



manningham
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Customer Panel

Terms of Reference

Last Reviewed: 2020

Next Review Date: 20.01.2026

Background

As a social housing provider, we have a duty to ensure that Manningham Housing Association (MHA) tenants and residents have a formal role in assessing and influencing the performance, service delivery, strategies, plans and behaviour of housing and related Services. The Regulator of Social Housing states that all social housing providers should ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in:

- The formulation of their landlords' housing-related policies and strategic priorities.
- The making of decisions about housing-related services is delivered, including the setting of service standards.
- The scrutiny of their landlords' performance and the making of recommendations to their landlord about how performance might be improved.
- Agreeing on local offers for service delivery. With this in mind, we have an active Tenants Panel and Online Tenants Panel, who are vital to the success of everything we do.

Purpose

A collaborative meeting for customers (tenants) to positively engage with Manningham Housing Association (MHA). The Panel acts as a consultative and scrutiny panel in MHA's day-to-day service operations.

Role and Responsibilities

The Customer Panel is a forum for finding out customers' views about Manningham Housing Association and the services that it offers. The panel exists to help assess KPIs, services and procedures to ensure that they are delivered to the highest customer satisfaction standards.

Roles of the Panel

Engagement-related:

- Promote involvement and engagement to the Association's customers and residents
- Drive the meeting agenda so that it is customer-focussed
- Represent views from the perspective of the wider customer and not the individual
- Help plan customer events including the Tenants Mela (s)
- Oversee the communication with customers including editorial involvement in the Feedback magazine
- Be the link with the Association's Board through the customer representative(s)
- Be the link to the Complaints Learning Forum
- Support MHA with setting up Tenants and Resident Associations

Service and procedure-related:

- Act as a consultative body for the development of new and existing policies and procedures
- Scrutinise MHA's services and help develop end-to-end reviews of procedures where required
- Review customer insight activities and performance reviews
- Identify areas for continuous improvement in the Association's service delivery
- Approve applications made for the Community Involvement Grant (CIG)
- Review performance against MHA's Customer Service Promise
- Review the effectiveness of each element of the menu of involvement.

Meetings

- The Panel will meet a minimum of four times a year, once a quarter either in person or using Microsoft Teams. This is to assist active tenants who may be unable to attend meetings in person
- An Chair will be in place to direct the meetings. There will also be an elected Deputy Chair to support the Chair role
- The meeting will be led by the Chair and administrative support will be provided by the MHA Administration Assistant. In their absence administration responsibilities will be carried out by another appropriate employee of MHA
- All members will receive papers **one week** in advance of the meeting to enable them to conduct the business of the Panel as appropriate
- Customer Panel Members will be expected to send apologies if they are unable to attend. Panel members are also asked to respond to meeting invitations and emails in a timely manner
- The meeting will be held at various locations to encourage more participation from tenants in Bradford and Keighley
- The Panel may from time to time be expected to reach decisions by consensus. If consensus is not achieved, members will be asked to vote on a decision by a show of hands

Membership

- The Manningham Residents' Panel is open to all Manningham Housing Association customers up to a maximum of twenty members
- Panel Members must not be subject to any anti-social behaviour order or investigation by either Housing Services, Civic Enforcement, the Police or any other enforcement agency
- Panel Members will need to agree to keep these terms of reference, MHA Code of Conduct, and have a commitment to undergo training and development as part of their role
- Panel Members will be asked to have their photo taken to promote the Customer Panel and MHA Services unless unable to due to exceptional circumstances
- Members of the panel must not disclose any confidential information outside of the Panel
- If a current Customer Panel member becomes in breach of their tenancy for any reason, they may be asked to step down from being a Customer Panel member. Members will be able to rejoin once any breaches are resolved
- All current members will have the right to appeal if they are asked to leave the Tenants Panel. This process will be overseen by the Head of Housing Services and, in his/her absence, by the Director of Operations at MHA
- MHA Officers who support the panel will, at times, seek to ensure the independence of the panel. Officers will ensure that any conflicts of interest are addressed, and members of the group may be asked not to vote if this is the case

Selection of the Chair

The Chair and the Deputy Chair will be nominated by the members of the Panel.

The Chair and Deputy must meet what is expected of an individual taking on the role of the Chair or Deputy Chair to deliver the objectives of the Panel.

Support

The Customer Panel will be facilitated by the MHA Administration Assistant or in their absence this will be carried out by another appropriate employee of MHA. The MHA Administration Assistant will help manage the administration of the meetings and the day-to-day running of the Panel.

Attendance

Members should make every effort to attend meetings and to send apologies in advance of the meeting to the Chair, MHA's Administration Assistant or MHA's Community Partnership and Engagement Officer if they are unable to attend.

Member Code of Conduct

Members at all times must:

- Be led by the Chair or Deputy Chair
- Be courteous to each other and support and assist other members and the Chair to achieve the best possible solutions
- Allow each other the opportunity to speak and comment
- Accept the purpose of the meeting is to benefit to customers generally and not specific individuals
- Recognise the rights of individual customers and the role of Manningham Housing Association's employees
- Follow the guidance of the Facilitator in the conduct of the meetings.

The Panel may treat deliberate or frequent breaches of the code as grounds for recommending removal from the Forum.

Personal Interest

Members of the Panel must not expect favourable treatment by officers nor shall they be treated any less favourably.

Accountability

The minutes of the Customer Panel meeting will be available to the MHA Board and in line with the new regulation, The Social Tenant Access to Information Requirements will be published from October 2026 on MHA website.

Training

Training may be required to help build the capacity and skills to support members of the Panel to achieve their objectives. Where possible, new members will be mentored by existing members. MHA will ensure there are mechanisms in place to ensure that good practice and learning arise from the work of the Panel.

Expenses and Payments

The Customer Panel members will not be paid but will be reimbursed for reasonable travel expenses. An expense form will be provided at each meeting.

Equality and Diversity

The Customer Panel members will work within MHA's values and assist in delivering MHA Equality and Diversity Strategy.

Data Protection and GDPR

MHA adopts an ethical approach of being transparent, open, and honest. We will at all times ensure that we carrying out all legal requirements in terms of data processing and use of data under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulations (UK GDPR) 2018. We will always treat the issue as not simply one of compliance but have a clear strategy for the use of tenant's personal data, how we process it, retain it and remove it effectively.

We envisage that there will be very limited data processing above using contact details to send information via postal mail and email to panel members and to analyse attendance at meetings. Panel members will be signed up to an online e-learning system and this will produce an analysis of which modules and training elements have been completed. We will seek consent from customer Panel members for the use of personal data where it goes beyond that described above.

Discrimination

Manningham Housing Association strives to ensure that there shall be no discrimination or unfair treatment on the grounds of gender, race, colour, ethnic or national origin, religion, sexual orientation, marital status, age, disability, social position, politics, trade union membership or social disadvantage. We aim to ensure that everybody is treated equally and has equal opportunity to receive the services we offer.

This stance is defined in our Equality, Diversity Policy and extends to cover all aspects of resident involvement including membership of and participation in the various MHA governance structures, panels, forums and committees.

Confidentiality

From time-to-time, Panel members will acquire and have access to confidential information and information that has not yet been made public. When Panel members are advised that information is confidential, it must not be disclosed to other people under any circumstances. By being a member of the Customer Panel you are in agreement that such information will not be disclosed and such information must not be used for personal gain.

If information is provided for any circumstances (meetings, extraordinary hearings, etc.), once the information is no longer required it must be disposed of (deleted for electronic documents, recycled/ thrown away if paper documents).

Other areas that the Panel must maintain confidentiality are:

- Members shall exercise discretion and care in performing their duties and responsibilities;
- Members shall abide by their commitment to confidentiality and comply with the Terms of Reference;
- Matters pertaining to individuals shall be treated as confidential;
- Members shall respect the confidentiality of customers and residents, the staff and the organisation, and are expected to maintain confidentiality at all times;
- Information about individual customers, staff, contractors and residents will not be discussed outside carrying out the role of a panel member.