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard, we will be open about our performance, service improvements, complaints learning and regulatory activity. We will share how resident feedback has influenced decisions and actions, helping residents understand the difference their involvement makes and strengthening accountability across Housing services.

1.2 Our communications and engagement vision

"To provide clear, accurate, and respectful communication that keeps residents informed, gives them meaningful opportunities to influence decisions, and shows how their feedback leads to action"

This strategy forms part of our wider work to improve Housing services, transparency and accountability. We know that clear, timely and consistent communication is important to residents. Through this strategy, we want to build on what works well, improve how we keep residents updated, and be clearer about how we respond to feedback and follow through on our commitments.

We want to make sure that every resident on our estates feels informed, involved and empowered to help shape our services. This strategy is about building stronger communication with our residents so that you are better informed about our services, improvement activities, strategies, projects and policies.

By 2031, when communicating about our services, strategies, projects and policies, residents should know:

- What is happening and why
- When they can expect it to happen
- Who is responsible
- How they can ask questions or raise concerns
- How resident feedback has influenced decisions or improved services.

We want our communications to be clear, accessible, timely and consistent, helping residents understand what we do, what we are achieving, and what they can expect from us as their landlord.

We use a mix of digital, printed and face-to-face communication channels. We will select channels according to the nature and importance of the information, the intended audience and residents' communication and accessibility needs.

We will listen to feedback, learn from resident experiences and demonstrate how your views help shape our services through a culture of open communication and continuous improvement, in line with our Resident Involvement Strategy. By working

together, we can build trust, strengthen communities and deliver better homes and services for everyone who lives on our estates.

We will work closely with the Corporate Communications team on significant or high-profile issues, helping to ensure that communications are clear, timely and coordinated. This will support a consistent approach across the City Corporation and help us communicate effectively with residents and wider audiences.

We will also keep reviewing how we communicate with residents to make sure it's working well and reaching our residents, no matter their background.

External consultants, contractors and agencies producing communications for residents will be provided with a copy of this strategy and appendices and we expect them to comply with its requirements.

1.3 How we shaped this strategy together

Resident Involvement Strategy

Our Resident Involvement Strategy captured feedback on communications from a variety of workshops, feedback platforms, and other sources. Three themes from these consultation activities related to communications.

- Communication and engagement:
    - Residents fed back that they wanted communications to be more consistent, responsive, and joined-up across service area, across all our estates
    - Residents report having to chase responses or escalate issues to be heard.
    - Engagement varies significantly across estates, creating a sense of inequality.
    - Communication methods must be inclusive, recognising that not all residents use digital channels.
    - Traditional methods (e.g. letters) should remain part of the engagement toolkit to ensure no one is left out.
- Inequity between tenants and homeowners (leaseholders):
    - Tenants feel overlooked compared to homeowners, who are perceived to receive more attention and respect.
    - There is a call for equal treatment and recognition of all residents' voices.
- Culture change
    - Residents welcomed the values outlined in the Resident Involvement Strategy but stressed that real change requires leadership and cultural shift, not just policy.
    - Change must be modelled from the top and embedded across all levels of the organisation.

What residents told us

Our 2025-26 Tenant Satisfaction Measure (TP07) shows that 73.1% of respondents are satisfied that we keep them informed about things that matter to them. We want to build on this and continue improving how we communicate and engage with residents.

We also consulted on this Strategy with our residents through Commonplace, City Corporation Housing's online engagement platform, which has 154 registered users. The consultation was advertised through emails, noticeboard posters, and newsletters. We received ten responses to the consultation. While this represents a relatively small number of responses, the feedback provided useful insights into residents' communication and engagement priorities and has helped inform the development of this Strategy. The main themes residents told us about are summarised below, alongside how we responded to their feedback.

- Residents broadly supported the direction of the strategy, particularly the focus on clear and consistent communication, accessibility and keeping residents informed and involved.
- There was also broad support for a digital-first approach, provided that printed, telephone and face-to-face options remain available.
- Residents told us that good communication is not only about the channels we use. Information must be accurate, timely, respectful and based on a proper understanding of residents' homes, estates and previous commitments.
- A strong theme was the need for communication to be followed by visible action. Residents want to know what is changing, when it will happen, who is responsible and how feedback has influenced decisions.
- Some residents also asked for clearer accountability, better communication about repairs and major works, and greater recognition of the needs of disabled residents, people facing language barriers and non-resident leaseholders.
- Residents also told us that the draft strategy was too long.

In response to this feedback, we have:

- Reformatted the strategy to be shorter and more resident-facing and created standalone documents to support the strategy.
    - Developed a separate delivery plan containing actions, responsibilities, timescales and measures.
    - Created a two-page accessible summary structured around what is changing, when it changes, how residents' experience will improve, and how residents can hold us to account.
    - Created standalone Housing Communications Principles and Guidance

- Reframed the vision for the strategy to focus on trust, action and accountability and updated objective one to focus on providing accurate information, delivering on commitments and ensuring residents are updated when plans change.
- Added a formal commitment to specific and time-bound feedback loops.
- Added a broader focus on accessible communications.
- Developed a set of communication promises responding to feedback around clarity, timeliness, consistency, transparency and respect. When communicating with residents, we will:
    - **Be accurate:** check facts, dates, responsibilities and commitments before information is issued.
    - **Be clear:** explain what is happening, why, when and what residents need to do.
    - **Be timely:** provide information early enough for residents to understand, prepare or respond.
    - **Keep residents updated:** if plans or timescales change, explain the change rather than allowing information to become outdated.
    - **Record commitments:** maintain appropriate records of significant commitments made through projects, consultations and engagement activities.
    - **Be accessible and inclusive:** consider disability, language, literacy, digital access and communication preferences.
    - **Close the feedback loop:** explain what residents said, what was decided and what action will follow.
    - **Be accountable:** identify the responsible service or project lead for significant updates

2. Our five objectives for communications and engagement

2.1 Objective one: Provide accurate, consistent communication and demonstrate delivery

We will communicate openly and regularly with residents, stakeholders and colleagues about our services, performance, projects and priorities. Our communications will be timely, accurate and easy to understand, helping people know what we are delivering and when, what improvements are being made, and what they can expect from us as their housing provider or landlord.

We will use our full range of channels to promote progress against our Housing Strategy, Resident Involvement Strategy and Corporate Plan, ensuring that residents can see how services are performing and where action is being taken to improve outcomes.

2.2 Objective two: Keep people informed and involved

We will support meaningful two-way communication by ensuring residents and stakeholders have opportunities to receive information, share feedback and influence decisions that affect their homes, estates and communities. We recognise that communication and engagement go hand in hand. By listening to resident views and demonstrating how feedback has influenced outcomes, we will strengthen trust, improve services and help create more engaged communities. This objective supports the Resident Involvement Strategy.

2.3 Objective three: Make communications accessible, inclusive, and respectful

We will use data, feedback and resident insight to ensure our communications are accessible, inclusive and effective. We recognise that residents have different communication needs, preferences and levels of digital literacy. By understanding our audiences better, we will tailor our communications, remove barriers to participation and ensure that no one is excluded from receiving important information. We will continually review communication performance and resident feedback to improve how we communicate.

2.4 Objective four: Strengthen our Housing identity and voice

We will continue to develop a consistent and recognisable identity for City Corporation Housing that reflects our values, standards and commitment to residents. Through clear messaging, professional presentation and a resident-focused tone of voice, we will strengthen understanding of the services we provide and improve confidence in our role as a responsible landlord. We will support colleagues across Housing to communicate consistently and effectively while aligning with the wider City of London Corporation style guide and corporate identity.

2.5 Objective five: Develop digital-first, but not digital-only, communications

We will make digital channels the primary way of delivering routine communications where appropriate, helping residents access information quickly, conveniently, and efficiently. However, we recognise that not everyone wishes or is able to engage digitally. We will continue to provide accessible non-digital options, depending on the material, to ensure all residents can receive information and engage with us in ways that meet their needs. Our approach will focus on widening choice rather than reducing access.

3. Turning this strategy into action

This strategy will be supported by a Communications and Engagement Delivery Plan covering 2027–2031, as well as communications principles and guidance, and our communication channels schedule.

The Delivery Plan sets out the actions we will take against each of our five objectives, who is responsible for delivering them, when they will be delivered and how we will measure progress.

We will review progress regularly and report back to residents on what we have delivered, what is still in progress and where our approach needs to change.

The Delivery Plan will be reviewed during the lifetime of the strategy so that actions and measures can respond to resident feedback, changes in Housing services and what our performance information tells you.