

Communications Strategy

2022-2025



The PCH story

Plymouth Community Homes (PCH) has a great story to tell – we provide quality social and affordable homes for rent and sale for people with housing needs in Plymouth and the surrounding areas.

Our Strategic Business Plan, which sets out our main aims as an organisation, is built around our PCH House which includes our vision:

‘We improve lives by providing affordable homes, great services and supporting communities’.

An incredibly important part of achieving our vision is to make sure we have ways to share

and receive information with our residents and other customers, staff, Board, stakeholders and the general public.

This Communications Strategy aims to ensure we have different ways to share business critical and operational information with our audiences, as well as providing the means for them to share their views and requests with us because communicating works both ways.

Well timed, clear and tailored communications contribute to the delivery of all areas of our Business Plan and our success as an organisation.



What are we trying to do?

We know PCH is all about people, so it's incredibly important for us to ensure we connect with different groups of people whose lives we affect in ways to suit them.

Our Communications Strategy links with all other strategies across the organisation, led primarily by the Strategic Business Plan, and closely connects with Our People and Digital and IT Strategies to encourage a positive culture of committed and motivated staff, as well as digitally enabled staff and residents.

All our communications should help to create the kind of reputation and culture we want to achieve because every contact builds up a picture of PCH as a landlord, employer, developer, partner and business.

The themes below sum up the aims of our communications work, which will contribute to the delivery of all PCH work.



Communication aims

PCH communications will:

- **Celebrate success and tackle stigma** – We will share how we are achieving our vision so we build a culture and reputation of ambition and excellence. We will tackle the stigma of social housing by sharing our brilliant residents' stories, as well as demonstrating the need for and value of social housing in bringing people together to create great places to live.
- **Tell the PCH story** – We will ensure our social mission is heard by showing people how we live our values: care, respect, listen and do the right thing.
- **Keep people informed** – We will tailor how we communicate and our content will be important to our audiences so we comply with regulations and people understand what we are doing, how it affects them and how to contact us. We will also share when things don't go as planned.
- **Encourage engagement** – We will promote opportunities for our residents, staff and stakeholders to share their views and influence how we work.
- **Support growth** – We will increase local, regional and national brand awareness to encourage potential business opportunities and partnerships, and attract the best talent.
- **Prevent avoidable contact** – We will provide online information and tools to enable those who can self-serve to do so, freeing up staff time for those who need it most.
- **Champion our digital by design/access by choice ambition** – We will expand our digital offer to encourage a shift towards digital contact for those willing and able.
- **Make the most of our data** – We will use the information provided by our customers when they communicate with us to understand them better so that we can improve and proactively provide what we know our customers want.



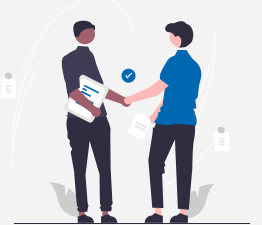
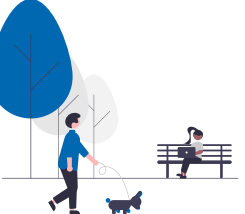

Communication principles

PCH communications will:

- Be driven by customer needs, the Strategic Business Plan and the brand
- Be purposeful – what we want people to understand, feel or do
- Be relevant and tailored to suit the target audience
- Be ethical, respectful and inclusive, in-keeping with our values
- Be as accessible as possible to meet our audiences' needs
- Be honest and straight-forward
- Be personable and in Plain English
- Be branded and look professional
- Be responsive and timely
- Be innovative and engaging

Who we need to communicate with

To communicate effectively it's incredibly important to understand who we are communicating with. At PCH we have many audiences but these can be broken down simply into the following:

				
Customers	People working for/with us	Stakeholders	General public	Media
Social rent tenants	Employees	Regulators	Plymouth	Local
Affordable rent tenants	Board	Investors/lenders	Surrounding areas	Regional
Garage/parking space tenants	Contractors/subs	Plymouth City Council	National	National
Commercial tenants	Suppliers	Other councils in surrounding areas	Prospective employees	Sector
Sheltered housing tenants	Partners	Partners	Prospective residents	
Shared owners		City influencers Networks	Prospective buyers	
Home buyers			Board members	
Leaseholders/freeholders				

Ways we communicate

We will continue to evolve the ways we communicate to ensure we reach our target audiences. Below is a summary of the different ways PCH aims to reach the people we are trying to share and receive information with and from:



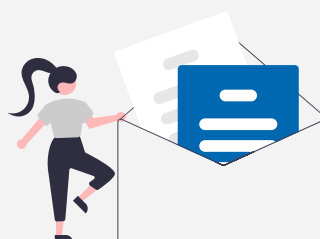
Digital

- PCH website
- MyPCH portal
- E-bulletins (direct email)
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Linked In
- You Tube
- Texts
- Videos
- Animations
- On-line surveys
- Webchat
- Hotjar web feedback
- Jannet (staff intranet)



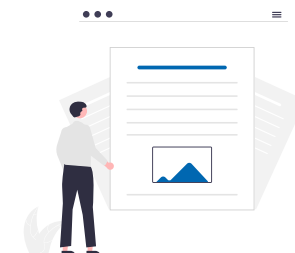
Face to face

- Meetings
- Board and Committees
- Home visits
- Community groups
- Resident meetings
- Walkabouts
- Committees
- Scrutiny
- Events



Print/post

- In Touch magazine
- My Home magazine
- North Prospect newsletter
- Mount Wise Towers newsletter
- Annual rent/service charge letters
- Ad-hoc letters
- Posters/flyers
- Resident handbooks
- Surveys
- Estate signs
- Notice boards
- Building branding
- Uniforms
- Vehicle graphics



Non-owned channels

- Public relations
- Media management
- Networks
- Paid advertising

Deliverables

To be able to achieve our aims, we need to take action. The list of deliverables below outline the things we need to do over the next four years to be able to successfully achieve our aims.

Celebrate success and tackle stigma

All strategic plan aims **Year 1**
 Develop a suite of brand images and hashtags to use as consistent ‘labels’ that draw a clear line back to the Business Plan.

Listen and respond to residents, staff and partners **Year 1 - Annually by September AGM**
 Continue to deliver an annual report for residents using the latest innovative tools to gain maximum reach

Listen and respond to residents, staff and partners **Year 2**
 Improve how we publish our performance data to engage with those interested in line with the Housing White Paper and Regulator for Social Housing

Listen and respond to residents, staff and partners **Year 1 onwards**
 Continue to publish news stories to external audiences via our website, social media channels, e-news and the media to achieve local, national and sector coverage. Minimum of an average of one story per week published on our website and socials. Achieving a minimum of 2 national/sector stories per year

Expand outside of Plymouth

Be an employer and housing provider of choice



Tell the PCH story

All strategic plan aims **Year 1**
Develop a suite of values-based hashtags to consistently brand our communications and draw a clear link to our values

Be an employer and housing provider of choice **Year 1 onwards**
Seek and share human interest stories that speak to our social purpose and publish them via our communications channels. Minimum of 4 feature stories published in In Touch annually

Provide a healthy financial and social return for investment **Annually by September AGM**
Create and publish our annual ESG report and consider how comms can be more environmentally friendly

Keep people informed

Keep residents safe and warm **Year 1 / 2**
Publish building safety information relating to requirements in the Housing White Paper

Deliver top quality housing services **Year 2**
Develop customer communication segments to enable better tailoring of topics

Listen and respond to residents, staff and partners **Year 2**
Develop distinct email distribution lists based on defined customer communication segments

Listen and respond to residents, staff and partners **Year 1**
Develop In Touch extra e-newsletter to be sent monthly and distributed to MyPCH and subscriber distribution lists

Keep residents safe and warm **Year 1 onwards**
Maintain business continuity and crisis communications plan. Reviewed and updated annually



Encourage involvement

**Listen and respond to residents,
staff and partners**

Year 1 onwards, ongoing

Promote opportunities for resident involvement and consultation

**Listen and respond to residents,
staff and partners**

Year 1 onwards, from May 2022 and ongoing

Contribute to and be involved in the delivery of actions as a result of the resident engagement review

**Be an employer and housing
provider of choice**

Year 1 onwards, ongoing

Support the recruitment of Board and Committee members, and involved groups

Support growth

Grow our business

Year 3

Develop a 'partners and stakeholders' dedicated e-news for direct communication with interested parties

Grow our business

Year 1 onwards

Continue to promote PCH development sites and opportunities for Shared Ownership and open market

Grow our business

Year 2 onwards

Complete a brand review to ensure traction with new and potential new audiences

Prevent avoidable contact

Listen and respond to residents, staff and partners **Year 1**
Review website content to include more webforms to encourage digital transactions

Listen and respond to residents, staff and partners **Year 1 onwards**
Expand our catalogue of ‘how to’ videos and animations to encourage self-service where practical

Listen and respond to residents, staff and partners **Year 1 onwards to Year 3**
Develop animations for our key documents including our tenancy agreement and other leaflets to provide an alternative way of explaining our policies and important information

Provide a healthy financial and social return for investment **Year 2**
Establish a working group to explore what transactions and processes could be delivered via digital means

Provide a healthy financial and social return for investment **Year 3**
Develop our webchat function to consider the use of bots through scripts and webforms

Digital by design/access by choice

Provide a healthy financial and social return for investment **Year 1**
Create a MyPCH portal roadmap to prioritise expansion of functions offered online

Provide a healthy financial and social return for investment **Year 1 / 2**
Explore developing leaseholder MyPCH account options as part of the roadmap exercise – with associated costs and timescales

Listen and respond to residents, staff and partners

Provide a healthy financial and social return for investment **Year 2**
Explore MyPCH app development within roadmap to establish a cost benefit analysis

Listen and respond to residents, staff and partners

Provide a healthy financial and social return for investment **Year 1 onwards**
Increase use of the MyPCH portal through targeted campaigns, how to guides and digital inclusion initiatives

Make the most of our customer data

Provide a healthy financial and social return for investment

Year 1 onwards

Continue to develop improved reporting to track the use of our digital channels and present the information to the Customer Focus Committee

Provide a healthy financial and social return for investment

Year 3

Explore new web technology and CRM options which enable better capture and analysing of customer information

Listen and respond to residents, staff and partners

Listen and respond to residents, staff and partners

Year 2

Explore more targeted use of 'Jannet' staff platform through uploading of staff information

How we will keep track

- Annual report to the Executive Management Team and PCH Board – updating progress against deliverables
- Quarterly reports to Customer Focus Committee – updating on specific topics of interest, projects and monitoring against targets, digital dashboard
- STAR survey results
- Benchmarking data
- Staff survey quarterly results
- Scrutiny





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