

Heylo RP (hhRP) Involvement and Empowerment Policy

As a registered provider of affordable housing hhRP recognises and values the tradition of community involvement within the wider social housing sector. HhRP's approach to community involvement is shaped by its size, geographical spread, core housing product provided (shared ownership), and management arrangements (use of support providers and managing partners).

Therefore, one can argue hhRP has and will have a relatively light touch and remote relationship with customers who in the main:

- Are largely working households (and less likely to be benefit dependent or vulnerable) who are seeking a performance, Value for Money and hence transactional rather than protective relationship with their landlord.
- Have been able to exercise a reasonable level of choice in the housing tenure and property offered to them.
- Have been able to exercise a reasonable level of choice in which housing provider has offered then shared ownership accommodation.
- Exercise a reasonable level of choice over who they buy key services from, given the hhRP and Heylo Housing Group model does not and does not seek to impose a direct estate and service charge management service, as is the case with traditional housing association providers. Where possible, hhRP and heylo housing Group Limited (heylo) will support customers to exercise the Right-to-Manage or Right to Appoint a Manager, as permitted under Landlord and Tenant legislation and especially where shared owners are receiving poor service by agents and/or Freeholders which cannot or is unlikely to be rectified via First Tier Tribunal or complaints management.

This will inform hhRP's focus upon and use of customers surveys in the first stage of its formal continuous customer engagement plan, which could then include focus groups of new and settled leaseholders to shape future services.

Provision of services

When a lease commences shared owners will be given details of their own responsibilities and services that will be provided by heylo, hhRP's support provider and/or managing partners. If and where any services are directly delivered by hhRP, shared owners will be provided with details on how to make contact to request those services. In accordance with the Landlord and Tenant Act 1985 and where applicable, the Homes England (HE)'s Capital Funding Guide) these will be set out in the lease (e.g. staircasing, repairs to communal areas) or occasionally in accompanying documentation (managing partner's tenant involvement structures). hhRP uses a standard form of lease which has been drafted to comply with regulatory and statutory requirements in this regard.

Heylo's website will provide customers with basic contact information and details of how to make a complaint or provide feedback. heylo uses social media to promote products and engage with customers. Feedback and complaints received through these channels will be responded to and reported on alongside comments received in person, writing, email, phone etc.

Heylo will produce an annual report on its performance which will be published alongside its financial report each year. The report will include a summary of performance against service standards; and the nature, number and resolution of complaints received. This will be placed on the website and customers will be notified of its publication by letter or email as part of the annual rent review notification.

Customers will receive separate reports or notifications relating to management companies that have been established for their specific accommodation. Where heylo or hhRP has a place on the relevant management company for each of its properties, it will seek views from customers before making representations to the company regarding maintenance, charges or other matters. This will be done in consultation with any recognised residents' associations or informal (but majority representative) residents' groups and individual resident communication. It will also raise matters on customer's behalf if asked in writing to do so.

Managing agents and management companies

Heylo contracts with managing partners to provide housing management services (allocations, collection of rent and service charges). heylo reviews its contracts and customer feedback will be taken account of in these reviews. If heylo proposes to seek a new managing partner, for example because it believes it can improve on value or quality, customers will be notified in writing and invited to share views within a set time. Responses will be used to inform any procurement activities.

Estate Management agents are usually in place for leasehold properties (maintenance of communal areas, cyclical works to external fabric of buildings). hhRPs influence may be related to the scale of hhRP's overall interest in a block or scheme and this may impact on heylo's power to change agents or work with shared owners and leaseholders to do so. See above for our general approach and intention.

Residents' groups

hhRP will consider any formal request from a group of residents that wishes to be recognised as a formal group for the purposes of scrutinising and interacting with hhRP as their landlord. hhRP aims to be supportive of groups that will create a platform for constructive interactions between landlord and resident on housing management matters.

On receipt of a request for recognition, hhRP will discuss appropriate mechanisms for interaction with the group and consider how information detailed in the Housing Allocation and Management policy could be made available to formally recognised residents' groups in a format other than the annual report. Residents looking to engage with their neighbourhood rather than management of their homes will be able to join groups established in their locality by the managing agent.

Diversity

hhRP will ensure that all agents who have direct contact with customers are respectful to all and are aware of appropriate ways to behave with regard to protected characteristics set out by the Equality Act 2010. hhRP will expect training to be provided and managers to check for, and enforce, suitable conduct.

Monitoring and review

hhRP will review the operation and impact of involvement with its residents in November 2018, seeking the views of residents as part of this. Reviews will be conducted three yearly thereafter.