



"Offering our community more than a home"

Communications Strategy – 1st Draft (for information)

Management Committee submission: 28 January 2020

Last Approved: N/A

Date Approved:

Next Review date: February 2020

Relevant CHA Objectives:

- To provide quality, affordable housing that meets the changing needs of our customers and to ensure fair access to housing within our area.
- To manage the houses provided, in a professional and cost effective manner, for the benefit of our local community and the environment.
- To work in partnership with others, supporting our tenants and other customers, to maximise opportunities for physical and socio-economic regeneration in Clydebank.
- To ensure local decision making and community control, we will encourage our tenants and other customers to influence our policy and participate in decisions, which may affect them.
- To promote social inclusion by applying principles of equality and diversity to everything we do.

This policy can be made available on request in a variety of different formats, such as on audio CD, in large print and translated into other languages.

Relevant Regulatory Standards:

- The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.
- The RSL is open about and accountable for what it does. It understands and takes account of the needs and priorities of its tenants, service users and stakeholders. And its primary focus is the sustainable achievement of these priorities.
- The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisation's purpose.
- The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.

Relevant Scottish Social Housing Charter outcomes:

- Equalities - Social landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.
- Communication - Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.

Documents integral to the delivery of this strategy:

- Tenant Participation Strategy
- Business Plan
- Value for Money Strategy
- Complaints Handling Procedure
- Openness and Confidentiality Policy
- Information in Different Formats Procedure
- Customer Care Policy
- Digital Inclusion Strategy
- IT Strategy
- Recruitment & Selection Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Equality and Diversity Policy Employment
- Data Protection Policy

Equal Opportunities Statement

We will ensure that our communications do not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage & civil partnership, pregnancy & maternity, race (including colour, nationality ethnic or national origins and citizenship), religion/belief, sex and sexual orientation.

Contents

1.	Introduction	X
2.	Purpose of the Strategy	X
3.	Key Stakeholders	X
4.	Responsibilities	X
5.	Channels of Communication	X
6.	Key Messages	X
7.	Standards of Communication	X
8.	Plan of Communication	X
9.	Evaluation and Review	X

Appendix 1 – Communications Plan Template

1. Introduction

Clydebank Housing Association has been a provider of housing and related services in Clydebank and surrounding areas for 35 years.

We manage and maintain over 1,100 homes for rent, 49 for shared ownership and are a factor to over 600 owner occupiers. Our offices are located in Clydebank town centre. Our main functions are:

- Property Maintenance
- Housing Management
- Development
- Wider Role
- Factoring
- Finance and Administration

We are registered as a Scottish Charity and with the Scottish Housing Regulator. We are run by a group of volunteers, our Management Committee, who make all the important decisions about the Association and employ staff to act on their decisions and carry out the day-to-day work.

We strive for excellence and provide the highest possible quality housing, environment and services to all our customers. We will aim to maximise our contribution to the overall regeneration of our area, addressing wherever possible, the needs of those in the community who are disadvantaged. Our mission is “offering our community more than a home”. In order to achieve this, we have the following core values:

Our Core Values

- **Respectful** – we will treat all our customers with courtesy and respect
- **Accountable** – we will be open, honest and approachable and act with the highest integrity at all times
- **Responsive and Informative** – we will listen, respond and inform through effective and timely communication
- **Professional** – we will ensure we have the appropriate skills and strive for excellence in all aspects of our service

In addition to our housing and related services, we embrace our wider role in the community and have several long-term wider role projects as follows:

Centre81

We own and manage Centre81, our regeneration centre in the heart of our community which opened in 2008. The Centre is home to Gym81, Café81, has an outdoor sports & play area, community garden, runs a wide variety of classes in partnership with others and provides office space to a range of organisations.

CHA Power Ltd

In 2005, following consultation with tenants, we set up CHA Power Ltd, a wholly-owned subsidiary, to provide energy efficient and affordable heat and hot water through a Combined Heat and Power system (CHP). It provides unlimited heat and hot water to over 360 two bedroom multi-storey properties and also supplies the local church.

Clydebank Social Economy Centre (SEC)

We own and manage Clydebank SEC which opened in 2005. The SEC provides quality, inclusive accommodation for social economy, voluntary sector and community businesses.

2. Purpose of the Strategy

The purpose of this communications strategy is to detail all the methods of communication the Association uses and to encourage staff and Management Committee, where appropriate, to use these channels effectively and consistently to:

- help us achieve our strategic objectives
- engage effectively with our tenants and other customers
- demonstrate the success of our work to tenants, other customers and stakeholders
- promote our mission and core values to tenants, other customers and stakeholders
- promote our services and increase take up of the other services offered by our wider role projects
- ensure tenants, other customers and stakeholders understand what we do
- ensure a strategic approach to communications
- influence and change perceptions where necessary

3. Key Stakeholders

We will maintain an effective and open dialogue with a wide range of customers and stakeholders. These include:

- current and prospective tenants
- sharing owners
- current and prospective owners
- current and future staff members
- current and future Management Committee members

- current and future volunteers
- shareholders of the association
- members of the public
- partners including other housing associations, local authorities, community groups and agencies
- contractors, consultants and suppliers
- elected members, MPs and MSPs
- Clydebank Social Economy Centre tenants
- Centre81 tenants
- Centre81/Gym81 customers
- CHA Power customers
- social media users
- the Scottish Housing Regulator
- the Scottish Government
- regulatory bodies
- funders and lenders

4. Responsibilities

Everyone within the Association has a responsibility for effective communication and for implementing this Communications Strategy. Communication is as fundamental as operational or policy objectives to achieving the organisation's overall mission.

Management Committee – committee members are key representatives of the Association, promoting our activities and creating growth opportunities. The Chairperson, leads the Management Committee and his/her primary role is to ensure that the Management Committee is effective in its task of setting and implementing the Association's direction and strategy and communicating that strategy to internal and external customers. The Management Committee will be visible and approachable to staff and tenants.

Chief Executive – the Chief Executive is responsible for proposing and implementing this Strategy. The Chief Executive will lead on external communications, acting as the main spokesperson and will draft/approve press releases and public statements on behalf of the Association.

Senior Staff – the Senior Staff will lead on communication for their departments and support the Chief Executive to fully implement this Strategy. They will ensure important information is cascaded to their staff through one-to-one meetings and regular team meetings and that feedback received is fed back upwards.

Staff – all staff members are responsible for communicating in a respectful, open and timely manner ensuring that important information is communicated or received and acted upon. All staff members must use their best endeavours to ensure communication results in a positive experience for our stakeholders even when relaying difficult messages.

5. Channels of Communication

Considerations when using different channels:

- Does the cost represent value for money? Will it return quantifiable benefits to us and our stakeholders?
- How can we target key stakeholders? Will the message reach a large number of the right stakeholders?
- Will the messages be received positively? Can the messages be personalised?
- What will successful communication look like and how will you know?

There are several different communication channels which the Association will consider utilising including: -

Written Correspondence:

- Letters
- Emails
- Faxes
- Management Committee minutes and reports
- Text Messages
- Surveys
- Press responses

Published Information:

- Association Intranet
- ChitChat newsletters
- Centre81
- Tenant's Handbook
- Annual Report
- Business Plan
- Performance Report on the Charter
- Housing application pack
- Housing applicant newsletter
- Waiting list review form
- Consultation
- Leaflets and flyers
- Promotional adverts
- Job advertisements
- Job application packs
- Posters
- Postcards
- Calling cards
- Stationery
- Reception screen

- Reception noticeboard
- Policies, strategies and annual accounts
- Information in other formats
- Poster case (outside reception)
- Noticeboards (multi-storey flats)
- Snap frames (office/interview rooms, caretakers' office, Centre81)
- Freedom of Information request responses
- Email signatures
- ID badges and name badges
- Press releases
- Annual returns to the Regulator
- Notifiable events

Audio Information:

- Audio CDs of published information
- Telephone calls
- Conference calls
- Video conferencing

In Person:

- Contractor/consultant appointments
- Tenants' groups meetings
- Tenant Panel meetings, inductions and training
- Reception
- Interviews
- Home visits
- Tenancy sign-up
- Staff inductions
- Tenant Conference
- Drop-ins
- Focus groups
- Annual General Meeting
- Social events
- Appraisals
- Information stands
- Banner stands
- Internal and external training events
- Full staff meetings
- Team meetings
- Networking forums
- Presentations
- Tenant Satisfaction Survey
- Owner Satisfaction Survey
- Customer Service Improvement Group
- Estate walkabouts
- Word of mouth

Media:

- Website
- Tenant Portal
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Newspapers (local/national)
- Radio (local/national)
- E-bulletins
- Local publications
- Magazines
- Adverts
- Television

Other:

- Our branding
- Office signage
- Promotional items
- Clydebank Social Economy Centre signage
- Graham Avenue sign
- Awards/accreditations
- Staff and Management Committee networking
- Suggestion/post box (reception)
- Suggestion/post boxes (multi-storey laundries)
- Post box (outside reception)
- Reception leaflet stands
- Photographs
- Envelope frank imprint
- Pre-paid branded envelopes
- Board room hire
- Corporate branded clothing
- Branded tablecloths
- Ideas whiteboard

6. Key Messages

Target Audience	Key Messages	Communication Channel
Tenants (current and prospective)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Good quality housing service that is well managed• Valued as customers• Services meets the diverse needs of the community• Will respond to service	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Housing application pack• Tenancy sign-up• Tenant portal• Advertising• Website• Publications• Information in different

	failures positively and seek to rectify in a timely manner	formats <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media coverage • Surveys • Consultation • Focus groups • Events
Sharing owners (current and prospective)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good quality housing service that is well managed • Provider of good quality factoring service 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising • Website • Publications • Media coverage • Consultation
Owners (current and prospective)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provider of good quality factoring service • Will respond to service failures positively and seek to rectify in a timely manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website • Publications • Media coverage • Meetings • Surveys • Focus groups • Consultation
Staff members (current and prospective)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CHA is a good employer • CHA is a great place to work • Staff are valued • Staff will be supported to develop • Attractive to diverse workforce 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising • Website • Job application pack • Induction • Intranet • Staff and team meetings • Events • Ideas whiteboard • Appraisal process • Exit interviews
Management Committee members (current and prospective)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique and exciting organisation to be involved with • Expertise and contribution valued • Input will help achieve business plan priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publications • Website • Office signage • Branding • Media coverage • Appraisal process
Current and future volunteers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique and exciting organisation to be involved with • Contribution valued • CHA is a great place to volunteer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publications • Website • Office signage • Branding • Media coverage • Information stands • Banner stands
Shareholders of the association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique and exciting organisation to be involved with • Contribution valued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publications • Website • Annual General Meeting • Events

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Banner stands
Members of the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good quality housing and wider role service that is well managed • An organisation that delivers excellent outcomes for the local community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publications • Website • Office signage • Branding • Media coverage • Events
Partners including other housing associations, local authorities, community groups and agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A good partner that will ensure mutual benefits • Able to collectively achieve greater impact • Our experience across the board brings added value • Able to support local strategy to develop and supply new homes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media coverage • Networking events • Meetings • Awards • Publications
Contractors, consultants and suppliers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good quality housing supplier • Unique and exciting organisation to be involved with • Partners are valued 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising (procurement) • Website • Publications • Media coverage
Elected members, MPs and MSPs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members and senior officers understand our role and see us as a useful partner • We provide a good example of a well-run housing association that is responsive to the needs of constituents • An organisation that delivers excellent outcomes for the local community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letters • Annual Report • Media coverage • Meetings • Website
Clydebank Social Economy Centre tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A provider of high quality, third sector office space • Will respond to service failures positively and seek to rectify in a timely manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising • Publications • Events
Centre81 tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A provider of high quality office space • Will respond to service failures positively and seek to rectify in a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising • Publications • Events

	timely manner	
Centre81/Gym81 customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A provider of high quality recreational facilities • Will respond to service failures positively and seek to rectify in a timely manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertising • Publications • Events
CHA Power customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A provider of low cost, energy efficient heat and hot water • Will respond to service failures positively and seek to rectify in a timely manner 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual accounts • Publications • Media coverage
Social media users	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A responsive, open and accountable organisation • Provider of accurate and useful information and signposting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social media accounts • Social media coverage • Website
Scottish Housing Regulator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good quality service that is properly governed and well managed • Viable and efficient organisation • Value for money and affordability of rents at core 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Plan • Annual Returns (financial and performance data) • Notifiable events • Website • Meetings • Media coverage
Scottish Government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to manage and deliver on a wide range of different sized, funded wider role projects • A contributor to policy development on housing and equality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly/annual returns • Meetings • Networking events • Media coverage
Funders and lenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sound and viable business • Growth plans supported by robust evidence • Able to meet loan payments and covenants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly/annual returns • Business Plan • Publications • Meetings • Networking events
Regulatory bodies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good quality service provider • Viable and efficient organisation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual returns • Website • Media coverage

7. Standards of Communication

Our communications will be:

Pro-active - Getting our key messages out to our target audiences.

Accessible - Making information available in alternative formats where practical and reasonable.

Appropriate and Relevant - Giving the right information, to the right people, in the right way, at the right time.

Clear - Using plain language that is jargon-free and expressed clearly.

Consistent - Conveying trust by delivering a strong and agreed message.

Effective - Reflecting our style and brand identity in all materials used for communication internally and externally.

High Quality - Ensuring all communications are of the most appropriate quality.

Open and Honest - Building and maintaining trust through consistency and integrity. Encouraging transparency and participation.

Informative - Facilitating a strong two-way flow of information and ideas.

Receptive - Listening to customers, staff and stakeholders.

8. Plan of Communication

A Communications Plan is the framework we use to develop the channels we will use to deliver our key messages to our key stakeholders.

Examples of the channels we might use include:

- Our annual report, newsletter or other publications
- Advertising
- Our website and social media channels
- Exhibitions and presence at events
- Editorials in media including housing industry magazines
- Press releases
- Celebrating success of innovative and successful projects or services
- A strong recognisable brand

These channels can be used in isolation but it's often more successful to use a blend to maximise impact. Our Communications Plan template (Appendix 1) is used to

help develop new projects, campaigns and ideas. The purpose of any Communications and Marketing Plan is to provide information to key stakeholders in a way that encourages a positive response. Each Communications Plan can be assessed against the 4c's criteria as follows:

Cost

- Does the overall cost of the campaign represent value for money?
- Can we demonstrate that an investment in a Communications and Marketing Plan will return quantifiable benefits to us and our stakeholders?

Clout

- Can a Communications Plan reach a large number of the right stakeholders?
- Can the message be personalised to the key stakeholders?

Credibility

- Will the messages delivered by the Communications Plan be received positively?

Control

- Can we target key stakeholders?
- Can we adjust the key messages to reach specific stakeholders or as the plan progresses

9. Evaluation and Review

We will review this Strategy annually to ensure that it remains current, reflecting objectives and commitments that are appropriate and relate clearly to our Business Plan.

Appendix 1 – Communications Plan Template

Project/campaign/idea:	
Stakeholders to be targeted:	
Staff member/team:	
Budget holder:	
Overall budget:	Budget for this plan:
Timeframe:	
Objective(s) of project/campaign/idea: <i>Top tip: When setting objectives, it's important to be realistic in terms of timeframes, budgets and resources. It's also important to ensure they are measurable.</i>	
Channel(s) to be used:	

Considerations	Responses
Cost	
Does the overall cost of this project/campaign/idea represent value for money?	
Can we demonstrate that an investment will return quantifiable benefits to us and	

our stakeholders?	
Clout	
Can this plan reach a large number of the right stakeholders?	
Can the message be personalised to the key stakeholders?	
Credibility	
Will the messages delivered by this plan be received positively?	
Control	
Can we target key stakeholders?	
Can we adjust the key messages to reach specific stakeholders or as the plan progresses	

What does success look like and how will you know when objectives have been met?

Top tip: This could be simple measures such as the number of responses to emails, number of volunteers enlisted, a well-attended event, media coverage volume and range or an increase in one or more elements of satisfaction.

Name:

Date:

Post project/campaign/idea evaluation:

Was it successful?

Have objectives have been met?

Learning for next time:

Name:

Date: