GETTING TO KNOW YOU

RBH'S CUSTOMER INSIGHT STRATEGY (2017-2020)

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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1. Introduction

RBH serves a diverse customer base that includes tenants, leaseholders, residents, users of our social alarm and independent living services and members of the general public. What we do makes a difference in the communities we serve. Our customers are changing in terms of both their needs and aspirations and future customers are likely to differ again in terms of what they require and expect from RBH.

Getting to know our customers - WHO they are, HOW they interact with us, WHAT they do as customers of RBH and WHY they have chosen to, and continue to choose to, take services from RBH is essential to enable us to prepare for the changing and challenging environment we find ourselves in. Understanding current and future customers' needs, aspirations, expectations and opinions will ensure that we continue to provide the best possible services that offer value for money.

Customer Insight is more than just gathering data. It is about obtaining a 360 degree view of our customers and using that information to provide services which are tailored in such a way that they deliver a great customer experience for all customers.

This document sets out the steps to be taken to move RBH from being an organisation which is "data rich but insight poor" to one where our understanding of our customers is enhanced through every interaction with them and that knowledge is used to bring about continuous improvement.

TURNING DATA INTO ACTION

2. Customer Insight definition

Whilst there are numerous definitions of Customer Insight, the one below seems to succinctly capture what RBH considers the 2 key elements of Customer Insight to be – understanding and action.

"A non obvious **understanding** about your customers which, if **acted upon**, has the potential to change their behaviour for mutual benefit" (Paul Laughlin (Laughlin Consultancy) cited in the HQN publication "Customer Insight: getting value from the data you hold – it's too precious to waste" Oct 2015)

The diagram below shows how RBH believe that understanding is achieved through gaining a 360 degree view of the customer.

GETTING TO KNOW YOU.

HOW

Interaction Data

- Email Contact
- Calls to Contact Centre
- Face to face meetings
- Activity via web

WHO

Descriptive Data

- Attributes
- Characteristics
- Self-declared Info (Vulnerabilities)

360 degree view

WHY

Attitudinal Data

- Opinions
- Preferences
- Needs & desires

WHAT

Behavioural Data

- Repair requests
- Payment history
- Length of tenancy

(Adapted from an image used in an article by Prakesh Mohapatra "The Power of Customer Insight in the Era of Big Data", 2014.)

The 4 types of information shown in the diagram are those commonly quoted as being information that support the development of Customer Insight although, as in Housemark's publication "Tenant Insight. A toolkit for landlords" (2015), the HOW and the WHAT are sometimes combined into just one category of behavioural data.

The diagram below, taken from the Housemark publication cited above, sets out the steps involved in obtaining Customer Insight.

'Getting To Know You' – Customer Insight Strategy 2017 - 2020
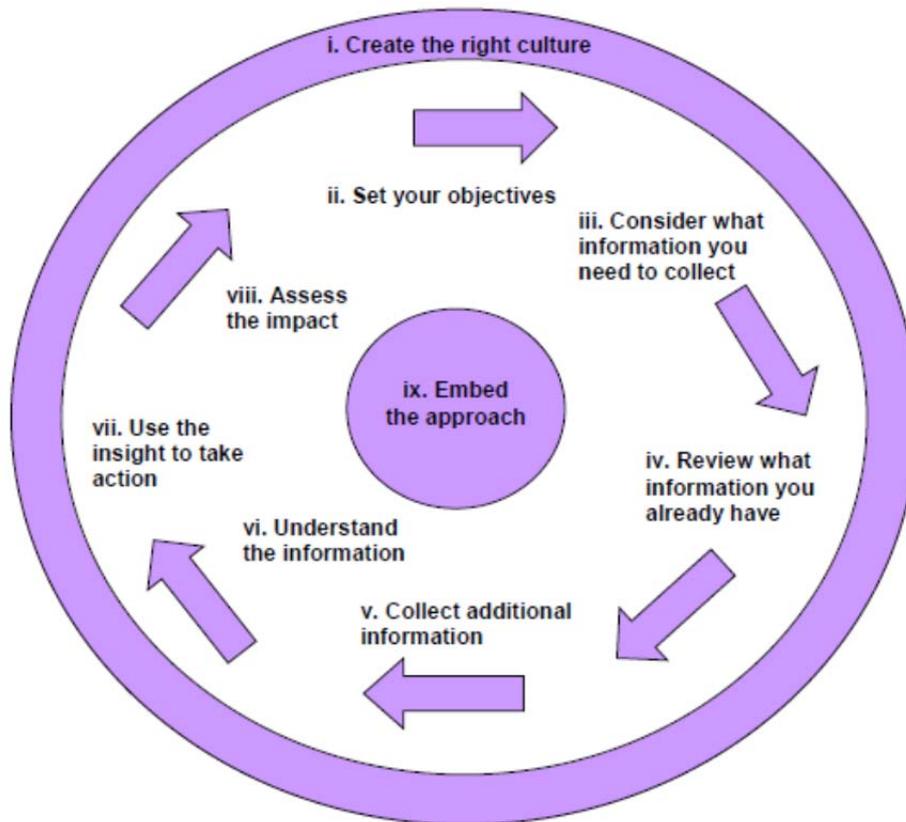
3. Context

Where we are now

RBH is aware from external research, and from feedback from organisations working with us, that like many other housing providers we are "data rich and insight poor". We have various methods of gaining an understanding of our customers, and some good examples of turning that understanding into action, but our approach to creating a single view of the customer and using that to inform and drive continuous improvement is unstructured and uncoordinated.

RBH captures lots of information about new tenants as part of the application and allocation processes. This includes diversity information (e.g. age, gender, disability) to ensure fair access to homes, household composition to assess property size required and income/employment status to assess affordability. Other information such as previous housing circumstances and reason for move are also captured through the COntinuous REcording (CORE) process where information is collected and used by central government for the strategic planning of social housing.

There are no processes in place though for backfilling missing information or for keeping information gathered up to date. Whilst it is accepted that some, such as date of birth and gender are unlikely to change, others such as household composition and

income/employment status will, particularly for our customer group. This means that when we come to try and use the information it is usually incomplete or inaccurate or both.

What we collect with regards to other customers e.g. leaseholders is less well defined and is often held on non core systems e.g. spreadsheets making using this information difficult, regardless of the quality.

As well as our main STAR customer satisfaction survey we have a number of ways in which customers can feedback to us about what they think of the services we provide including transactional/point of service surveys (e.g. after a repair has been completed) and our Customer Feedback process through which customers can raise complaints, compliments or comments. We also run bespoke consultations throughout the year, usually as part of developing or reviewing policies or strategies.

Our activity around customer feedback is uncoordinated with individual teams running their own programmes. It is questioned how robust some of the surveys are and whether we can be confident that any service improvements are being made in response to reliable data. There is inconsistency in our approach to learning from feedback, although some good examples of service improvements made in response to customer information/feedback exist: -

- **Repairs policy** – from customer feedback and Business Intelligence we recognised that our customers lead busy lives and that this was impacting on our ability to offer an efficient service through repair appointments not being kept. We have therefore moved away from setting priority timescales for completion of repairs to just having 2 types of repair – emergency and repair by appointment. This gives customers more control over when non emergency repairs are carried out with them able to arrange appointments when it is convenient for them rather than when we need the repair to be done to meet internal, arbitrary timescales. Customers from our Homes Panel Continuous Improvement Group (CIG) were involved in the development of this policy whilst all tenant members and employees were given the opportunity to participate in a workshop and/or survey about the proposed new policy.

- **Payment methods** – when we opened our customer facing office at St Alban's House in the summer of 2015 we knew early on, from feedback and from monitoring visits, that one of the things customers were expecting when they visited was a quick and easy way for them to make rent payments. As such, a kiosk was installed where customers can make payments without the need for employees to be involved in the transaction hence reducing waiting times at St Alban's and ensuring payments get onto the rent account as quickly as possible. We also actively use customer insight and profiling to determine which of our customers require more intensive intervention, e.g. those customers transitioning to Universal Credit or subject to the Benefit Cap.

It is recognised in our Corporate Strategy "Our Mutual Future" that RBH needs a stronger focus on customer and business intelligence and projects are underway to purchase and implement 2 business systems – Business Intelligence and Customer Relationship Management – which in relation to Customer Insight will be the tools for developing our understanding of the WHAT and the HOW. Business Intelligence is also the tool that will be used to bring all the information we gain about our customers together and to turn the information into insight.

As separate projects are already established for both of these they are considered out of scope for this strategy (see below) although strong links will need to be made between these pieces of work if a full 360 degree view of the customer is to be achieved.

Where we <u>need</u> to be

Customer Insight is a key strategic asset without which RBH will find it difficult to navigate the changing external landscape and to continue to serve the needs of the people of the borough. We want to be an organisation which is insight rich and where action is taken in response to knowledge gained which improves the customer experience.

In the last 5 years, it has become even more important for housing providers to get to know their customers in order to respond effectively to the challenges of welfare reform and other new developments such as voluntary Pay to Stay and the extension of the Right to Buy. New areas of work such as financial inclusion and fuel poverty all rely on having insight – finding out which customers are affected by benefit changes, who needs what kind of help, where the highest priorities are and what services and forms of service delivery are most likely to be effective.

More tenants now have to pay part of their rent from their own income and these tenants rightly expect to see value for money and are likely to become more demanding as customers. These customers compare RBH not with other housing providers but with other service providers e.g. utilities, banks, supermarkets. They expect and demand the same level of customer service and experience. As such, RBH needs to learn from customer focused companies in all sectors about how to glean information from customers every time they interact with them and then how to use this information for service improvement and the development of new products and services.

Changes in funding arrangements and other opportunities offered by, for example, the devolution of health and social care in Greater Manchester are resulting in RBH looking at developing new products, for example home ownership products such as Shared Ownership or Rent to Buy. RBH needs to gain insight into different customer groups to ensure that any ventures into these new areas of business are well thought out and ultimately successful.

As other sectors have already realised, huge efficiencies can be achieved by establishing an efficient digital platform. RBH, however, works with some of the most digitally

excluded people in society (we know from our most recent STAR survey (2015) that c40% of current customers do not have access to the internet) and hence needs to balance the desire to deliver services more efficiently against ensuring access for all. Key to doing this will be understanding our customers' ability and desire to interact with us online and building a channel shift programme that reflects this.

4. Scope

The scope of the Customer Insight Strategy was agreed at the Representative Body meeting in March '16 as being: -

- **Customer profiling (WHO)** – how we will understand who our individual customers are (demographics – e.g. age profile, vulnerabilities, language needs etc)
- **Customer feedback (WHY)**– how we will understand what customers think of the services we provide (through complaints, compliments, comments, STAR survey, transactional surveys and bespoke consultations/customer involvement activity)
- **Customer Insight tools e.g. customer segmentation** – how we will understand the different segments within our customer base, their behaviours, needs and aspirations (e.g. do younger people require a different type of service compared to older people?)
- **Customer Insight (TURNING DATA INTO ACTION)** – how we will use the understanding gained to tailor existing services, develop new and bring about service improvements which enhance the customer experience.

The following areas were identified as being out of scope: -

- Our new Customer Relationship Management and Business Intelligence systems **(HOW/WHAT)** – see above
- Regulatory customer involvement (i.e. the work of the Continuous Improvement Groups). The current terms of reference for these groups makes it clear that they are not consultative groups so whilst inevitably customers on these groups will use them as opportunities to air their views on the services provided by RBH this is not their primary purpose and hence they are considered out of scope within this strategy.

5. How this strategy has been developed

This strategy has been developed through: -

- Considering best practice from other housing providers
- Training/workshop sessions with The Leadership Factor around understanding the WHY – attitudinal data (Sept '15, Nov '15)
- Scoping session with Customer Panel Jan '16 and follow up session to address concerns regarding Data Protection Aug '16

- Session with Services for All Group Aug '16 to challenge Equalities Impact Assessment
- Sign off of scope by the Representative Body March '16 and establishment of the Representative Body Task and Finish Group to assist with the development of the strategy
- 3 meetings of the Task and Finish Group focusing on the WHO and the WHY and looking at ways to ensure 'buy in' from customers and employees by addressing concerns around Data Protection
- Development and agreement of actions to deliver and embed the strategy with various employee teams/working groups including Welfare Reform People Group Customers Management Team, Communities Management Team
- Presentation of a draft strategy to RBH Board Aug '16 for recommendation for approval to Representative Body
- Presentation of the final strategy to Representative Body for approval Jan '17

6. The Aim of this strategy and the 6 Steps to be taken to achieve it

The overarching aim of the Customer Insight Strategy is

To develop a deep knowledge and understanding of our customers which will allow us to review and improve existing, and develop new, products and services which meet the needs and aspirations of current and future customers.

The following are specific areas of work where Customer Insight is needed: –

- Predicting and managing the impact of benefit changes and other government initiatives e.g. roll out of Universal Credit, voluntary Pay to Stay and the extension of the Right to Buy
- Predicting which of our customers may place more demand on our services and planning interventions which will help sustain such tenancies where possible or bring them to a controlled end
- Implementing the new approach to Our Place. Identifying high and low demand neighbourhoods and tailoring our service offer accordingly.
- Customer Access and Channel Shift (i.e. the movement of services online)
- Customer communications planning
- Strategic planning e.g. for the ageing population, young people locked out of the housing market
- Development of new products and services e.g. Shared Ownership, health and social care related services, expansion of RBH Response (social alarms service)
- Ensuring fair access as part of our commitment to Equality and Diversity including the identification of groups in our communities who we are not currently serving but who could offer new markets for our services

- Understanding more about specific health issues which are prevalent in the Borough and in particular in our neighbourhoods in order to plan support and interventions more effectively.

It is envisaged that this list will change over the lifetime of this strategy but this gives a starting point on which to focus actions.

To achieve these goals 6 **sequential** steps have been identified which map broadly to the steps shown in the Housemark diagram above: -

1. **CULTURE** - Communicate the strategy to ensure customer and employee buy-in and to alleviate concerns regarding Data Protection
2. **INFORMATION** – Identify the data we want to hold on our customers, ensure information is accurate and complete and consider how we hold it so that it is accessible to all who need it
3. **UNDERSTANDING** - Use information gathered to understand the individuals and groups within our customer base and ensure fair access to services
4. **ACTION (TACTICAL)** - Embed Customer Insight in organisational improvement (Corporate Strategy, strategy and policy development, performance management, Value for Money)
5. **ACTION (STRATEGIC)** - Develop customer insight tools such as customer segmentation to enable strategic decisions to be made about existing products and services and the development of new products
6. **IMPACT** - Provide more feedback to customers regarding how Customer Insight is being used and is making a difference

The first 2 steps are about developing an understanding of our customers and are a **prerequisite** to the next 4 steps which are about taking action based on that knowledge and understanding and bringing about the mutual benefit highlighted in our definition of customer insight.

7. Principles

The Representative Body Task and Finish Group involved in the development of this strategy agreed the following principles which underpin the work which will be done to enable us to achieve our aim. These principles link to our values: -

RESPONSIBILITY
  Make use of the information we already hold about customers first
  'If you ask for it, use it'
  Ensure everyone is aware of their responsibilities under Data Protection (i.e. only ask
  for relevant information and be clear about the purposes for which will be held)
EQUITY
  Ensure that insight gained is used to ensure fair access to services, homes and
  information for all

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DEMOCRACY
  Ask for information, views and opinions but avoid duplication. 'Ask for it once'
OPEN AND HONEST/CARING
  Give feedback about how information gathered and insight gained is being used
CHAMPIONING/PIONEERING
  Work with partners (e.g. through the GM Connect initiative) to limit what we need to ask customers about and look for new and innovative ways to gather the information needed in a cost effective and non intrusive manner

8. Equality & Diversity

Our Equality and Diversity policy states that

"We will work towards eliminating discrimination and promoting equality of opportunity. Our aim is that all members, tenants, employees, Representative Body members, Board members and partners are valued and respected and their differences valued"

In order to achieve this we need to understand what the differences, and similarities, are between our customers and to use this knowledge then to tailor services to the differing needs identified. This is where Customer Insight comes in.

An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) will be completed to sit alongside this strategy to ensure that, particularly in the process of collecting information about our customers, no one is disadvantaged and all represented groups are given equal opportunity to respond to surveys and other exercises undertaken to understand customers' demographics, views and opinions. This EIA will be challenged by our Services for All Continuous Improvement Group in Aug '16 to ensure customer input into this element of the development of the strategy.

9. Monitoring and Review

Monitoring arrangements are to be agreed with Representative Body when the strategy goes to them for final approval in Jan '17. It is proposed that an annual review takes place as with the Older Persons Strategy.

All RBH strategies, policies and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis in order to ensure that they are 'fit for purpose' and comply with all relevant legislation and statutory regulations.

This policy, including any other related policies and procedures will be reviewed annually in order to ensure its continued appropriateness and formally reviewed and submitted to the appropriate 'approving body' at least every three years.

10. Thematic Links with other SPSS Documents

- Equality and Diversity Policy/Strategy (In development)
- Customer Experience Strategy (To be developed)
- IT/Digital Strategy
- Communications & Marketing Strategy
- Customer Feedback Policy
- Data Protection & Information Security Policy
- Engagement Strategy

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11. Action Plan

N.B. where not already identified, named leads will be determined at the first meeting of the Project Team

Ref No.	Action	Outcome	Responsible Lead	Deadline
CULTURE				
1	Identify Project Sponsor Establish Project Team.	Action plan is progressed Project Team members act as Customer Insight Champions within their teams ensuring 'buy in' to the strategy from employees	Gina Tomlinson (Business Intelligence)	First meeting Jan/Feb '17
2	Develop and deliver a Communications Plan. In the first instance prepare articles for In The Know, Membership Matters and Core Brief post approval	Customers and employees are clear about why we ask for information, how it is stored and used ensuring 'buy in' to the strategy 'Buy in' is demonstrated through: -	Project Team	As soon as possible following final agreement by RB in Jan '17
3	Review privacy statement on the website **(Task & Finish Group 24.05.16)**	Increase in the % of customers for whom we hold diversity information Current – 65.6% (Housemark median 15/16 – 81.1%)	Risk and Compliance (To be reviewed and developed with Task and Finish Group)	Mar '17
4	Develop privacy statement to go on all surveys/requests for customer information **(Task & Finish Group 24.05.16)**	Increase in response rate for paper,email,text surveys/Decrease in phone surveys refused Current performance (service areas identified as Priorities for		
5	Review message on application form/HomeChoice website about how information will be stored and			

#	Action	Measure	Responsibility	Date
	used **(Task & Finish Group 24.05.16)**	Improvement by STAR) –		
6	Review mandatory training for all employees regarding handling personal data	• Repairs – baseline to be established • Planned works - baseline to be established • Empty homes - baseline to be established	Risk and Compliance /L&D	Mar '17
	INFORMATION			
7	Complete audit of existing customer data particularly 9 diversity strands and vulnerabilities information	RBH understands WHO our customers are	Glynis Hanson (BI)	Mar '17 (part of E&D self assessment)
8	Agree 'Golden Data' to be gathered from all customers **(Task & Finish Group 25.04.16)**	Increase in the % of customers for whom we hold diversity information Current – 65.6% (Housemark median 15/16 – 81.1%)	Project Team/CRM Project Team	Mar '17
9	Produce options appraisal of the different methods available for collecting and maintaining 'Golden Data' including annual customer census. **(Task & Finish Group 25.04.16)**	Increase in the % of customers for whom we hold 'Golden Data' Baseline and target to be established	Project Team/CRM Project Team	Mar '17
10	Implement method of collecting and maintaining 'Golden Data'	RBH understands WHY customers use our services and what they think of them	Envisaged to involve a number of teams	ASAP once option agreed
11	Commence backfilling of missing data	Increase in the % of customers who are satisfied with opportunities to participate in management and decision making Current – 81.9% (no benchmark/target)	Envisaged to involve a number of teams	Targeted programme Apr '17 to Sept '17
12	Review the methods used to conduct transactional surveys for the service areas identified through the STAR survey as Priorities for Improvement (repairs, planned maintenance,		Gina Tomlinson (BI) to produce paper for Heads of Service to consider	New surveys to commence April '17

	empty homes) **(Task & Finish Group 24.05.16)**			
13	Introduce centralised survey programme for other consultation exercises. Review how CRM or TP Tracker could be used to facilitate this.		BI/Membership/ Customer Involvement	Commence April '17
14	Conduct STAR every 2 years to act as satisfaction tracker		Glynis Hanson (BI)	Oct/Nov '17
15	Widen STAR to include customer groups other than tenants (e.g. leaseholders, shared owners)		Glynis Hanson (BI)	Oct/Nov '17
16	Develop processes to ensure that vulnerabilities information is kept up to date and used to tailor services to individual needs		Glynis Hanson (BI)	Sept '17
UNDERSTANDING				
17	Develop profiles of 'typical' RBH customers initially based on employee knowledge then refine through data gathered and use these 'customer personas' to ensure that the needs of all customers are considered when, for example, reviewing policies	RBH understands WHO our customers are and uses this information to tailor services to different customer groups RBH uses knowledge of our customers to ensure fair access for all	Gina Tomlinson (BI)/Alison Rigby (CE)	Initial draft Sept '17 (once backfilling of information completed)
18	As part of the review of the Equality and Diversity policy, establish key performance indictors and monitoring	Increase in performance on Customer Effort Score Current – 66% of those who had contacted RBH in the last 12 months scored ease of contact 7-10 (no benchmark/target)	Gina Tomlinson (BI)	Mar '17 (E&D Strategy to Board)
19	Complete annual self assessment in relation to Equality and Diversity and report to Board		Gina Tomlinson (BI)	May '17 (and annually thereafter)

20	Ensure that RBH's Customer Access and Channel Shift work is informed by what we know about our customers and how they are able to/want to interact and communicate with us		Alison Rigby (CE)	Ongoing
ACTION				
21	Work with an external company to identify tools and techniques which enable data (including customer data) to be used for organisational improvement.	RBH uses knowledge of our customers to improve services Increase in RBH's Customer Satisfaction Index Score	Gina Tomlinson (BI)	Sept '17
22	Implement and embed approach to organisational improvement	Current 79.7 Target 82.2 (this was the 'realistic' target suggested by The Leadership Factor)	Gina Tomlinson (BI)	2018/19
23	Embed customer journey mapping in LEAN reviews to ensure that customer views are taken into account when reshaping services		Dena Coleman (Transformation)	2017/18
24	Use customer feedback to inform customer service training about employee behaviours which our customers value and which increase customer satisfaction **(Task and Finish Group 24.05.16)**		L&D	Ongoing
25	Review commercial geodemographic products on the market e.g. ACORN, MOSAIC and consider how they could be used by RBH. If appropriate, draft business case for purchasing and seek funding in 2018/19 budget.	Decrease in customer turnover Current – 12.9% (Housemark median 15/16 – 8.51%) Increase in customer retention/customers remaining as tenants for more than 12 mths	Gina Tomlinson (BI)	Sept '17 (purchase in 2018/19 if budget approved)
26	Review bespoke segmentations		Gina Tomlinson	Sept '17

	developed by other housing providers (e.g. Riverside's TIM model). If appropriate, draft business case and seek funding in 2018/19 budget	Current – 16.5% (no benchmark/target)	(BI)	(develop in 2018/19 if budget approved)
**IMPACT**
27	Establish a regular 'Customer Insight Into Action' slot in In The Know, Membership Matters and Core Brief to communicate to customers and employees how we're using Customer Insight for service improvement and development	Increase in the % of customers who feel that their views are taken into account in decision making Current – 72.0% (Housemark median 15/16 – 71.9%)	Communications	As soon as possible following final agreement by RB in Jan '17
28	Produce an annual report linked to the annual VFM self assessment which looks at how customer insight has been used to inform service improvement and development		Glynis Hanson (BI)	May '17 (and annually thereafter)