

## Customer Strategy

2025 – 2029

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This refreshed Customer Strategy 2025-2029 sets out how we will deliver high quality services and improve the experience of our customers with a clear emphasis on service improvement. The Strategy builds on what we have achieved in 2024/25 and includes all our services for all customers and tenures. Building on our successes we are ambitious in our plans and want to be considered as a landlord our customers value and a strong performer when compared to others. Our objective is to achieve a C1 Consumer Standards rating by the Regulator of Social Housing and be a landlord that our customers are proud of.
- 1.2 This is an organization-wide strategy, with a focus on both internal and external customers, led by the Board. At bpha we believe that embedding a customer first culture and developing our colleagues to have the right skills to really put customers at the heart of what we do is essential to our success. Our work through our People strategic plan will support us in achieving this.
- 1.3 In developing this Strategy, we have considered our progress during the last year, feedback and input from our Customer Service Improvement Panel and the results of the first year of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures which provide valuable insight into what our customers are telling us about our services. We have also looked at the changing regulatory position, including learning from Consumer inspections, the introduction of the new Consumer Standards, the updated Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code and learning from the Housing Ombudsman Spotlight reports.
- 1.4 The Strategy sets out how we will continue to work with customers and use their feedback to develop and improve services, particularly those that matter to them most. Our customer engagement framework tailored to and co-created with bpha customers will help us achieve this.
- 1.5 The Strategy takes account of the changing and challenging environment in which social housing providers are working and the changing expectations and needs of customers and those that regulate the services we provide. This changing environment means that we often need to do more with the same resources; taking an innovative and planned approach to what we want to achieve over the next 4 years is a key part of the Strategy.
- 1.6 The Strategy sets out a clear plan to improve services and will report on a range of measures as detailed in Section 8 to demonstrate the outcomes achieved.

## 2 CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PANEL SUPPORTING STATEMENT

The Regulator of Social Housing has introduced standards that Registered Providers have to meet, taking tenants' views into account in their decision making about how landlord services are delivered, and communicate how tenants' views have been considered. The Consumer Standards aim to give tenants more power in holding their landlords to account for their decisions, performance and conduct. This is a huge cultural shift within the housing sector to redress the imbalance of power.

This Customer Strategy gives us confidence that bpha are not only responding to the Regulator but proactively driving the customer agenda forward. Empowering customers is not new to bpha as customers across all tenures and geographical areas, are invited to get involved, in a wide range of opportunities to influence and scrutinise its strategies, policies and services. This strategy builds on that solid customer engagement success to date but now has specific goals, with steps that bpha will take, to positively impact customer satisfaction, going forward.

Service Improvement Panel customers have helped shape this strategy by ensuring that what matters most to customers, is included to influence and affect real change. We recognise that resources, whether that be in staffing or Information Technology will be required to deliver on many objectives outlined in the strategy. As a scrutiny panel we will be holding bpha to account for their decisions, performance or conduct that may adversely impact the success of this strategy.

We applaud and recognise that bpha are making extraordinary efforts to embrace customer engagement and propel it to the next level, so we are pleased to support and endorse this customer strategy. As a panel we welcome its implementation and look forward to seeing how it brings alive the values that bpha embodies.

**Service Improvement Panel, 3 February 2025**

## 3 VISION AND VALUES

### Our Vision

“Quality homes. Connected Communities”

Our vision focuses on improving lives and opportunities through providing good, safe and sustainable homes and by helping connect customers with their local communities and services.

### Our Values

Our values are integral to the service we offer and how we work in partnership with customers. They are embedded across the organisation, and our teams place great importance on reflecting the values in their everyday work.



## 4 WHAT ARE OUR CUSTOMERS TELLING US

- 4.1 Feedback from customers is invaluable in helping us prioritise our work over the next four years. We successfully co-created our In-House Maintenance Services by working with our customers to develop a range of recommendations to help us shape the new service. Our Customer Service Improvement Panel are now working on a range of scrutiny reviews as well as developing their work plan to continue to support us on our journey for improvement.
- 4.2 To help us develop this Strategy we have used insight from a range of sources both through our involved customer network and our perception and transactional satisfaction data.
- 4.3 Consultation on this refreshed Strategy has been undertaken with the Customer Service Improvement Panel who have confirmed that their top priorities for the next four years are:
  - Customer Experience including the efficiency and speed of transactions
  - A holistic and person- centred approach
  - Repairs, in particular, improving our response times for non- emergency repairs
  - Communication
  - Expansion of digital services for all tenures but ensuring that in person services always remain an option.
- 4.4 Our customer surveys for the Tenant Satisfaction Measures are undertaken by an independent third - party market research consultancy who specialise in the social housing sector, IFF Research. We have worked with IFF Research to analyse the first full year's data and looked carefully at benchmarking with other providers. The clear priorities for customers through their responses to the survey in 2023/24 are speed of repairs, communication, taking responsibility and estate services.
- 4.5 During 2024 we also held workshops with shared owners and leaseholders where the key themes related to ASB and the upkeep of communal areas.
- 4.6 Customer feedback aligns closely with our current performance demonstrated through our Key Performance Indicators. These customer priorities have been built into the objectives of this Strategy with clear actions developed on how they will be achieved and reported on.
- 4.7 We have used the customer voice to validate our Strategy decisions. We triangulate customer feedback and engagement from multiple sources to ensure a comprehensive and accurate understanding of customer experiences.

This includes gathering insight from direct surveys, transactional (checking how customers feel after an interaction with us, such as a repair) and perception surveys (e.g. the TSM's), compliments and complaints data and also calls received by the Customer Communication Centre, case logs and repairs requests. By cross-referencing these data points, we are able to identify reoccurring issues, validate concerns, and prioritise improvements.

We also monitor social media and use information from community engagement events and meetings with customers to help provide further context.

This multifaceted approach ensures our decisions are based on reliable evidence rather than isolated opinions – ultimately leading to service improvements that are customer led.

4.8 The Board is committed to hearing the Customer Voice and using the feedback we receive in all levels of our decision making.

## 5 OPERATING/REGULATORY CONTEXT

5.1 The terrible loss of life caused by the tragic fire at Grenfell Tower has led to many changes in the way that social housing, and building safety, is regulated in England.

5.2 The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 introduced a number of changes for the sector including enhanced powers for the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). This has seen substantial change and 2024 saw the introduction of new Consumer Standards, the publication of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) and a new inspection regime for housing providers, which focuses on consumer issues alongside governance and financial viability.

5.3 The Building Safety Act 2022 and the Fire Safety Act 2021 introduced new measures to better ensure the safety of residents particularly those in high-risk buildings and the information to be provided to residents to ensure their safety.

5.4 The role of the Housing Ombudsman has grown with the importance of the role confirmed in the Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023. The refreshed Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code was launched in April 2024 with a requirement for self-assessment and publication. The emphasis that the Ombudsman has placed on services to individual customers has been particularly acute in a period where there have been several highly publicised cases where housing providers have failed to provide the service they should have. The Ombudsman continues to publish a range of Spotlight Reports, and we will continue to use these alongside this Strategy to help us on our service improvement journey.

5.5 Consultation has been undertaken on Awaab's Law following the tragic death of Awaab Ishak whose health was adversely affected by damp and mould in his family home. The National Housing Federation submitted a sector response to the consultation, and the new legislation will take effect during 2025.

5.6 The key learning from Grenfell was that the residents did not feel listened to, or their views respected by their landlord. The Government's Charter for Social Housing Residents captured the need to change this culture across the sector. Our Customer Strategy starts from the need to listen to the Customer Voice and ensure that our culture really reflects one of Customer First.

5.7 The charter for Social Housing Residents opens with:

**'A home should always be more than just four walls and a roof'**

5.8 And leads on to seven key statements for customers:

- 1. To be safe in your home.**
- 2. To know how your landlord is performing.**
- 3. To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly.**

4. **To be treated with respect.**
5. **To have your voice heard by your landlord.**
6. **To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in.**
7. **To be supported to take your first step to home ownership.**

5.9 The current operating context is critical to how we plan our resources and ensure that delivery of our objectives meets legislative and regulatory requirements. This Strategy takes full account of both new and existing requirements.

## 6 CUSTOMER STRATEGY OBJECTIVES

- 6.1 Through our values and this Customer Strategy we will provide ***effective, efficient, and inclusive services that customers need, delivered in the way customers prefer.***
- 6.2 We will offer a person-centred approach across the organisation that is experienced by customers and that they can trust. This will enhance colleagues' understanding of the importance of their role and the impact they have on customers' experience.
- 6.3 This Strategy is supported by our other strategies to deliver the bpha Corporate Strategy 2024/29:
  - Asset Management Strategy
  - Growth and Development Strategy
  - Environment Strategy
- 6.4 The four core strategies are supported by a range of strategic plans. These plans cover treasury; information, data, and technology; people; external affairs; and equality, diversity, and inclusion.
- 6.5 The Corporate Strategy 2024/29 has four key commitments. We have developed seven customer strategic objectives to support our Corporate Strategy commitments as shown in the table below:

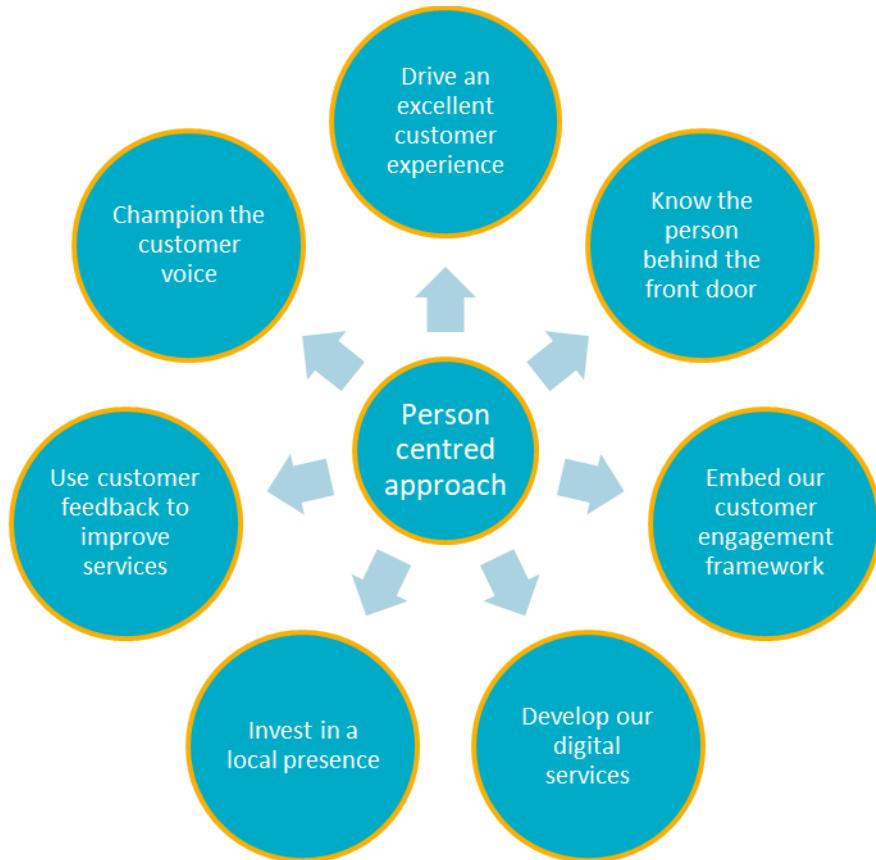
Deliver quality and value to customers	Help make places and build local communities
Create a sustainable future	Put people at the heart of bpha

Customer Strategy Objective	Corporate Strategy theme	
<p><b>1. Deliver an excellent customer experience</b> through person centred services that are appropriate to the needs of our individual customers.</p>	<p>Deliver quality and value to customers</p>	
<p><b>2. Proactively collect and act on feedback to design and improve our services</b> and to provide a safe and well-maintained home.</p>	<p>Deliver quality and value to customers</p>	<p>Create a sustainable future</p>
<p><b>3. Continue to develop our digital services</b> to offer choice of access to our services for all customer groups.</p>		<p>Deliver quality and value to customers</p>
<p><b>4. Know the people behind the front door</b> so we offer services based on the information customers provide</p>	<p>Deliver quality and value to customers</p>	<p>Create a sustainable future</p>
<p><b>5. Invest in a local presence</b> building strong links with communities and partnerships with a focus on the quality of our neighbourhoods</p>	<p>Help make places and build local communities</p>	
<p><b>6. Champion the customer voice</b> to ensure it is heard and is at the heart of decision making at all levels of the organisation.</p>	<p>Put people at the heart of bpha</p>	

<p><b>7. Embed our customer engagement framework, listen and feedback.</b></p>	<p>Put people at the heart of bpha</p>	
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6.6 These objectives will be delivered by working in partnership with customers and partners and supporting and developing colleagues by building a customer focused culture.

#### 6.7 Our Person-Centred Approach



## 7 WHAT WILL WE ACHIEVE BY 2029

### 7.1 Objective 1 – Deliver an excellent customer experience

- 7.1.1 Customers tell us that how they are treated and the experience they have is their top priority. We will improve the customer experience, and increase customer satisfaction, by streamlining the number of customer touchpoints so we resolve issues more quickly and reduce customer effort.
- 7.1.2 A customer's first contact is often the most important and impacts on their view of us as a landlord. The majority of first contact is through our Customer Communication Centre with

our independent living customers working directly with colleagues based locally in the scheme where they live. For customers booking repairs online their first contact will be with the repair operative from In House Maintenance Services (IHMS) and for regeneration and new homes with our aftercare, sales and marketing teams.

- 7.1.3 We will focus on both our internal and external customers. Our Customer First culture applies to all colleagues including those internal colleagues who support customer facing colleagues to deliver services to customers. Our work to drive forward our Customer First culture is supported by our People strategic plan to deliver a whole organisation focus on our commitment to customers.
- 7.1.4 Our committed teams are keen to act quickly by listening and responding to customers and have a target to increase first time resolution. In the past, recruitment and retention issues in the Customer Communication Centre, and on occasion reduced operatives in IHMS, have meant we have not always been able to respond as quickly as we would like. We have increased the number of colleagues to address these issues, and we will continue investing in our teams; improving the speed of resolution at first point of contact is a key priority.
- 7.1.5 The Customer Communication Centre currently resolve 77% of queries at the first point of contact and our repairs teams complete 76% of repairs at first visit, but we want to increase both measures to 85%. The quality of our calls handled through the Customer Communication Centre, including demonstrating empathy with customer requirements, is strong and meets our target of 92% satisfaction. This is supported by feedback from our Service Improvement Panel. We now want to work to improve call response times and reduce the number of abandoned calls.
- 7.1.6 We welcome a number of new customers each year and their initial view of us and our services sets the tone for many years to come. We are focusing some actions in this Strategy on the onboarding process and how we welcome our customers to bpha so we can demonstrate our commitment to our values at this early stage.
- 7.1.7 We have refreshed our approach to Customer Onboarding in our Independent Living service and will be embedding this during the year and reporting on outcomes. We will then consider whether this approach could benefit wider customer groups including how we onboard new customers in our large developments of new homes.
- 7.1.8 Improving our communication to ensure we meet the diverse needs of our customers and to ensure that we are demonstrating fair access to our services is critical and actions in the Strategy will help us achieve this. We will strengthen our approach to communicating that we are listening by being clearer in our communication using a "You Said We are Listening" model.
- 7.1.9 We will improve the customer experience with a focus on a customer first culture by all colleagues and contractors. We want to offer a professional approach, with well-trained colleagues really focused on first contact resolution.

We will:

- 7.1.10 **Embed our person-centred approach to improve customer trust.**

- Deliver a rolling programme of induction and customer service training, to embed our customer first culture to include listening, responding and empathy for all colleagues with a part to play in delivering services to customers.
- Work in partnership with our contractors to train their operatives on our values and culture.
- Support professional qualifications for completion by all identified managers by 2028.
- Deliver cross- team collaboration projects to support understanding of customer service issues based on feedback from the Great Places to Work colleague survey.
- Implement the CRM Dynamics case management module to improve visibility of customer needs and requirements.
- Report on outcomes of the Independent Living Onboarding project and develop and deliver onboarding project for all new customers to include the review of the lettable standard.

#### **7.1.11 Improve Customer Communication Centre performance.**

- Increase customer preference information through all interactions including the Customer Communication Centre and by using this achieve our Customer Effort target of 4.8 by 2026 and year on year improvement to 4.1 by 2029.
- Implement a service improvement plan to achieve call, e mail and webchat response, call waiting and abandonment targets. Publish report on progress through the website and Talk magazine each quarter.
- Customer Communication Centre to support the delivery of a refreshed Channel shift plan to support customers with routine enquiries to use the bpha customer portal freeing up resources for complex issues.

#### **7.1.12 Make our first contact count and improve resolution at first point of contact from 77% to 85%.**

- Develop a triage service based on the needs of customers and colleagues to free up time to support those with complex issues.
- Publish performance information on first contact resolution by the Customer Communication Centre and repairs completed at first visit.
- Increase repairs completed at first visit by reviewing our van and depot stock.
- Improve CRM usage across the wider business, set targets and monitor improvement.

#### **7.1.13 Communicate effectively and actively to meet the diverse needs of our customers.**

- Formulate an annual communication plan including the customer annual updates to include proactive honest messages about our services, performance, impact of our improvements and outcomes.
- Develop the Performance area of the website to post regular current information on our performance.
- Assess impact of customer engagement on an activity basis throughout the year and publish outcomes and case studies.
- Embed our Customer Calendar project to upskill colleagues on written customer communication.

## 7.2 **Objective 2 – Pro-actively collect and act on customer feedback to design and improve our services and provide a safe and well- maintained home**

- 7.2.1 Customer satisfaction for tenants at 70.9% and shared owners at 49.6% is average when compared to other providers but our ambition is to be a landlord our customers are proud of and to compare well with other social housing providers. We will increase overall customer satisfaction for tenants to 80% and shared owners to 60% by the end of the Strategy term. Our ambition is to continue to improve customer satisfaction further beyond the life of this Strategy, as well as reducing the satisfaction gap between tenures, but we recognise the importance of doing this in a sustained way to fully embed the improvements we achieve over the next 4 years.
- 7.2.2 The service that our customers tell us most drives satisfaction is repairs. Listening to this feedback and working together with our involved customers we co-created our in-House Maintenance Service (IHMS) in 2022. IHMS have successfully taken on general repairs and maintenance, aids and adaptations, kitchen and bathroom replacements, and electrical repairs supported by specialist contractors for compliance work and planned works. We now offer digital self-service to book a range of family friendly appointment times, offer better communication, improved work planning and scheduling and the opportunity for customers to provide immediate feedback through our text surveys. Our key performance measure – the satisfaction with the last repair is strong at 93%, but overall repairs satisfaction measured through the TSMs is 66% which is lower than the sector average of 72.3% reflecting the performance of some of our previous external contractors before we developed IHMS. Appointments made and kept is 80% but we want to increase this to 90% to really help us drive up customer satisfaction.
- 7.2.3 We have set up a specialist damp and mould team so we can triage requests for work based on risk and will continue to refine the work of this new team, taking account of Awaab's Law and planning our resources to meet the new requirements.
- 7.2.4 Our journey for improvement has commenced and in the last year we set up a small works team to take on more complex repairs to free up appointments for more routine items. With support from our involved customers, we have also appointed a new contractor to support us with our aids and adaptation work.
- 7.2.5 Safety of our homes is paramount, and we have successfully achieved full compliance of all health and safety indicators which are reported through our Asset Management Strategy. We will focus on proactive identification of housing health risks and review our end -to -end digital processes to ensure damp and mould is a managed effectively.
- 7.2.6 Customers tell us having a named person to talk to is important to them. We are proud of our generic housing officers who provide a visible point of contact and engagement in the community. We have invested more resources in this area as well as setting up a new complex cases team to support us with anti-social behaviour and safeguarding. We have completed a comprehensive review of our anti- social behaviour work during 2024, developed and published a new ASB Policy and started to develop our implementation plan for improvement.
- 7.2.7 Using our Cycle of Service model we will shape and improve services. To achieve this, we will:

**7.2.8 Develop and deliver a plan to improve customer satisfaction with our repairs and maintenance service 66% to 78%.**

- Complete a review of routine repairs in progress/not yet started to increase the numbers of repairs completed within the 28-day target to 80% by March 2028.
- Increase the number of appointments made and kept to 90% and review appointment categories in partnership with involved customers.
- Embed our new small works team to enable dedicated resources for more complex repairs freeing up resources for routine repairs and review success after the first 12 months.
- Monitor the outcome of the new 60-day target for more complex repairs and the impact on customer satisfaction.
- Embed our contractor management framework and report outcomes through Operations Board to better measure outcomes leading to improved performance.
- Introduce “on the way tracking” to reduce missed appointments and minimise waste.
- Review outcomes from the new damp and mould team and continue to embed our commitment to triage and prioritisation of cases including the requirements of Awaab’s Law.

**7.2.9 Improve satisfaction with our ASB service from 47% to 60% focusing on both individuals and neighbourhoods.**

- Report on and deliver the outcomes from our recently completed ASB review and publish expected outcomes for customers by April 2025.
- Work in partnership with local authorities and other stakeholders to deliver services in a joined-up way that consider the needs of the wider community.
- Review our customer information on ASB and Hate Crime so that customers are clear on timelines for actions and when and how they will be contacted.
- Achieve re-accreditation with the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance.
- Complete the ASB CRM development project and report outcomes to customers.

**7.2.10 Grow our tenancy sustainment service and reduce our tenancy failure rate.**

- Develop our approach to person centre risk management and develop a new customer facing policy to support this.
- Establish our offer for new tenants with additional support needs based on individual circumstances and once in place review option for expansion to existing customers.
- Report on caseloads, key issues linked to safeguarding and the provision of support, and the number/ percentage of tenancies sustained following intervention/support.

**7.2.11 The Board will continue to oversee our learning from complaints, and we will improve satisfaction with complaint handling to from 39% to 50%.**

- Review TSM feedback on satisfaction with our approach to complaint handling and develop a plan on how to drive up satisfaction by a minimum of 2% per year.
- Introduce enhanced quality monitoring of Stage 1 responses to include greater personal contact to reduce the number of complaints escalating to Stage 2 and report on outcomes.
- Meet Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code targets on complaint handling.

- Ensure that regular reporting to Customer Experience Committee captures key lessons from complaints and identified service improvement actions.

### 7.3 **Objective 3 - Continue development of our digital offer to enable choice of access for all customer groups**

- 7.3.1 We will offer a wide range of access to our services to meet the diverse needs of our customers. We know that in person services are important to some of our customers, but many customers increasingly want to access our services digitally, in a way and at a time which suits them.
- 7.3.2 Our ambition is to have all key services available online by 2029, with the back-office infrastructure in place to fully support this and a website that fully meets the needs of our customers.
- 7.3.3 We have a customer portal “my.account” designed with customers and we can offer many services online including payment of rent, general enquiries, ordering and booking repairs for tenant’s homes and updating household details. We are encouraging customers to sign up to the customer portal to both access services and view important information about their tenancy but take up is currently relatively low, partly due to constraints in repairs appointments. We have 1000 regular portal users, but we need to better understand how many transactions are being undertaken and what blockages there may be to usage. We have ambitions to develop “my.account” to include a customer document library, ordering communal repairs, viewing information on block and estate cleaning and gardening, gas servicing appointments, reporting ASB and logging a complaint.
- 7.3.4 Our new website went live in August 2024 and gives customers easy to access information on our services as well as a range of accessible functions such as Google translate and Reach Deck which includes a range of functionality to ensure the site as fully accessible. We also have Live information on our Customer Communication Centre performance so customers can choose the easiest time to contact us.
- 7.3.5 We designed the new website with involved customers and have agreed that we will review the new look with them during 2025 to ensure that information about both our services and our community engagement offer is easy to access.
- 7.3.6 To support us on our digital journey we will:
- 7.3.7 **Continue to develop the customer portal to increase online transactions.**
  - Deliver self-service functionality as set out in the IT strategic plan with a key focus in 2025/26 on setting up direct debits, raising a complaint, communal repairs and estate maintenance.
  - Define online transactions, set targets and develop BI reports to understand transactions completed, started and aborted.
  - Co-create a new self-service offer for leaseholders and shared owners
  - Deliver CRM Dynamics projects in line with programme in IT strategic plan to support ongoing development of the customer portal.

**7.3.8 Review the customer elements of new bpha website 18 months from Go Live taking account of customer feedback. Feedback under the “You Said We Did “model.**

- Develop a project scope for review by the Customer Service Improvement Panel, complete review and implement agreed recommendations by April 2026.
- Review performance information to ensure that we are reporting the right information about our services, and it is presented in a transparent and accessible way.
- Develop an ongoing review plan of customer facing information to ensure information provided is current and relevant.

**7.3.9 Increase customer usage of self-service functionality to 4000 to free up resources to support complex issues.**

- Develop a refreshed Channel shift campaign to drive up usage and measure outcomes. Set annual targets and monitor monthly.
- Promote self-service at each customer contact and evidence this.
- Monitor success rate of appointments and speed of service requests made online to enable learning and to support service change to drive up customer satisfaction.

**7.3.10 Review the “The Place” as our customer engagement platform to drive up use and support delivery of this Strategy.**

- Review current usage of The Place, outcomes achieved and share with customers.
- Develop plan for driving forward usage of the Place and our desired outcomes
- Develop a refreshed communication plan with opportunities of engagement.
- After year 1 complete options appraisal of alternative platforms/use of the customer portal to include comparison of functionality, ease of access and use and value for money.

**7.4 Objective 4 - Know the people behind the front door and treat customers as individuals basing the decisions about them on the information they provide.**

7.4.1 We will collect and hold customer data to help us tailor our services appropriately, to understand the diverse needs of our communities and to help identify any gaps in service provision. The data we collect will help influence service design, understand household size and levels of overcrowding and under-occupation, better understand language needs and the number of customers requiring reasonable adjustments due to disability and support needs.

7.4.2 The data we currently hold supports our decision making but we want to collect data where we have gaps and use our data in a better way to deliver the right services at the first point of contact. We recognise the importance of only collecting the customer data we need to offer appropriate services and to protect the customer data we hold in line with data protection legislation.

7.4.3 bpha’s customer base is made up of a mixture of predominantly rental customers (78%), shared owners (18%) and leaseholders (4%). Ages range from 18 to 103 years with the majority of tenants and shared owners falling into the 25 to 44 years age bracket (40%) and followed by the 45 to 59 years age bracket (30%). The length of tenancy varies from new

tenants to nearly 50 years with the majority (23%) in the 11 to 20 years group and 22% holding a tenancy between 6 and 10 years.

- 7.4.4 Our geography and demographics are different across our regions, so it is important we tailor our services to reflect this. In Cambridge over a third of our homes are shared ownership with most customers in the 25 to 59 age group so our focus is on our housing management offer and increasing repairs efficiency. In Bedford 2,500 customers are over the age of 60 and 50% of customers have lived in the area for more than 10 years so we will have a greater focus on planned maintenance, adaptations and meeting the needs of customers who have lived in their home a long time.
- 7.4.5 In the last year we have developed a strategic Information Management Framework. This is a corporate project of which Customer is a key part. This project is looking at information governance and will lead to the development of an Information Management Strategy in June 2025 which will support the work of this Strategy.
- 7.4.6 The Housing Ombudsman produced a Spotlight report on Knowledge Information Management in 2023 with a range of recommendations. We have used this report to self-assess our performance and will use this good practice to support our work in this area.
- 7.4.7 We are developing a customer risk assessment framework, with the new CRM Dynamics case management module to support this, which will ensure that all our decisions are person centred.
- 7.4.8 Our tenancy sustainment service is key to supporting customers with additional needs. In the last year we have redefined our tenancy sustainment offer and going forward we will be developing a new internal service level agreement and better reporting on outcomes. We have developed a model of intensive housing management to support and help fund this work and hope to expand our service as needs are identified through our risk assessment framework.
- 7.4.9 We have piloted a Healthy Homes initiative focusing our silent customers. The initiative brings together colleagues from across bpha to focus on homes where we are finding it difficult to access the property or where we become aware that tenants have multiple issues being addressed by different teams. We will review the pilot and consider how we can use this information to deliver this Strategy.
- 7.4.10 Knowing and using our data effectively is essential to the delivery of person-centred services. Our ambition is to hold sufficient data to inform our decisions, use the data safely to deliver services in the most appropriate way and report on how we have used this data and the impact it has had on improving on services.

7.4.11 We will:

- 7.4.12 **Implement the Information Management Framework including the customer data quality improvement plan.**
  - Complete our Customer Data Collection Plan and produce a report for Customer Experience Committee outlining results.

- Produce 6 monthly updates on progress against the plan and how we will use data to drive service decisions.
- Deliver improvements to customer information management contributing to achieving the overall Data and Information Management Maturity Measure of 4.2 by 2029.

**7.4.13 Use our data to understand customer needs and provide support to sustain tenancies.**

- Develop a plan on how we will use the data we collect demonstrating a clear link to service improvements and impact.
- Business Intelligence reports in place on use of data and how this is improving service delivery and outcomes.
- Demonstrate learning and service improvements on completion of the plan including feedback to customers through the website and customer communications eg Talk magazine.
- Embed our updated Tenancy Sustainment Offer, launch the new service level agreement and report on outcomes.

**7.4.14 Review Healthy Homes pilot project, consider outcomes and future direction.**

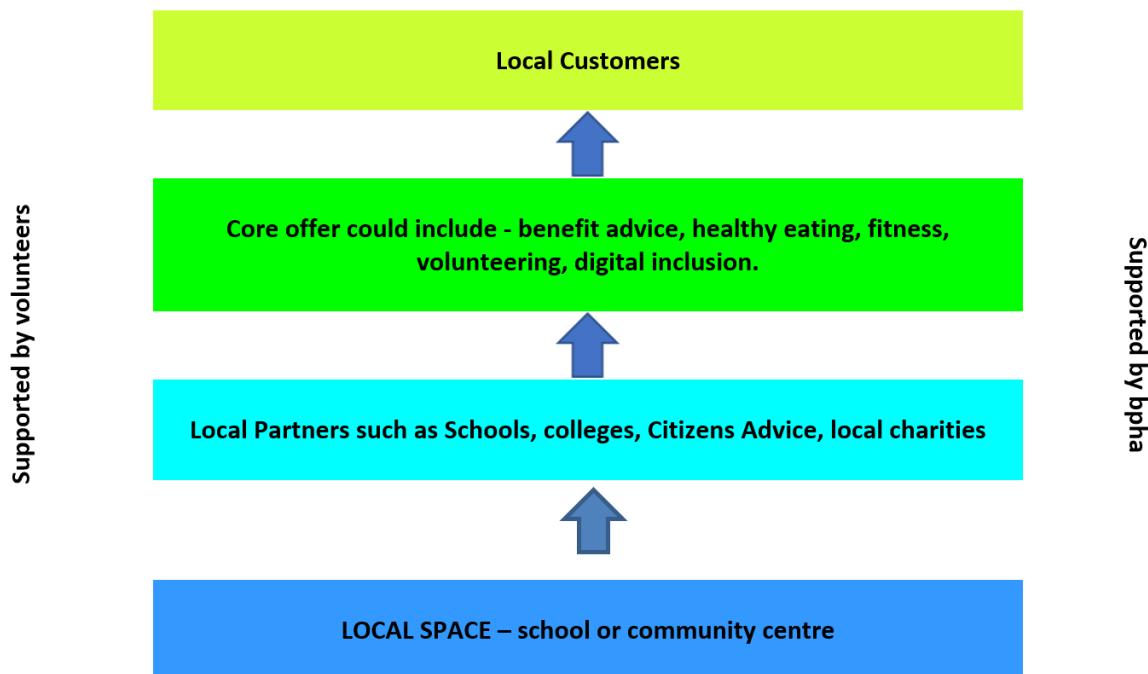
- Develop proposal to understand data on “silent customers” to support our safeguarding work and our commitment to proactive work on damp and mould.
- Develop business case for wider project based on outcomes and consider resources required
- Develop plan for launch of project and timescales for delivery including reporting on outcomes.

**7.4.15 Deliver the “The Big Listen” project in local areas to support our aim of better understanding our customers.**

- Develop scope for a pilot project to be delivered in Year 1.
- Roll out programme of “door knocks” with colleagues from across the organisation.
- Assess outcomes and publish the impact to the wider customer community.

**7.5 Objective 5 – Invest in our local presence building strong links with our communities and local partnerships to improve the quality of our neighbourhoods.**

**7.5.1** The communities we work in and the partnerships we have developed are of great importance to us and are essential to delivering services for our customers. The graphic below shows how we work together to achieve this.



- 7.5.2 We will continue to develop our already strong community offer, improve our local communal services such as cleaning and grounds maintenance, ensure value for money of service charges and continue to work in partnership with others.
- 7.5.3 We have a strong presence in local areas where we have a number of homes and work in partnership with many agencies including our local authority partners and health trusts to deliver joined up local services in particular to support our work on safeguarding, ASB and Hate Crime. We recognise the importance of health and housing and the impact that health inequalities can have on our communities. Working with others, particularly where we don't manage a block or communal areas ourselves, is essential to improving our services.
- 7.5.4 We are working successfully with our partners to deliver the Greyfriars regeneration scheme and will build on our work with customers during the next phase.
- 7.5.5 Our community hubs are important to customers and deliver multiple services in one location. Over the last year we are pleased to have opened Cafe Connect in Queens Park and new community hubs in Kingsbrook and Cauldwell in Bedford and Trumpington in Cambridge. These new facilities offer a range of community projects to support health and wellbeing, community food projects, employment support and money advice.
- 7.5.6 We are an active member of a Health and Housing Partnership with three of our key local authority partners (Bedford, Milton Keynes and Central Bedfordshire) and two other housing associations (Peabody and Amplius). We have supported the work of Bedford Council's Health and Wellbeing Strategy and will continue to do this by active involvement in the Strategy's workstream activities.

7.5.7 We want to respond to our TSM scores where nearly half of our customers surveyed are telling us that they are not satisfied with the cleaning and upkeep of our communal areas and our contribution to their local neighbourhood. Improving the delivery of communal services and making a positive contribution to local neighbourhoods is an essential part of this Strategy. A particular focus will be on our grounds maintenance service and improving the performance of our contractors in this area.

7.5.8 We will:

7.5.9 **Supported by the Board we will deliver our Community Hub three-year plan.**

- Develop community hubs and skills of members to move to a self - sufficient governance model.
- Develop plans for future hubs based on data and feedback from customers
- Report annually on successes and outcomes against the plan
- Develop a joint funding model with a focus on external partner match funding and contract social value funding.
- Measure and report on social value through a recognised evaluation model.

7.5.10 **Improve tenant satisfaction with communal areas and contribution to neighbourhood to 62%.**

- Review our Neighbourhood Policy and service offer including estate inspections and greater customer visibility of services.
- Develop the customer portal to improve information on communal/neighbourhood services.
- Work with our grounds maintenance contractor to drive up standards and improve how we communicate service dates and performance to customers
- Develop scope and deliver a project to review fixed service charges for communal area services to ensure value for money.
- Launch project to improve how we work with managing agents to deliver better value for money and improved standards for communal services.

7.5.11 **Continue to work in partnership with others to improve what we do.**

- Continue to support the local Health and Housing Partnership set up by Bedford, Central Bedfordshire, and Milton Keynes Public Health service.
- Carry out joint work with public health and other partners to support our regeneration projects including Greyfriars.
- Develop and deliver a customer onboarding plan in conjunction with our partners for the successful launch of our new homes at Linmere.

## **7.6 Objective 6 - Champion the Customer Voice to ensure it is heard and is at the heart of decision making at all levels of the organisation**

7.6.1 The Board will take the lead in championing the customer voice and ensure it is at the heart of decision making at all levels of the organisation. We know that a key driver of customer satisfaction is whether customers feel they are being listened to and that we are

responding to what they are telling us and designing our services around their needs and priorities.

- 7.6.2 In the last year we have continued to develop our approach to listening and are starting to report on the changes we have implemented as a result of this feedback. However, our Tenant Satisfaction Measure score on “Listen to Views and Acts” of 56.1 % is lower than we want to see.
- 7.6.3 Our Customer Service Improvement Panel plays a valuable role in scrutinising our services, strategies and policies and we will continue to work support the Panel in their valuable work.
- 7.6.4 We have looked at how the Board can better hear the customer voice and have successfully introduced Customer Stories at each Board meeting. We will work with our involved customers and Board Members to consider how we can enhance our work in this area.
- 7.6.5 We are committed to improving how we act on customer feedback as well as reporting on outcomes and will work with involved customers to better develop how we do this.
- 7.6.6 We will:
- 7.6.7 **Improve our listening to customers score to 70%.**
  - Develop Listen, Change and Feedback model and publish outcomes to wider customer group using a “You Said We have Listened” approach.
  - Analyse data quarterly from the TSMs and Customer engagement framework reporting on key themes and trends.
  - Review how we act on and publish transactional satisfaction feedback to help us transparently report our current performance.
  - Extend out transactional surveys to the development aftercare team and grounds maintenance and use feedback to drive service improvements.
  - Develop, deliver and report quarterly on annual service improvement plan and outcomes for all delivery areas using “You Said We have Listened ”.
- 7.6.8 **Publish outcomes from Learning from Complaints and the deep dives completed by Resolve, our customer complaint group, demonstrating changes made to our services.**
  - Analyse key learnings by theme for all complaints received and report to Customer Experience Committee.
  - Assess underlying trends and work with business to effect change.
  - Build service changes required into SMART annual service improvement plans and share plans with customers.
  - Publish outcomes of changes to services through the website and customer magazines.
- 7.6.9 **Develop a refreshed framework for hearing the Customer Voice through the governance structure including the appointment of 2 Members from our Service Improvement Panel to the Customer Experience Committee.**

- Review the current methodology and outcomes for hearing the Customer Voice at all levels in the organisation.
- Consult the Board, Customer Experience Committee and Service Improvement Panel on their views for hearing the Customer Voice through the governance structure.
- Develop a refreshed framework for recommendation to Customer Experience Committee and Board during 2025.
- Roll out new framework and report on outcomes.

**7.7 Objective 7 - Embed our Customer Engagement framework, increase numbers of involved customers and improve our reporting on the impact and outcomes.**

7.7.1 We will use our Customer Engagement framework to ensure our customers have a voice and can see that their input, knowledge and experience is valuable to us and is evident in the decisions we make and the services we provide.

7.7.2 It is important to demonstrate that customers are at the heart of what we do and that our first consideration in our decisions making is to consider the impact for customers.

7.7.3 Building on the feedback we have had from our customers we know that engagement is important. We have developed a range of opportunities to become involved which are shown in the graphic below.

7.7.4 In the last year we have recruited our Customer Service Improvement Panel who have undertaken deep dive reviews on complaints and parts of the repairs service and have had input into our home ownership group and our work on person centred risk management. The Panel are continuing to focus their next project on repairs as we know this is the top priority for customers.

7.7.5 We have seen improved use of The Place, where we can engage with a broader range of customers online, and we want to improve day to day engagement through this channel.

7.7.6 Our Building Safety Group, which includes residents, has made a positive contribution to our building safety engagement and we are expanding the work of this group to help deliver the key requirements of the Building Safety Act 2022.

7.7.7 We have successfully engaged with customers through our Project Vista schemes and will use the feedback they have provided as we launch our project at Brickhill.

7.7.8 We want to better embed our engagement framework to ensure that the impact and outcomes are measurable and evident in actions we take and the decisions we make. We must be able to clearly communicate to customers how we have changed and improved our services as a result of their feedback and be open and honest where change is not possible and why.



#### 7.7.9 To embed this framework, we will:

##### 7.7.10 **Review and publish outcomes from our customer engagement framework for 2024/25 and use learning to develop the 2025/26 and future years' plans.**

- Publish our 2024/25 Customer Engagement impact report by July 2025.
- Develop an annual customer engagement work plan in partnership with the Service Improvement Panel to include how we hear from customers from all areas of our diverse communities.
- Develop and deliver a customer and community engagement plan for new our community at Linmere.
- Review our programme of focus groups with a focus on the “hidden voice” to include greater feedback from shared owners, leaseholders and new customers to include learning from customers at our environmentally sustainable new homes at Fen Drayton.

##### 7.7.11 **Increase customer participation on The Place to 1000 customers to support better service outcomes.**

- Increase the number of active involved customers across all customer groups by better promotion of opportunities/projects.
- Develop a campaign for engagement by current involved customers with an objective of increasing involvement from wider communities.
- Focus deep dives/improvement workshops in the areas where customers are telling us we most need to support to improve our services.

## 8 MEASURING SUCCESS

- 8.1 We will review progress against the Strategy action plan each month and report on progress to our Service Improvement Panel at each quarterly meeting. A twice-yearly update on progress against the Strategy action plan will be provided to Customer Experience Committee with an annual report to Board. An annual review will consider the details of the Strategy action plan each April for the coming year.
- 8.2 Success will be measured by improvement in our strategic KPIs, transactional customer satisfaction for a range of service areas including repairs, the Customer Communication Centre and complaints as well as improvements in customer satisfaction measured through our customer perception survey that collects the data for the Tenant Satisfaction Measures.

Measures/Targets	2025/26	2026/27	2027/28	2028/29
Customer Satisfaction - T	74%	76%	78%	80%
Customer Satisfaction - SO	52%	53%	57%	60%
- Complaints Satisfaction	38%	43%	47%	50%
- ASB Satisfaction	50%	53%	57%	60%
Customer Effort	4.8	4.7	4.4	4.1
- Listening to Customers	60%	63%	66%	70%
Tenants	60%	63%	66%	70%
Shared Owners	44%	47%	50%	54%
- Average call wait time	8 mins	6 mins	5 mins	4 mins
- Abandoned calls	10%	8%	7%	6%
- First Contact Resolution	78%	80%	83%	85%
Home is well maintained -	73%	74%	77%	80%
- Repairs Satisfaction	72%	74%	76%	78%
- First Time Fix	78%	80%	83%	85%
- Repairs in target	75%	76%	78%	80%
Positive Contribution to neighbourhoods	55%	57%	60%	62%
Tenants	58%	60%	62%	64%
Shared Owners	40%	42%	44%	46%
- Communal Area Maintenance	59%	60%	63%	65%
The Place Participation	500	650	800	1000
Regular portal users	2200	3000	3600	4000
- Digital transactions - routine	20%	30%	40%	50%

## 9 PUBLISHING OUTCOMES

- 9.1 This Strategy will be launched both internally for colleagues and externally for customers. We want to be clear in our communication about where we are now on our customer journey

and our plans for improvement over the life of the Strategy. Honest and clear communications are essential to building customer trust.

- 9.2 Reporting outcomes is key to our transparent approach and will include colleagues internally through The Hive, customers through the website and other customer communication channels, the customer annual updates and externally through our Annual Statement and Financial Accounts.