



## **COMMUNICATION STRATEGY 2015**

### **1.0 PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Association having such a strategy is to plan, monitor and evaluate how effectively the Association communicates internally and externally in a variety of ways.

### **2.0 INTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

The first part of this strategy deals with internal communications.

#### **2.1 Staff Communication**

The key components of staff communication are as follows;

- Internal Meetings
- Circulation of Minutes & Information
- Staff Representative Forum
- Team Building

#### **2.2 Internal Meetings**

A variety of different internal meetings are held during the year and these can be summarised as follows;

- Attendance of Management Team at all Management Committee Meetings unless otherwise agreed;
- Regular Management Team Meetings to be led by the Director (at least monthly) to co-ordinate strategic activity between departments;
- Monthly Departmental Staff Meetings to be led by Departmental Managers to plan departmental workloads and for feedback from Management Committee meetings;
- Monthly Team meetings (Customer Services) led by the departmental manager (or assistant) to discuss issues relevant to specific teams;
- Monthly Staff Meetings to be led by Director for discussion of issues common to all staff;
- Weekly meetings between Chairperson and Director to discuss key current issues and monthly Management Committee agenda/minutes.

#### **2.3 Circulation of Minutes and Information**

Staff have access to, or are specifically provided with copies of, various internal communications including the following;

- Relevant agendas and action points associated with the above meetings;
- Copies of minutes of the Management Committee unless these are of a reserved or strictly private and confidential nature;
- Information circulated by the Director to the Management Team unless identified for Management Team members only;

- Information relating to Staff Vacancies, General & Public Holidays, Health & Safety or Union information

#### 2.4 Staff Representative Forum

Annually the staff "elect" a "Staff representative Forum" comprising representatives of the various departments.

This Staff Representative Forum (SRF) is effectively the representative body by which staff can be formally consulted about issues both directly and indirectly affecting the Associations staff and through which staff may express opinion, ideas and suggestions to management.

#### 2.5 Team Building

In order to assist the integration of all staff an annual staff "away day" is held each year.

The Association also has at least one event annually where the Management Team and Committee can come together in an informal setting principally for the purposes of improving communication. Eg Christmas evening meal. Responsibility for arranging this will rest with the Director and Chairperson.

#### 2.6 Committee Communication

The key components of Committee communication are as follows:

- Regular attendance and participation at full Committee meetings and designated "Sub" Committee meetings;
- Attendance at the Annual Committee "Planning Day/Evening";
- Attendance at any Committee or Committee/Staff social events organised during the year;
- Attendance at the quarterly in house Committee training sessions.

### 3.0 **EXTERNAL COMMUNICATION**

The Association recognises that in order to inform and promote itself to its tenants, partners, potential partners and the wider community it has to communicate effectively on a number of fronts and in a variety of different ways.

The second part of this strategy is aimed at articulating the way in which the Association communicates and interacts with a wide range of external organisations and identifies the expected output or benefits to be gained from such communication.

#### 3.1 Communication with Tenants

The Association has developed a positive and inclusive tenant participation policy which outlines the way in which the Association communicates with its tenants. Central to the development of such a policy is the exchange of information and a variety of mechanisms are employed in relation to this. These include:

- Formal tenants group meetings
- Regular IRG / Forum Meetings
- Tenant Newsletters
- Annual Performance newsletter
- Adhoc Focus Groups
- Regular Tenant Surveys

- Tenants Handbook
- Annual Report
- Website
- Text Messaging
- Facebook
- Adhoc communication on specific proposals

The Association believes that regular and open communication with its tenants will assist the Association in the development of a more participative and inclusive organisation.

### 3.2 Local Authorities

In the provision of housing and associated services it is very important that the Association has an excellent working relationship with its key strategic partners. One of the Associations key partners is the local authority and in order to build and maintain a positive working relationship, effective communication is vital.

At officer level will include the following:

- Regular formal contact between various officers covering, housing management and other services;
- Adhoc monitoring meetings specifically relating to the Nomination Agreement and/or other allocation initiatives (such as Choice Based Lettings), Common Housing Register, Antisocial Behaviour Strategy, Homeless Strategy, Local Housing Strategy

### 3.3 Scottish Housing Regulator

The Association can communicate with the Scottish Housing Regulator in a variety of different ways but mainly this involves the submission of information including:

- Annual Financial Viability Assessment submission
- Annual Report on the Charter (ARC) submission
- Notifiable Events / Regulatory Communication

### 3.4 Lenders

The Association formally communicates with its lenders at regular intervals during the year and in addition to an annual business review meeting this principally involves the submission and discussion associated with the following information;

- Quarterly management Accounts
- Annual Accounts
- 30 year financial projections
- 5 year financial projections
- Stock Valuations

### 3.5 Networking with Other Associations

The Association recognises the importance of having regular contact with other housing associations. This will be achieved at least in part by the following:

Staff attending regular SFHA forum meetings - finance, housing management, and property maintenance.

Staff attending subject based SFHA annual conferences - finance, housing management and property maintenance.

Continuing to develop effective links with our Strath For partners - Forth and Rural Stirling both at officer and Committee level. This will include arranging joint Committee and staff training sessions where appropriate.

### 3.6 Public Relations /The Media

The Association will use the media to communicate to a wider local audience on matters of local interest. Opportunities for using local press or radio will include the following:

- New development proposals and completions
- Strategic plans eg rent Review and Maintenance Plans
- Annual Report
- AGM
- Committee Elections
- General "good news" stories

### 3.7 Local Exhibitions/Events

The Association will seek to communicate to a wider audience through participating in local events and by supporting local causes. These will include the following supporting local crime prevention, child abuse, safety in schools etc. campaigns.

### 3.8 Community Donations

The Association will sponsor a variety of worthwhile events where there is considered to be a benefit in terms of community involvement, youth education /development or internal team building. Details of the events etc assisted each year will be reported to Committee as part of the strategy monitoring process.

### 3.9 Customer Service / Corporate Image

Through training ensuring all front line staff and field work staff have excellent customer relation skills and by projecting a caring and listening corporate image to tenants, other service users, and other external contacts and organisations will assist the Association deliver an effective external communication strategy.

## 4.0 REVIEW

This strategy will be subject to annual evaluation and will be reviewed formally at least every 3 years.

George Tainsh  
Director

**9<sup>th</sup> April 2015**

### Policy Review Consultation Process

Reviewed by the HSEHR Committee on	16 <sup>th</sup> April 2015
Circulated to the Management Team on	17 <sup>th</sup> April 2015
<b>APPROVED BY THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE ON</b>	<b>30<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2015</b>
<b>Date of Next Review</b>	<b>April 2018</b>