

CCG CUSTOMER PARTICIPATION FRAMEWORK

2016-2020



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1. Introduction

- 1.1. Back in March 2017, the Welsh Government published the 'National Tenant Participation Strategy for Wales'. The strategy concentrates on participation in the housing sector and the strategy's main aim is to develop participation services of the highest standard in Wales.
- 1.2. As part of the strategy, it is required that all landlords in Wales produce a 'Local Tenant Participation Strategy' that outlines how the landlord will commit to empowering their tenants and include them within their work.
- 1.3. Our first Local Tenant Participation Strategy was produced back in 2011, this outlined the shape and nature of participation activities within the organisation between 2012- 2015. The next strategy will set a new strategic direction for our work between 2016- 2020.

2. Background

- 2.1. Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd (CCG) was established as a registered social landlord in 2010 following the transfer of 6,300 properties from Gwynedd Council to our management.
- 2.2. CCG's main focus for the five years of existence was to fulfil the promises included within the offer document and to ensure that our properties reached the *Welsh Housing Quality Standard*. The need to establish and develop new policies, processes and procedures was also a priority and took the main focus from our first Local Tenant Participation Strategy (LTPS).
- 2.3. Since producing the last strategy back in 2011, Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd (CCG) has made significant achievements. We now find ourselves facing a new period in our history with a new vision, set of priorities and challenges ahead.
- 2.4. Including our customers at the heart of our work has been a priority for CCG since the beginning. Our customers continue to be a priority within the new corporate plan, where an aim has been set for us to meet the needs of our customers and to encourage their involvement in shaping how services are designed and delivered.

3. 2015 – 2020 CCG Corporate Plan

- 3.1. A new corporate plan was launched in 2015 that set a new direction for the organisation for the next five years. Our vision for the next five years is "*to be a leading provider of quality housing – meeting the needs of customers, valuing communities*".

3.2. We will be operating in our work by living the following values:

- **Fair** – making consistent and objective decisions which promote equality and respect diversity
- **Accountable** – Be effective and take responsibility for the decisions we make and the things that we do.
- **Open**- Be honest and transparent in everything that we do.
- **Innovative** – Be ambitious and open to new ideas and new ways of working.
- **Friendly** – Be accessible and easy to work with at all times.

3.3. Four themes have been identified within the corporate plan which will steer our work for the next five years; Customers, Development and Growth, Assets and Sustainable Communities.

4. Participation stakeholders

4.1. Our Customers

As a social landlord, CCG have a number of customers, internally and externally. In the context of this strategy and the framework's activities, when referring to our 'customers', we will be referring specifically to the following customers;

- i. **Tenants**- Individuals who live in properties owned by CCG.
- ii. **Residents**- Individuals who own their properties, located within a CCG estate.
- iii. **Leaseholders** – Individuals who own a lease on a property which is located within a building that is under CCG's management or responsibility.
- iv. **The Community**- This could include young people, prospective tenants for the future, community groups and establishment and other relevant stakeholders (excluding elected members).

4.2. Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd

- i. **CCG Staff** – Individual staff members that work within the company. The effect that participation has and requirements on staff will vary depending on their responsibilities, work areas etc.
- ii. **Our services** – All services across the company will need to give consideration to participation and involvement requirements when developing their improvement plans. Participation opportunities will be identified as part of the prioritising process.

- iii. **The Board** - We will need to ensure that effective and appropriate communication takes place between the Board and our customers. The Board will need to be aware of our customers views when making important decisions that effects our customers. In the same way, our customers also need to be aware of the Board’s work to understand what decisions are being made, and what considerations lead to the Board making their decisions.

4.3. Other – External

- i. **Welsh Government** – when creating and reviewing policies, changing legislation and landlord regulation.
- ii. **Bodies that encourage and represent customer participation** – (i.e. Welsh Tenants, TAP, TPAS Cymru, etc) – these will help us identify good practice, provide the landlord and our customers with support, advice and guidance to sustain effective participation.
- iii. **Other Housing Associations** – to help us to learn from each other and to identify opportunities to work together on various plans and projects.
- iv. **Other relevant organisations and establishments** – (i.e. the Police, Citizens Advise Bureau etc) – we will continue to develop new and existing partnerships with providers in order to enable us to achieve our joint objectives.

5. CCG Local Tenant Participation Strategy Review 2012 - 2015

- 5.1. During 2015, CCG’s Local Tenant Participation Strategy was reviewed. The review was held by the LTPS Steering Group that included tenants, residents, CCG Board members and staff members who have been appointed tenant champions (that also includes a representation of all CCG Services)
- 5.2. The Group completed a self-assessment by using the same scoring guidelines that have been adopted by CCG for the corporate self-assessment;

	Judgement	Details – what does it mean
1 (best)		We are doing well, but need to continue with the work
2		We are doing well, but we can improve
3		We are doing ok, but we know that we need to improve
4		We are doing ok, but we need to put plan in place for improvement
5		We need to improve, but we know how to improve

6 (worst)		We need to improve but we need to understand what needs to be done
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5.3. The four objectives were scored against the above scoring criteria, with the following results;

	2012-2015 Objective	Steering Group Score
1	'Improve the Services provided by CCG by ensuring that they reach the needs and circumstances of different tenants and residents'.	3- We are doing well, but we know that we need to improve
2	'Ensure that processes for planning, decision making and reviews across the whole landlord Services are open and accountable to tenants and residents by mainstreaming tenant participation'.	3- We are doing well, but we know that we need to improve
3	'Increase tenants and residents skills and confidence to ensure that they have greater influence on the planning and decision making Process'.	3- We are doing well, but we know that we need to improve
4	'Improve the quality of life and environment in the communities that our tenants and residents live in'.	4- We are doing ok, but we need to put plans in place to make improvements.

5.4. Main achievements

One of the main achievements from the last strategy is that we managed to complete 90 specific actions within the strategy's action plan. As a result, tenant participation has been central to our main areas of work including the WHQS programme, the delivery and implementation of the Community Investment Fund and when the developing of new service policies, processes and procedures.

The development in the relationship between tenants and staff has also been a key achievement to be very proud of in terms of main-streaming tenant participation across the organisation. Evidence of this can be found by acknowledging the partnership working that has taken place between the community involvement team and participating tenants, the role that has been taken by senior managers to include TP within their work areas and when seeing front line staff taking up a role as tenant champions within their services.

Various community projects such as the Junior Warden scheme, Environmental projects and the estate visit programmes have also given us the opportunity to visit our communities and to work in partnership to achieve joint objectives. Developing and encouraging partnership working within our communities will continue as a key area of work for us for the next 4 years.

5.5. Areas for improvement

It is important that we acknowledge the good work that has already taken place in developing communication through the use of social media tools such as *Facebook* and *Twitter*, however we also understand that developing our work in digital participation is also a very important step in order to try and attract a new, and broader audience, to participate with us. Broadening the informal participation methods will also be a key area of work to ensure that we are getting the opinion of a good and fair representation of our customers- and an increase in the number of customers participating with us.

A solid foundation has been established for participation and there will be room to develop on this work over the next years by looking at different areas of work, such as scrutiny, assessing value for money etc. Assessing the value of participation will also be a part of value for money, and we need to work to ensure that participation provides clear outcomes – this will be realized by establishing clear communication channels with the Board, by ensuring that we are responding to ideas and suggestions, and that we are providing better feedback our customers and relevant staff relating to our actions and our achievements.

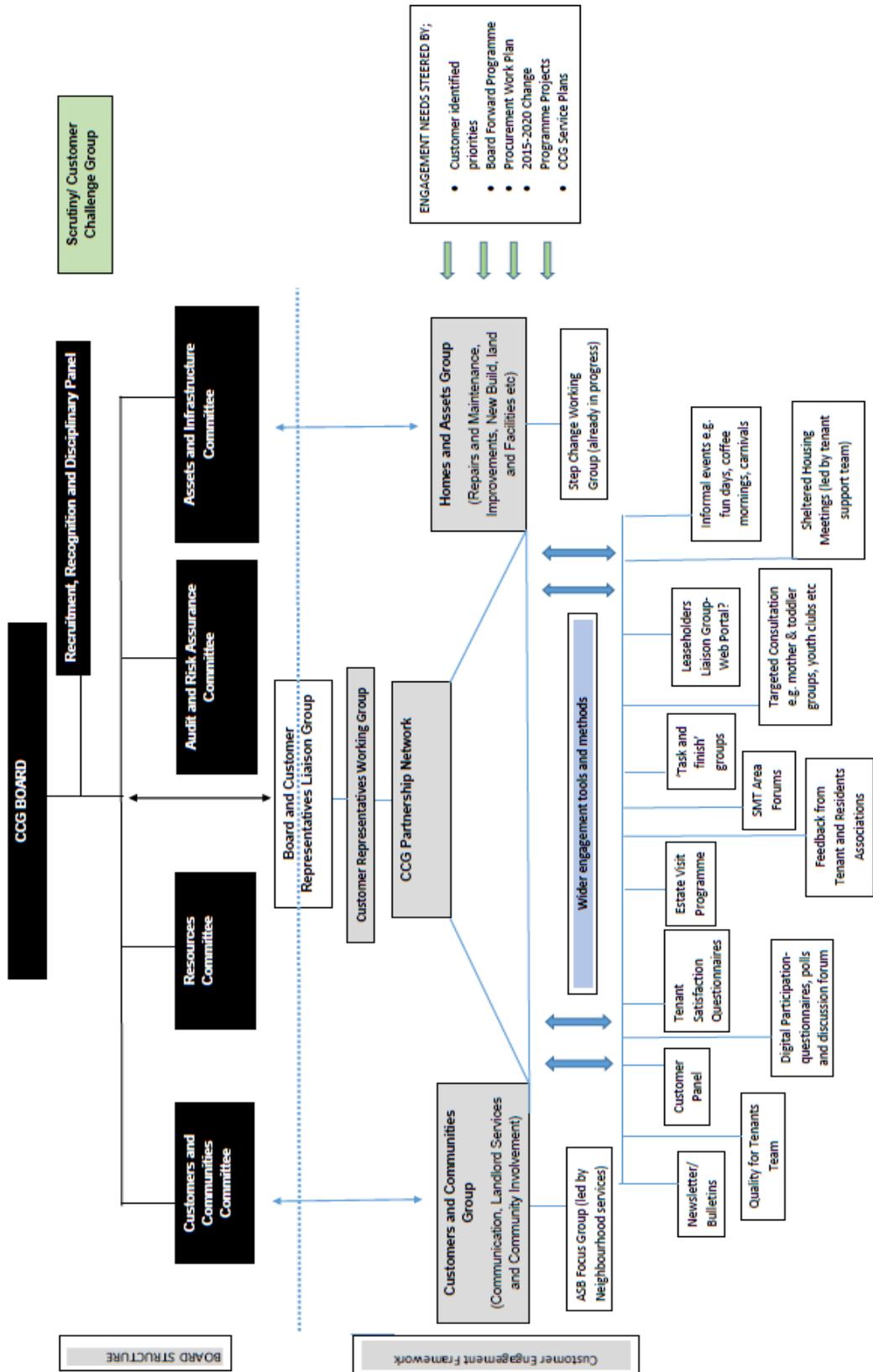
6. Participation Framework Review

A corporate project was commissioned in 2015 to review the current participation framework by looking at how a revised and developed framework could offer a more representative view of our customers views, needs and aspirations. This project is due to be completed in May 2016, with the introduction of a new participation framework for CCG and our customers.

7. The new Participation Framework

- 7.1. This strategy will be supported by the new participation framework (please see diagram below under point 7.6)
- 7.2. Various participation opportunities will be offered through the new framework to suit interests and the level of commitment that our customers are able, and willing, to offer.
- 7.3. Various participation methods will be used to reach the wider audience, including digital participation and activities on a local level within our communities. We will commit to hold a programme of estate walkabouts, attend groups that are already established and hold and attend various community events.
- 7.4. We will also be offering more traditional means of taking part within the new framework, such as groups and forums with scheduled work programmes in place to focus on specific areas of work that are identified by our customers and services.
- 7.5. The new framework will offer more flexibility in comparison with the previous framework, which focused predominantly on the more traditional methods of participation. The new framework will offer a better balance between traditional participation and the more innovative techniques, and will create a connection between the participation, Board and CCG's work programme.

7.6. The Framework (Diagram)



8. 2016 – 2020 Customer Participation Strategy

The new strategy will be steered by the following vision, aim and principles;

Vision: Place the customer at the heart of our work

Aim: Improve customer participation across CCG and our communities.

Strategy principles:

- ✓ Inform
- ✓ Consult
- ✓ Involve
- ✓ Collaborate
- ✓ Empower

Four main objectives have been identified;

Objective 1	Put a participation framework at work to influence the Services for our customers
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Our tenants who take part are representative of wider body ✓ Our Services satisfy our tenants needs ✓ Our participation activities are valuable and effective
Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in the number of customers that participate with CCG • Change in diversity and demography of the customers that take part • % of tenants that believe that CCG listens to their views and acts upon them (<i>Housemark</i> measure)

Objective 2	Ensure that our services are fair, open and accessible through effective participation
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Our Services are fair, open and accessible ✓ Our Services achieve our customers' expectations ✓ Our customers can influence the Service received by their landlord
Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of reviews held • Number of service improvements offered • % of tenants that believe that CCG provide them with the opportunity to have their say (<i>Housemark</i> measure)

Objective 3	Empower our customers to improve their skills and confidence
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Customers are confident to participate with CCG ✓ Training and development has a positive effect on the quality of participation at CCG ✓ Customers can participate effectively in other aspect of their lives / community
Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Results of regular self-assessments (individual + group)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of customers that have benefited from the programme or development that has been provided financially supported by CCG (<i>Housemark</i> measure) • % of tenants who are satisfied with learning outcomes when asked 6 months after training has taken place (<i>Housemark</i> measure)
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Objective 4	Work in partnership within our communities to enable and promote wider participation
Outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Our communities are sustainable ✓ Our customers are participating within their communities ✓ There is a feeling of belonging within our communities
Measure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Programme of activities held • Number of groups / projects supported by CCG • % of tenants that are satisfied with their local neighbourhood (<i>Housemark</i> benchmark)

9. Resources and Support

- 9.1. An annual budget of £60k is in place to support the implementation of the tenant participation framework, this includes a budget for training, subsistence costs for tenants, translation and to hold informal events.
- 9.2. 3 members of staff are also employed within the Community Involvement Team to provide support for our customers who want to take part, in addition to supporting CCG's Services with their participation activities.

10. Monitoring and evaluation arrangements for the strategy

- 10.1. The Board will be the owner of the strategy and will be responsible for its successful delivery. Regular progress reports will be provided as and when required.
- 10.2. An annual action plan will be developed that will put specific plans and tasks to work to achieve the set vision and objectives.
- 10.3. The Tenant and Resident Partnership will play a role when reviewing the content of the action plan annually, and regular progress reports will be provided which will measure progress against the action plan.
- 10.4. In addition to the action plan, the strategy's success will also be evaluated by looking at result patterns against the various performance indicators. These have been noted under section 8 of the strategy, under the relevant objectives.