



Customer voice report

Year ended March 2025

Chair's Introduction

Sadie Parr, Chair of the Service Improvement Panel



As we mark the first full year of the Service Improvement Panel (SIP), I'm proud to reflect on what's been a truly insightful and rewarding experience. Since forming in July 2024, our panel of tenants and shared owners have had the opportunity to work alongside colleagues across bpha to scrutinise services, represent the collective voice of residents, and make real contributions to positive change.

Over the past year, we've grown not just in confidence but in capability. Panel members have had the opportunity to shadow different departments, reflect on the latest TSM (Tenant Satisfaction Measures) scores and decide on areas to review, attend conferences, and complete a variety of training courses, all of which have strengthened our understanding of the services bpha deliver and the needs of the communities we represent. These experiences have been invaluable in equipping us to ask the right questions, challenge constructively, and support service improvements with the customer perspective firmly at the core.

We've been involved in everything from reviewing the Repairs Policy to helping shape communication materials and strategies and have seen first-hand the difference our involvement can make. Our most recent deep dive has focussed on the void (vacant) property process, from the moment a customer gives notice through the allocation of a property to a new customer. This has also allowed us to gain insight into the disposal of properties and the support available from the Money Advice Team.

This publication showcases the breadth and depth of customer engagement activity over the past year and highlights how the voices of residents continue to shape and improve services across bpha.

As Chair, I want to thank all those who have contributed — from fellow SIP members and involved customers who have taken part in surveys and focus groups, to the teams within bpha who have welcomed our input and supported our work. I look forward to building on this strong foundation in the year ahead as we continue to amplify the customer voice.

Introduction

Customer engagement at bpha means proactively collecting and acting on feedback to improve services, making sure the customer voice is heard and is at the heart of decision making at all levels of the organisation. In line with the customer strategy, and with support from trusted organisations such as TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service) tenant engagement specialists in the sector, engagement has continued to grow this year and is more responsive and effective than ever.

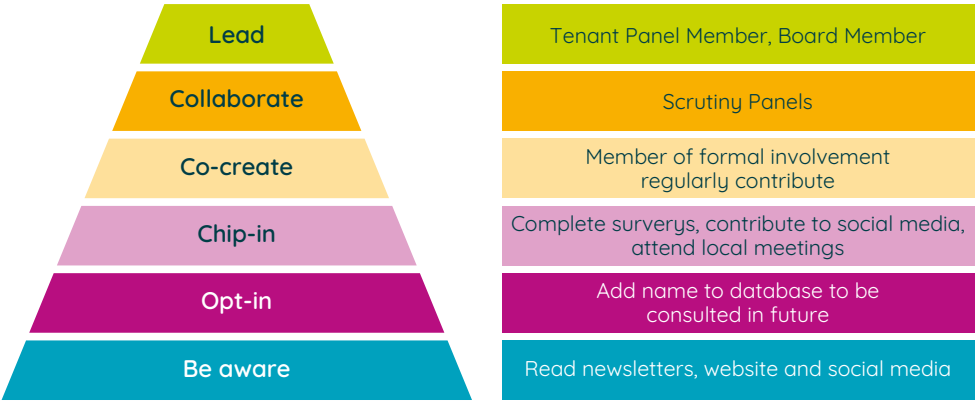


Customer engagement is a critical part of delivering and developing person-centred services and we aim to proactively engage with as many customers as possible. Knowing what good engagement looks like can sometimes be difficult as engaging with customers includes informing customers as well as working in partnership with them. For example, a customer reading ‘Talk’ magazine is as important as a member of the Service Improvement Panel.



This report shows examples of how we have delivered against the four engagement themes and how these align with our customer strategy:

- 1. Giving your feedback
- 2. Staying informed
- 3. Engaged, shaping services
- 4. Governance and influence.



How do we engage?

There have been a range of engagement methods used across this year, with different levels of engagement and participation.

The main methods of customer engagement include:



Emails and surveys

The most common approach, reaching hundreds, sometimes thousands of customers. Some surveys we've used to collect feedback this year include feedback surveys after a customer has received a service from us, such as after a repair, or after the purchase of a new home.



Telephone calls

Used for more personalised engagement, typically in smaller numbers. This is one of the forms of engagement used to collect the Tenant Satisfaction Measure survey feedback.



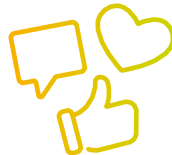
Face-to-face meetings and letters

This is used for targeting specific feedback, or updates, such as consultations or focus groups.



Publications

Talk, High-rise Headlines and annual reports. Effective ways of sharing bpha news and information reaching thousands of customers.



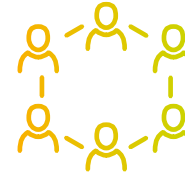
Social media

Used to promote general customer safety, support information and customer stories. As well as highlight engagement opportunities such as the Building Safety group.

Who do we hear from

We engage with customers in different ways depending on the topic, timescales and best approach for the feedback required.

Examples include:



The Service Improvement Panel

A group of 10 customers who are in a paid worker role to challenge and scrutinise us and represent a collective voice of customers.



The engaged customer database

A list of customers who've requested to 'be involved'. They are invited to take part in focus groups/task and finish activities, surveys or asked for feedback on documents or policies.



Resolve

The Complaints Scrutiny group who review complaint's themes, trends and check compliance with the Housing Ombudsman Code.



Targeted groups

We target our engagement with specific groups of customers dependent on their experiences - an example of this is the New Home Survey which is sent to those who have recently moved into a newly built home.



The Place

Our online engagement platform which gives us an easy way to create digital content to engage with customers, this includes surveys, quick polls and drop-ins amongst other tools.



Giving your feedback

Buyer and seller surveys

Following customer feedback regarding inconsistent communication from generic email inboxes, the Marketing and Sales team took proactive steps to enhance the customer experience by assigning named contacts for each enquiry. This change has improved communication and customer satisfaction, as customers now have direct contact details for their dedicated coordinator.

Kitchen event in Milton Keynes

As part of our planned kitchen maintenance programme, we invited customers due to have a new kitchen installed in their home to two kitchen information events. The events gave an opportunity for customers to view kitchen options including, cupboards, worktops and tiles as well as meet the team. While attendance was lower than hoped, many customers appreciated that we also offered the option to make selections from home, providing useful learning for future planning.

Neighbourhood Policy Focus group

Nine customers took part in the focus group to discuss and develop the new Neighbourhood Policy. Their feedback has been incorporated into the policy, alongside that of SIP and involved customers for final comments before the policy was implemented.

New website

Two customers were part of the selection panel to help us choose the contractor who designed and developed our new website.

We held two interactive sessions with 10 customers to get their views on the new website. This led to changes to the homepage buttons, the title 'Menu' changing to 'About us', buttons being made bigger and colours changing to make it more accessible, as well as a quick link being added for reporting emergency repairs.

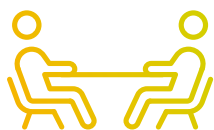
The Place

bpha's online engagement platform. At the end of quarter four, 317 customers had registered on the platform. Between 1 April 2024 - 31 March 2025 76 customers signed up. Despite the numbers registered, engagement is often low. We're testing new ways to increase both registrations and engagement, for example linking articles in Talk magazine with a consultation on the Place, providing a QR code to take customers directly to the Place along with an incentive of prize draws to boost engagement.

The topic this year with the most engagement was contents insurance which led to 20 requests for more information on the scheme which have been passed onto the Money Advice Team.

Independent Living Schemes

Across our Independent Living Schemes, a person-centred approach to engagement continues. Activity included:



19 resident meetings



13 newsletters



three consultations



nine open door sessions

Examples of outcomes include:

- Accessible garden planters at Moorside Court
- Improved communal space at Centurion House
- Privacy fencing and planting beds at Windsor Court
- New BBQ facilities at Wootton Vale
- Approved installation of an electric fence at Jill Jenkins Court
- New resident-led permit system at Russell Court.

'my.account'

The bpha portal has been rebranded to align with the updated bpha website design, creating a cohesive experience for users transitioning from the website to the portal. Customers took part in testing the self-appointment feature for repairs by accessing the portal test site, and two customers contributed further through a focus group. The feedback indicated that the self-appointment option for repairs was not easily visible, prompting the development of an icon to be added to the home screen. Customers also commented on the site's accessibility, leading to adjustments such as avoiding particular colour combinations with white text to enhance usability for individuals with visual or reading difficulties.

Shared owner listening sessions

The purpose of the sessions was to listen to shared ownership customers to help improve overall customer satisfaction with bpha, which is generally lower than rental customers. This is typical across housing providers, not just bpha.

Feedback from the group included:

bpha to look at information given to shared ownership customers, both when customers are going through a purchase, and also reminders at intervals during ownership. A lot of information is provided and it was felt we need to get better at highlighting what's most important.

Talk magazine to be more relevant and engaging to shared owners.

Provide information on lease extensions and staircasing.

A shared ownership service improvement plan. This has been developed and is monitored by SIP.

My home guide for Priory Court

Following customer feedback, we've produced an information guide for residents of Priory Court. The guide outlines what they can expect from bpha and their responsibilities as tenants. We plan to produce these for the other high-rise blocks in Bedford. The Service Improvement Panel and the Building Safety group gave their feedback on the guide and included:

Front cover picture being changed as felt too similar to the [building safety resident engagement guides](#).

Additional Information on pets has been included, instead of the customer being directed elsewhere to find this information.

More information on where to take bulky items as it was pointed out that skips are not provided by bpha.

Information on customer engagement outcomes and where this has made a difference has been added to the document to encourage customers to get involved.

Supported housing booklet

The service charge booklet has been rewritten to give simpler explanations of service charges and what they mean. Customers from Mill View, Queens Court and The Doubles shared their feedback, and these have now been added to the document. The booklet forms part of the rent review documentation and is issued as a paper copy to all Independent Living customers.

How we spend a pound

This customer report was shared with customers for their feedback on content and design. The response was that the document was one of the clearest and most interesting reports that had been put together. Customers also fed back that the new approach of shorter reports on specific topics were more interesting than the longer 'annual report'.



TSG customer feedback surveys

TSG is our registered contractor who carries out gas safety checks on our behalf. We receive the surveys customers complete on their service and identify any areas where improvements need to be made. For example, if ID was not shown at the time of the visit.

Building safety resident engagement guides

We've now produced a building safety resident engagement guide for 14 High-rise blocks in Bedford. We're currently producing the overarching strategy which will accompany the guides and meets the requirements of the Building Safety Act. Once delivered to customers, further engagement and feedback will be sought from customers on the effectiveness of the guides. You can view the guides on our [website](#).

Resolve - our customer complaints panel

Following changes to the Housing Ombudsman Code the way we work with Resolve has changed. They have recently completed a complaints review and have met with the Complaints Resolution team to share their findings around code compliance. We're continuing to develop the group, with changes to how they carry out reviews and some further training will be delivered to these involved customers. In 25/26 we are asking them to contact customers who reported dissatisfaction with complaints through the TSM's.

Shaping services

We use feedback from customers via surveys, the TSM's (approximately 1,500 customers) and compliment and complaint data along with data collected when customers contact us more generally, to help shape services.

Examples of changes in service that have resulted from customer feedback include:

We increased the number of operatives in IHMS (In-house maintenance service) to allow for larger jobs to be completed without impacting responsive repairs.

Using the feedback around the grounds maintenance contract to shape priorities for 2024/25

Learning from complaints to make changes to the sales process - more information can be found within the [TSM](#), and Complaints reports.

Aids and adaptations procurement

Customers who've received an aid and adaptation were invited to take part in selecting the supplier for the new contract.

Allocations survey

Customers were invited to give their feedback about their recent experience of being allocated a new home. This has been used to shape the new allocations processes within our systems and on [my.account](#)



Staying engaged and informed

There are many examples of where we communicate important information to customers and consult on changes that impact them and where they live. This includes providing information in a variety of ways including, digital noticeboards, the website, letter, bpha publications, in person meetings social media and activities in the community.



Customer engagement newsletter

Involved customers are kept informed of the latest customer engagement activities they can take part in through a regular newsletter which is sent by email.

The Place newsletters

We send out quarterly newsletters from [the Place](#) that includes information on the latest topics that customers can take part in.



LGBTQ+ festival

bpha held an art workshop with the theme 'The Art of Defining You' at Rainbow Bedfordshire which hosted the Bedford LGBTQ+ Festival. The festival was a great opportunity to chat to residents and find out what they thought about their community. As a result of the event, we have had interest from more customers about getting more involved with bpha customer engagement activities.



Talk

The magazine is issued to customers quarterly by email. Analysis of how customers connect to 'Talk' helps us understand what's important to customers and enables us to tailor communications, increasing articles on similar topics or through targeted social media campaigns.

Customer feedback has meant we've made changes to both the layout and content of future editions of Talk, such as including personal experiences from customers who have accessed our services.

High-rise Headlines

The printed magazine is hand delivered to 850 customers in our Bedford high-rise blocks. The publication is based on results of a survey, and this year we asked customers again if they liked the publication. Most customers who responded wanted the magazine to continue to be delivered in a printed format and said that building and fire safety are the most useful articles. The results of the survey was shared with customers in the summer 2024 edition.



Customer events

In November we invited customers to meet members of the Service Improvement Panel along with colleagues from across the organisation to discuss how they can get involved to help shape and improve the customer journey.



Governance and influence

Service Improvement Panel

The panel was formed in July 2024. They've scrutinised bpha performance reports and TSM results and suggested areas they wanted to take a closer look at. This included complaints, repairs and shared ownership scores and making suggestions for improvement. They completed a review into the customer and bpha's maintenance responsibilities, their recommendations have helped shape the the new Repairs Policy.

Building Safety group

The resident Building Safety group (BSG) meet bi-monthly. They've been consulted on topics including:



Data collection



Refuse & waste



Rough sleeping in the blocks



CCTV



Bin stores



The group helped produce the building safety resident engagement **strategy guides** for the blocks. Identified solutions to issues including a CCTV camera being relocated and stopping food being left by a charity in the communal areas of one of the blocks.

They also supported our customer safety engagement event, an opportunity to receive feedback from customers on building safety resident engagement guides and to talk to residents about building safety in their block.

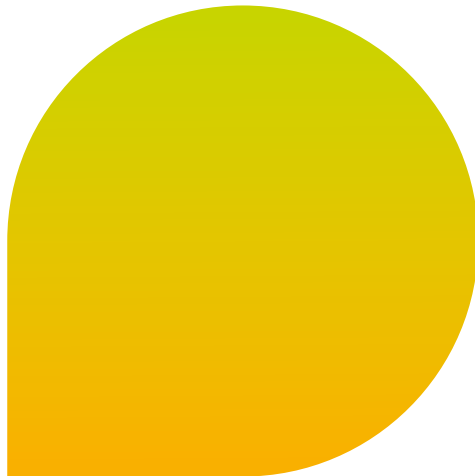


Customer voice in recruitment and procurement

We now regularly invite customers to take part in recruitment of staff/Board and contractors, examples of this include:

- The recruitment for the Chair of the Board as part of the customer colleague panel
- The recruitment for Chair of Customer Experience Committee as part of the customer colleague panel

- The Customer Engagement Officer recruitment
- The Service Improvement Panel recruitment for new members
- Interviews for a Senior Project Officer.



Future engagement activity

There's a programme of reviews which are being carried out by the Service Improvement Panel. This includes a review on no access appointments, vacant properties (voids), and the Customer Communications Centre.

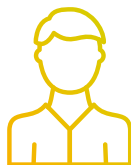
Some of the other customer engagement activities we have planned include:



Communal cleaning procurement



Further feedback about my.account.



The reintroduction of Resident Inspectors



Increasing number of reviews by Resolve



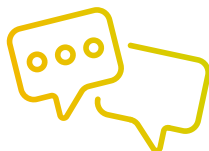
Development of a resident panel for Greyfriars regeneration



Engagement with customers at Brickhill about Project Vista



Introducing a customer approved stamp which will identify documents that have been reviewed by customers before publication.



Electing Chair and vice Chair to SIP



Seeking feedback on our customer commitments

EDI strategy

The strategy will focus on understanding customers, and in particular hidden voices. To support this, the Customer Engagement and Insights teams will be completing in-depth analysis of the customer voices we do hear, to ensure representation across all the communities we serve.



Get in touch

To find out more about our customer engagement activities or how you can get involved get in touch with the Customer Engagement Team.



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Email:
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Website:
bpha.org.uk/my-neighbourhood/customer-engagement



The place:
Theplace.bpha.org.uk



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