

# Draft Resident Involvement and Empowerment Strategy

2020 - 2023



# Introduction

*'Elim's vision is to meet housing need and deliver places for people to call home.'*

In order to fulfil this vision, we need to work alongside all of our residents, across all of our different types of accommodation. This strategy outlines how we plan to do this over the next three years.

Elim are unique in the range of accommodation and services we offer. We provide homes and housing services to over 800 households across 11 local authority areas in England and Wales. Residents may be people who have experienced homelessness living in our supported housing, Gypsies and Travellers on one of our specially developed sites, first time buyers of one of the homes we have developed, or residents of our social housing, some of whom have been with us for decades.

As well as being a landlord and support provider, we also develop new homes. While much of this strategy will focus on improving the service we provide to existing residents, it will also involve harnessing the views of residents and other stakeholders in order to shape the new services we provide and the homes that we build. Our resident profile is diverse and this diversity is one of Elim's great assets. Throughout the delivery of this strategy we will recognise the differing priorities and requirements of our residents and focus on ensuring that everyone receives a consistent level of service.

This strategy has been developed using input from our residents over the past year. This has come through routine satisfaction surveys and other forms of customer feedback, including complaints, as well as more in-depth conversations with a representative sample of our residents. It makes explicit the ways in which we will fulfil our responsibilities as a registered provider of social housing and through our commitment to tangible outcomes and the sharing of our performance, makes us accountable to our residents.

We would like our residents to see this as an opportunity to work in partnership with us. Resident feedback, whether positive or negative, will shape our actions over the life of this strategy and beyond. By working together, we believe that we can fulfil our vision of meeting housing need and delivering places for people to call home in a way that improves the lives of everyone associated with Elim.

The strategy will cover **three** key areas:

## 1 Engagement

is about making communication as easy as possible for our residents, whether they are looking to provide feedback about our services or simply want to order a repair.

## 2 Involvement

describes how we recognise our residents as partners in the development and delivery of our homes and services, listening to their feedback and making sure it is reflected in our work.

## 3 Empowerment

is the logical conclusion of engagement and involvement. It describes not only the impact that our residents are able to have on their services but also our accountability to them as an organisation. It involves formal decision-making accountability being held by our residents.



# Strategy aims/vision

We understand that it is the fundamentals of our work that our residents care most about: good quality homes, services that provide value for money and ease of communication with their Housing Officer and our Maintenance Team. This strategy will see Elim utilising the input, knowledge and experience of our residents to ensure that we get these basics right. Activities such as paying rent or ordering a repair will be quick and simple. We understand that the first measure of success of this strategy will be whether residents feels that the services we provide have improved.

A renewed focus on engaging with our residents will ensure that they find it easier to talk to us. We will open up new channels of communication that reflect the preferences and lives of our residents. We will expand our online communications so residents can pay rent or request repairs at any time of day or night, but we will continue to develop our service in more traditional forms of communication. We understand that many of our residents value their face to face or telephone communication with their Housing Officers and we will continue to invest in and improve our service in these areas.

We will make ourselves more accountable to residents, providing them with more information on our activities and performance. We will provide more information about their home, giving them direct access to safety certificates and Fire Risk Assessments. We will give residents the opportunity to take up positions where they have formal input into and responsibility for decision making. We will communicate clearly to our residents the impact that their input and feedback has had on the service they receive.



# Starting Conversations

Getting the basics right will always be our priority, but we want to do more than that. This strategy recognises our residents as partners in our quest for continuous improvement and provides a roadmap for how they will shape this progress over the next 3-years. Over this time, opportunities for our residents to provide feedback about our services will increase and improve. Our hope is that rather than being a one-way street, this will be an opportunity to start lasting conversations with our residents, keeping us increasingly in touch with their lives so that we can respond in a way that reflects their priorities and meets their aspirations. Our belief is that improving our engagement with residents will promote a cycle of continuous improvement that benefits everybody, expressed below.



# Your Best Move

Your Best Move is Elim's model of service delivery that represents our belief that a good home should act as a platform for someone to achieve their aspirations for their future housing or employment. As well as asking our residents how they feel about their current home, we will also speak to them about their hopes and aspirations and this conversation will inform the development of our future homes and services.

From our Customer Insight survey, we know that almost 30% of our residents have aspirations for home ownership. Over half of our residents would like to see a change in their employment circumstances. As both a builder of new homes and a provider of support services, we believe that we can be part of the solution to these challenges.





# How will we do it?

Our values In 2019 our residents helped us to develop a new set of organisational values: **Elim CARES**. In delivering this strategy, we will observe these values at all times.



## **Customers First**

Customers are at the heart of our services and decision making.

**This value forms the basis of the strategy and underlines our view of our residents as partners in delivering the strategy outcomes.**



## **Aspirational & Accountable**

We are ambitious for our customers, staff and business and we work with integrity, learn from mistakes and do what we say we will.

**The strategy is ambitious. We will keep our residents informed about our progress in delivering the strategy and always remain open to challenge.**



## **Results**

We work hard and deliver great results for our customers and for Elim.

**Every action we take in delivery of this strategy will contribute to a tangible outcome for our residents.**



## **Everyone's view matters**

We listen to understand, improve and build our services.

**We understand that our residents are a diverse group. We will ensure that everyone has the opportunity to contribute to the delivery of this strategy.**



## **Supportive**

We tackle challenges head on and inspire each other to achieve our potential.

**We know that getting involved is not always straightforward for all of our residents. We will make it as simple as possible for them. In delivery of the strategy we will not lose sight of the day to day support and services that our residents require from us.**



## What will the strategy deliver?

### Engagement

- We know that first impressions count. We will change our process for new residents, ensuring that they are provided with all the information they need to stay safe and happy in their new home.
- We will treat every resident as a new resident: in the first year of this strategy every resident will have the opportunity to meet with their Housing Officer or another member of Elim staff.
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### Involvement

- We will improve our proactive communication with residents, ensuring that all residents are updated about our activity in their preferred method of communication.
- Residents will be given the opportunity to feedback on any service development that affects them, from the development of policies to the new support services we develop.
- We will continue to develop our website, making it a comprehensive resource for any resident looking for information about Elim or related services in their local area.

•We will launch a new Customer Feedback Framework, incorporating a revised complaints procedure that gives every resident the opportunity to provide us with comprehensive feedback about all of our services at least annually.

- We will conduct a distinct consultation process with residents of properties that we have developed, using the feedback to inform the development of our future homes
- We will promote and facilitate the development of Residents' Groups in individual schemes.

### Empowerment

- We will regularly publish our organisational performance information, including value for money information along with benchmark data, so our residents know how well we are performing for them.
- We will improve resident representation on our Board, giving residents direct involvement in decisions that affect them.
- Wherever possible, we will use resident feedback to inform our procurement of the services that they receive.
- We will establish a Residents' Forum, that will have formal decision making responsibility for certain issues.
- Our Customer Portal will allow residents to access information about their tenancy, allowing them to obtain up to date rent account information or view a copy of their current Gas Safety Certificate.
- All Policies or procedures that affect our residents will be available on our website. We will also direct all residents to the regulatory and legislative documents that govern the work we do, enabling them to hold us to account.
- Every resident that provides us with feedback will be given a response, outlining how their feedback has impacted on the way we work. If it hasn't, we will explain why.



# Measuring success

We believe that these tangible outcomes will have a direct impact on our residents' experience of their homes and our service. We also believe that by harnessing the insight and knowledge of our residents our services will improve. We will measure the success of this strategy in the following ways:

## Resident satisfaction

In measuring success we will take our lead from our residents. We expect our overall resident satisfaction score to improve year on year, achieving 90% satisfaction by the end of 2023.

## Maintenance Satisfaction

We know that our maintenance and repairs service is one of the most frequently used by our residents and is a significant overall driver of satisfaction. This strategy will see our residents' satisfaction with maintenance increase year on year achieving 85% satisfaction by the end of 2023.

## Right first time

We will increase the number of enquiries from residents that we are able to resolve at the first contact by 20% and provide all customers with information about our performance in this regard.

## Service delivery

Our service delivery is directed by our organisational policies. By the end of the strategy 100% organisational policies that directly affect our residents will be able to demonstrate resident involvement in their development and review.

## Organisational performance

We believe that improved communication with residents will deliver better outcomes for everybody. Our performance in organisational performance indicators such as arrears will improve year on year, as residents are better supported and equipped to manage their tenancy.

## Value for money

We will develop value for money metrics that provide insight into the work we do and the value we deliver to our residents and communities and we will improve this performance for each year in the life of this strategy.

## New developments

100% of new homes or services we develop will be able to clearly demonstrate how they are a response to the needs of our residents or the local community.