

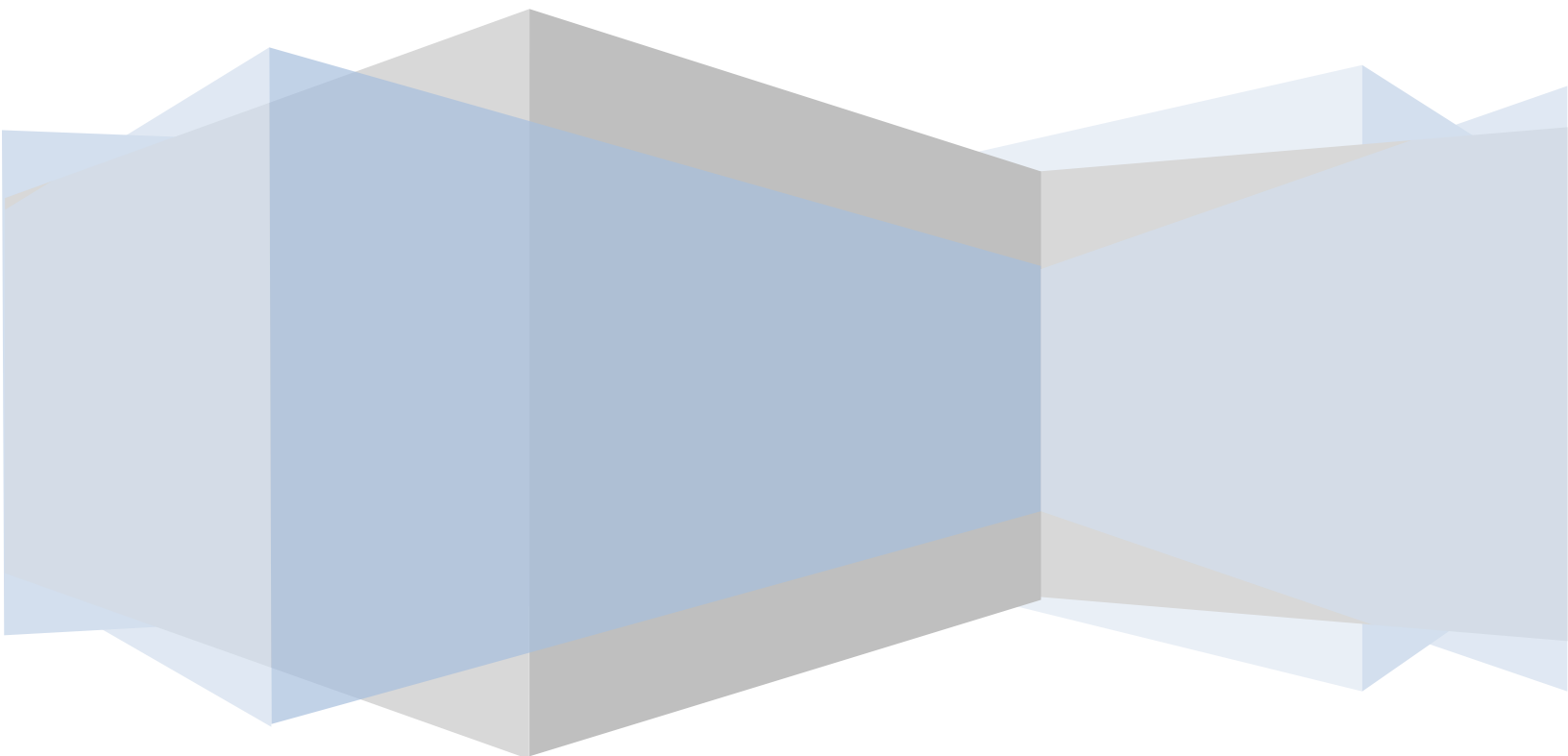


**CDHA**

Cathcart & District Housing Association

# **COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY**

**May 2022**



All Policies are available on tape, in braille, and translation into most languages. Please ask a member of staff if you would like this policy in a different format.

Date of Policy Review: May 2022  
Date of Committee Approval: 24 May 2022  
Date of Next Review: May 2025

<b>SCOTTISH HOUSING REGULATOR STANDARDS</b>	STANDARD 1: The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users  STANDARD 2: 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.  STANDARD 4: The governing body bases its decisions on good quality information and advice and identifies and mitigates risks to the organisations purpose  STANDARD 5: The RSL conducts its affairs with honesty and integrity.
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## **1. Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd - Vision**

- 1.1 To embed a culture within the organisation that places residents at the heart of everything we do. Communication plays a key role in this as it involves getting across our messages in an effective and understandable way to all audiences.

## **2. Purpose**

- 2.2 To provide clear direction and a sense of purpose for all communication and promotional activities. Creative and innovative solutions will be used to achieve the strategy's objectives and ensure consistently high standards.
- 2.3 The strategy will deliver effective two-way communication with residents, staff, partners and stakeholders. It will assist in growing the external profile of Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd and promote the organisation.

## **3. Objectives**

- 3.1 The strategy will be informed by the environment within which Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd operates.

Key objectives are to:

- 3.2 Support the creation and sustainability of putting residents at the heart of Services
- 3.3 Positively engage residents, partners, and stakeholders, ensuring communications are relevant, engaging, interesting and appropriate
- 3.4 Motivate and empower staff to contribute to both Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd's success and business outcomes
- 3.5 Effectively promote Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd services and branding
- 3.6 Celebrate Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd achievements and convey key news items to a range of audiences
- 3.7 Protect Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd from adverse publicity
- 3.8 Position Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd to exert maximum influence on local and national policy makers.

## **4. Key Principles**

The strategy is based on the following key principles:

- 4.1 Ensure inaccuracies, rumours, and conjecture about Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd are dispelled

- 4.2 Develop clear and consistent messages to promote Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd's services and the positive images we wish to sustain about Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd.
- 4.3 Improve internal communications with staff to create a hardworking but happy and comfortable environment whilst ensuring efficiency
- 4.4 Develop effective tools to enable staff to deliver Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd communication objectives
- 4.5 Ensure communications are genuinely two-way and that residents feel involved in the work of the organisation
- 4.6 Make the connection between communications and delivering key Cathcart & District Housing Association's strategic objectives such as improving resident engagement, delivering our Tenant Participation Strategy, and using customer feedback to drive service improvements
- 4.7 Support organisational cultural change to a resident influenced organisation which puts residents at the heart of everything we do
- 4.8 Improve the relationship with stakeholders such as local councillors, the Local Authority, keeping them involved in and up to date with the organisation's work on an ongoing basis
- 4.9 Maximise networking opportunities and manage external relationships with partner organisations, stakeholders (including our regulators and government agencies), media, policy makers and external agencies to achieve key business objectives
- 4.10 Identify and deliver political goals and targets. The strategy will be delivered through a mixture of in-house expertise and purchased services from external agencies.

## **5. Delivering the Strategy's Objectives**

### **Residents**

Delivering a positive customer experience is vital to our residents' perception of Cathcart & District Housing Association as well as our external reputation. The quality of communications is a key element of the customer experience and is critical if we are to deliver our aim of placing residents at the heart of everything we do.

We will:

- 5.1 Ensure all communications are clear and easy to understand
- 5.2 Be creative and innovative in our approach ensuring communications are interesting, engaging and clearly communicate our messages

- 5.3 Understand our residents, their preferred methods of communication and the languages and formats they require
- 5.4 Create communications which are consistent in terms of quality and regularity which customers and staff can rely on
- 5.5 Ensure we proactively and regularly seek feedback on services and demonstrate how feedback from residents is used to improve services

## **6. Staff**

Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd staff and other colleagues working with us are our biggest asset. CDHA can only achieve its ambitions by having a motivated, skilled, engaged, and informed staff team. Effective communication is integral to this.

We will ensure our communications enable staff to:

- 6.1 Understand our strategic objectives; how we plan to achieve them and the role they play in making them a reality
- 6.2 Understand how adopting our values are integral to delivering our objectives
- 6.3 Be engaged in a two-way discussion about the direction of the organisation and the quality of services, empowering staff to contribute to the organisation's future plans
- 6.4 Value their contributions and celebrate their success
- 6.5 Feel part of Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd and have clarity about how to create a cohesive organisation and enable staff to positively promote the organisation to residents' customers and stakeholders

## **7. Stakeholders**

Gaining the support of our stakeholders, such as local councillors, the Local Authority, and other regulators, is key to achieving our long-term goals. The quality of communications with this group is vital to improving our existing relationship with them.

We will:

- 7.1 Ensure all stakeholders are kept aware of Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd improvement plans
- 7.2 Ensure all communications are clear and in the appropriate format, tone and Language

- 7.3 Maintain a two-way communications process which allows stakeholders to contribute to the future direction of the organisation and to feel involved with its work on a day-to-day basis
- 7.4 Organise regular face to face meetings with key stakeholders to maintain a good working relationship with them

## **8. Profile and Promotion of Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd**

### **Structure**

Raising and further developing the external reputation and profile of Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd is key to achieving our business objectives.

Success will open doors and provide the organisation with the opportunity to showcase achievements, influence policy and practice and take advantage of new business ventures.

To achieve this, we will:

- 8.1 Implement a strategic approach to networking, maximising relationships with key stakeholders to support the delivery of agreed business outcomes
- 8.2 Develop effective relationships, where appropriate with trade, national and local media and use those relationships to maximise positive news coverage to a range of different audiences.
- 8.3 Develop positive relationships with the Local Authority, the Scottish Housing Regulator as well as the other agencies we work with, ensuring we deliver both transfer promises and government objectives
- 8.4 Develop relationships with politicians, policy makers, the Chartered Institute of Housing in relevant areas of operation
- 8.5 Substantially boost the profile of Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd to support the objectives in our area of operation
- 8.6 Ensure we maximise business growth and development opportunities to reinforce our brand and positioning

## **9. Outcomes**

Successful implementation of this strategy will lead to the following outcomes:

- 9.1 Clarity and understanding among staff, residents, stakeholders and externally about who Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd are and what they do.
- 9.2 Improved resident satisfaction about the quality and methods of communication, and trust that their views are being heard and acted upon

- 9.3 Resident and stakeholders feel engaged with the organisation and able to get involved with and contribute to its work
- 9.4 Staff understand and buy in to our strategic aims, objectives and achievements and are motivated to achieve these
- 9.5 The ethos whereby residents are at the heart of what we do is embedded throughout the organisation
- 9.6 Staff are ambassadors of Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd in communicating with our residents and stakeholders

## **10. Critical Success Factors**

Critical success factors include:

- 10.1 Effective use of resources to implement the strategy, including staff time and financial resources
- 10.2 Continued development of a focused Internal Management Plan which ensures we are meeting the strategy's objectives
- 10.3 Ensuring staff are clear about the organisation's business objectives, have effective communication skills and are provided with clear guidance and support
- 10.4 Development of innovative communications and marketing materials that effectively support our objectives

## **11. Evaluating Success of the Strategy**

- 11.1 The delivery and effectiveness of this strategy will be monitored on an ongoing basis by the Director, staff, feedback/surveys, and the governing body
- 11.2 In order to ensure that the strategy continues to respond to the communication needs of our residents, staff, and stakeholders and that it is capable of delivering our business priorities, this strategy will be reviewed three yearly and adapted accordingly.

## **12. Key Related Policies**

- 12.1 Related policies include:
  - Internal Management Plan
  - Tenant Participation Strategy
  - Digital Strategy
  - Publications Policy.

## 12.2 Digital Strategy

The Communications Strategy works in conjunction with our Digital Strategy. We recognise that digital access is essential to engage now and in the future with our tenants and to make efficiencies in our costs. We believe embracing digital in everything we do will transform lives further and enhance the experiences for our tenants, customers, staff, and committee members.

The Strategy is about:

- Transforming our tenant interactions
- Delivering improved digital services and technology with improved mobile working
- Working more collaboratively with improved intelligence and data sharing
- Ensuring we have the resources in place to achieve our digital goals and;
- How we can support and collaborate with other local agencies

Review cost savings of implantation of any solutions and impact on tenants. An example of the transactional cost for each type of interaction is shown below;

Type	Cost
Postal	£12.10
In Person	£10.53
Phone	£3.39
Online	£0.08

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/digital-efficiency-report/digital-efficiency-report> (Customer contact profiling report – ESD toolkit Aston Campbell Associates, 2008)

The figures above have been used by the UK Government to highlight potential benefits in their Digital Efficiency Report.

There is a significant benefit in moving from post to an online service.



Appendix 1

**Cathcart & District Housing Association  
Equality Impact Assessment**

<b>Name of policy to be assessed</b>	Communications Strategy	<b>Is this a new policy or a review?</b>	Review
<b>Person completing the assessment</b>	Emma Connelly	<b>Date of Assessment</b>	16.05.22

1. Briefly describe the aims, objectives and purpose of the policy	The purpose of this strategy is to provide clear direction and a sense of purpose for all communication and promotional activities. The key objectives are to positively engage with residents, customers, and stakeholders, ensuring communications are relevant, engaging, interesting and appropriate, promote CDHA services and branding, convey key news items to a range of audiences and protect the Association from adverse publicity.
2. Who is intended to benefit from the policy? (e.g. staff, applicants, tenants, staff, contractors)	Tenants, customers, owners, staff, committee members, contractors, and stakeholders.
3. What outcomes are wanted from this policy? (e.g. benefits to customers)	The strategy wishes to improve resident satisfaction about the quality and methods of communication used, residents and stakeholders feel engaged with the Association and can become involved and contribute to our work, residents and tenants feel their views are valued and being acted upon, and staff understand our strategic aims and objectives and are motivated to achieve these.

4. Which protected characteristics could be affected by the policy (tick all that apply)

Minority Ethnic: X  
 Gender:  
 Disability: X  
 Sexual Orientation:  
 Marriage/civil partnership:

Age: X  
 Religion/belief:  
 Transgender:  
 Maternity/Pregnancy:  
 Socio-economic status:

5. If the policy is not relevant to any of the protected characteristics listed in part 4. State why and end the process here.

N/A

6. Describe the likely positive or negative impacts the policy could have on the groups identified in part 4.

**Positive Impacts**

Minority Ethnic, Disability and Age – The Strategy should have a positive impact on these groups as the Association can add their preferred method of contact to our housing management system, and we will also make arrangements to ensure our methods of communication are being received effectively. Lastly, translated versions and other formats of communications will be offered where needed.

**Negative Impacts**

Minority Ethnic – All of our communications are written in English and could be restrictive for those where English is not the persons first language.  
 Disability – All of our communications are written in English and usually in Arial font size 12 and could be restrictive for those with learning disabilities or visual impairments.  
 Age – All of our communications are typically written in Arial font size 12 and could be restrictive for those with poor sight.

<p>7. What actions are required to address the impacts arising from this assessment?</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Offer translated versions of communications where needed</li><li>2. Offer other formats of communications where needed</li><li>3. Add tenants, owners, and waiting list applicants preferred method of contact on to our housing management system e.g., telephone call, email, post, text message, home visit etc.</li><li>4. Communications will be written in plain English</li><li>5. Offer assistive technology on our website e.g., accessibility toolbar which offers a screen reading tool, translation and language tools and ability to change font size etc.</li></ol>
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Signed: Emma Connelly

Date: 16.05.22