



Communications Strategy 2025-2028

1. Executive Summary

This document outlines the Communications Strategy for the West of Scotland Housing Association Group (WSHA) for 2025-2028. The overall aim of WSHA is to deliver a comprehensive and effective communications strategy that builds relationships with stakeholders including tenants and customers, staff and Board/Sub-Committee Members and external stakeholders. We also want to raise our profile and protect our reputation by promoting the impact our services have on tenants, customers and the wider community.

The strategy outlines the following key communication aims:

- Deliver effective and meaningful internal communications to ensure all staff feel valued, fully informed and listened to so that they are empowered to shape strategic plans and service delivery.
- Ensure tenants and customers are kept fully informed via timely, meaningful and engaging communications so they are informed about services and outcomes.
- Raise the profile and protect the reputation of WSHA among key stakeholders.

The strategy also provides an overview of planned communication activity for 2025/2026.

In addition to this overall group Communications Strategy, we have Communication Plans in place for our subsidiaries Willowacre Trust and Westscot Living.

2. Introduction

All WSHA's activity is underpinned by our mission: putting customers at the heart of service delivery. This ethos is the basis for the vision, values, culture and strategic aims of WSHA (outlined below).

Our Vision:

We go further to provide housing you call home

Our Mission:

Our mission is to provide affordable and sustainable housing and services to enhance lives and empower communities in the west of Scotland. We will do this through engaging with our customers and partners, ensuring that every voice is heard and valued.

Our Strategic Aims:

Our strategic aims are to:

- Deliver outstanding service to all our customers
- Maintain and improve our homes and communities and develop new homes to meet local needs
- Be the best we can be for our customers, staff and volunteers
- Work with others to improve tenant's lives and deliver sustainable communities
- Be well managed and financially strong
- Drive sustainability across our organisation by reducing carbon emissions and waste

Our Values

- **Respect**
- **Integrity**
- **Inclusive**
- **Support Improvement**

Our Culture

Our culture will always have a strong customer focus and we continually strive to embed this throughout the organisation. We will also promote a culture where staff members, senior management and members of our Board are encouraged to carry out their roles in line with our values.

We want to embed a culture of all staff proactively shaping service delivery to meet the diverse needs of our customers and ensure access to our services and information is accessible for all.

Corporate Business Plan

Our Corporate Business Plan outlines the overall strategy of WSHA and our key business objectives for the year ahead. Effective communication underpins each element of achieving our Corporate Business Plan and it is therefore essential that a comprehensive and effective strategy is created and delivered that will help to achieve the business objectives of WSHA.

We have ensured that this strategy meets the relevant Governance and Financial standards set out by the Scottish Housing Regulator. The strategy outlines a number of ways we take account of the needs and priorities of our tenants, customers and stakeholders when delivering communications.

3. Stakeholders

WSHA has a wide variety of key stakeholders including:

- Existing tenants and customers
- Potential applicants and customers (including Westscot Living)
- Staff, Board and Sub-Committee members
- Local Authorities
- Project and service funders (including Willowacre Trust)
- Lenders
- Prospective employees
- Regulators
- Housing sector including other RSLs
- Elected Members
- Partner agencies
- Press

This strategy divides our stakeholders into four categories:

1. Internal (staff and Board)
2. Tenants and other customers
3. Wider externals e.g. SHR, funders.

4. Strategic Approach

COMMITMENT TO EQUALITY & DIVERSITY

We are committed to ensuring the information we share internally and externally is fully accessible and meets the communications needs and preferences of our customers. During 2025, we will implement actions to improve the accessibility of the information we provide and improve our data on equalities to inform this process e.g. providing information in an accessible format for those customers with visual or hearing impairments.

We will also begin to embed a culture of celebrating diversity by sharing relevant content to highlight national and international campaigns such as International Women's Day and LGBT history month. Consideration will be given to the content we communicate to ensure it is meaningful and adds value.

INTERNAL CUSTOMERS

Background

WSHA has around 115 staff, including those employed by Willowacre Trust. We have a clear and comprehensive five-year Corporate Business Plan which outlines our strategic aims and objectives for the next 5 years. This plan was shaped in consultation with staff and it includes the strategic aim:

- **Be the best we can be for our customers, staff and volunteers**

This is supported by the People Culture Strategy which aims to give an overarching framework that supports WSHA to be an excellent employer and create a positive staff culture.

Effective internal communication is key in encouraging a positive culture where staff feel informed, valued and are proud to be ambassadors of WSHA.

Staff Feedback

Staff feedback has been used to shape the strategic aim of internal communications and the related actions for the year ahead. The Staff Engagement Surveys in for the past 2 years include the following results:

Statement	2023	2024	Variance
I would recommend WSHA as a place to work	77.27%	83.50%	+ 6%
I am proud to work at WSHA	74.24%	80%	+ 6%
Corporate communications - frequent enough	93.94%	95.30%	+ 1%
Corporate communications - detailed enough	93.61%	95.30%	+ 2%

Good understanding of how the organisation is making progress	83.33%	87.10%	+ 4%
Staff feel listened to	55%	55%	0
There is effective communication through regular team meetings	84.55%	85.90%	+1

Aim: Deliver effective and meaningful internal communications to ensure all staff feel valued, fully informed and listened to so that they are empowered to shape strategic plans and service delivery.

In September 2023, we established a Staff Consultation Group which includes representatives from all teams. This group was established following feedback from staff in respect of the “Staff Feel Listened To” question on the Staff Engagement Survey. The Group has significantly improved how we engage, consult and communicate with staff teams.

Staff, Board and sub-committee members are the greatest ambassadors of WSHA therefore it is essential they have a positive view of WSHA and have the skills and confidence to promote it. Staff, Board and sub-committee members will receive regular communications that contain internal news, examples of how their work makes a difference and give them the opportunity to share content for news stories. They should also feel confident in sharing information that will inform content for promotional purposes.

We will achieve this by:

- Making use of latest technology to improve internal communication e.g. Microsoft Teams.
- Encourage wider staff participation in the Staff Consultation Group through regular Hub updates and team meeting discussions
- Utilising the Intranet to share information and good news stories, encourage more team based news and information
- Review and update team sections on the Hub – put in place a process to ensure regular updates
- Work with managers to ensure consistency of messaging with teams
- Re-establishing the staff champions group that will represent their team/department and gather content for WSHA to use as content for online and offline communications.
Providing structured advice and support to help staff communicate key messages and promote the impact of their services.
- Nurturing meaningful relationships with staff to ensure the PR & Communications Officer has an excellent understanding of the work of WSHA, any issues and upcoming news content.
- Ensuring all information is accessible for all staff and internal customers.

All internal communications will reflect the following key messages:

- You share our vision and values and will be supported to deliver them in your working practice.
- Your views are encouraged and valued, and they are used to create a workplace where you feel happy and motivated.
- You are fully informed about all aspects of WSHA so you can help us achieve our strategic objectives whilst putting customers at heart of service delivery.

TENANTS AND OTHER CUSTOMERS

Background

WSHA has around 4,400 homes in 66 separate locations which can make communication challenging due to the fragmented nature of the communities. We recognise that we need to continue to have strong connections with our customers and our communities which is partly achieved by adapting communication to suit the differing needs of customers and the wider community.

Tenant Feedback

We seek tenant feedback on our communication via annual customer satisfaction surveys. The below result from 2024 reflects an upwards trend since our last survey and shows that tenants are very satisfied with communication.

How good or poor do you feel WSHA are at keeping you informed about their services and decisions?	97%
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In the 2024 Customer Satisfaction Survey, we asked tenants about what their preferred communication method was:

- Westworld – 66%
- Text Message – 25.2%
- Letter – 21.8%
- Email – 17.6%
- Website – 8.7%
- Social Media – 5.4%
- Customer App – 4.0%
- Telephone – 0.7%

Aim: Ensure tenants and customers are kept fully informed via accessible, meaningful and engaging communications so they feel informed about services and outcomes.

We want all of our tenants and customers to be proud of being part of WSHA and act as ambassadors for WSHA. All communications with tenants and customers across all platforms must reflect WSHA's vision and values. This year we have developed Customer Profiles to target our communications and communication methods to specific audiences and groups of tenants. It is recognised that they will read our

communications and become more engaged if the communication is being sent in their preferred format and also if it is about a topic that interests them.

In 2024/25, one of our Key Business Objectives was to “Review our Customer Communication in respect of WSHA services”. A lot of progress has been made in respect of this over the past year but it will be a continuous improvement area for us as we develop our digital offer and to make further usage of our Customer Profiling as detailed above. A number of actions detailed below in this strategy will also contribute to continuous improvement in respect of our services.

It is essential that we build a positive relationship with tenants and customers via meaningful and regular communication. WSHA continuously strives to seek ways to improve communications and uses feedback to help shape communication activity.

We will achieve this by:

- Ensuring all communications are easy to understand and accessible for all and adhere to the Equalities Act
- Implementation of “Westy” Chat bot to enhance navigation of our website
- Undertake an exercise to collect communication preference data from our customers to assist us to deliver communication in the right way
- Improve our website to improve navigation and to be more customer facing
- Creating content that reflects the diversity of our customers and their experiences in our homes and communities.
- Ensuring the views of tenants and customers shape communications content and method of delivery at all times. This includes the use of TAG to give their views and using existing customer satisfaction and complaints information.
- Continuing to increase the use of digital channels to communicate e.g. Customer App, text message, email and social media.
- Review and improve how we communicate to tenants where English is not their first language
- Use our customer profile information to send targeted communication
- Thinking innovatively about communication methods to ensure that as many tenants as possible are reached whilst ensuring value for money.
- Maintaining the content on our website to reflect sector best practice and guidance i.e. Scottish Federation of Housing ‘Open all Hours’.
- Continue with our use of social media engagement particularly with tenants by posting regular and interesting content.
- Providing opportunities for tenants and owners to share their content.
- Develop an Annual Communications Planner for Tenant and Customer Communications

WIDER EXTERNAL

As detailed in Section 3, we have a number of external stakeholders and it is important that we communicate effectively with these stakeholders.

Aim: Enhance and protect the reputation of WSHA among key stakeholders.

WSHA is proud to provide houses you can call home and to make a difference to individuals and communities. To enhance and protect this reputation it is essential to proactively promote the work of WSHA and effectively manage any potentially damaging situations.

Building meaningful relationships with key stakeholders is also important so WSHA can capitalise on any opportunities to be involved in new projects or funding streams that would help achieve our key business priorities.

We will achieve this by:

- maintaining a register of all relevant stakeholder groups with our lead officer/s identified and ensuring its' importance is communicated at the induction(s) of new leadership team members.
- Increase our communication to elected members through annual e-newsletters and invitations to local community events
- As part of annual review process ask Directors/Managers to identify key external stakeholders they are engaging with and reflect on their successes.
- Proactively seeking content to be used in news releases for sector and national/local media.
- Issuing a 6 monthly e-news bulletin to external stakeholders.
- Continuing to utilise our online channels e.g. Facebook, LinkedIn to engage and share content with external audience.
- Working with the Development Team and partners to promote new homes to prospective tenants and other external stakeholders e.g. Local authorities
- Ensuring all communications reinforce the vision and values of WSHA.
- Seeking beneficial opportunities for WSHA to be represented externally such as sector forums or Government groups and ensuring those that attend are confident in their ambassadorial role.
- Ensuring all staff are aware of the procedures for press enquiries.
- Increase content on Linked In to optimise use of this platform

4, Subsidiaries

WSHA currently has 2 subsidiary companies:

- Willowacre Trust
- Westscot Living

Each subsidiary has their own Communications Plan which can be found at Appendices 2 and 3 of this strategy.

5. Monitoring and Reporting

The PR & Communications Officer will lead on the implementation of this strategy. Progress will be monitored by the Director of Corporate Services with a progress report provided to the Board on an annual basis.

To achieve successful implementation of the Communications Strategy, it is essential that the Leadership Team play a key role in delivering effective internal communication.. Members of the Leadership Team should identify communication structures within their team to cascade information internally and promote a culture of effective communication with all stakeholders.

The Corporate Services team will provide support to the Leadership Team in relation to the communication of key messages and organisational communication.

It is recognised that for internal communication aims to be achieved, all staff are accountable for ensuring they are proactive in keeping updated with key organisational information and that they play an active role in any consultations.

Measuring Impact

The key performance indicators for the Communications Strategy are linked to the aims:

Aim	Key Performance Indicator	Target (2025/26	Measurement source
Deliver effective and meaningful internal communications to ensure all staff feel valued, fully informed and listened to so that they are empowered to shape strategic plans and service delivery.	Intranet Usage	90% of staff login on a daily basis.	Intranet analytics
	Staff Survey Results	+5-10% increase on previous year results	Staff Engagement Survey
Ensure tenants and customers are kept fully informed via	Tenant satisfaction with keeping informed	Maintain 97%	Annual Satisfaction survey

Aim	Key Performance Indicator	Target (2025/26)	Measurement source
timely, meaningful and engaging communications so they are informed about services and motivated to engage	<p>Satisfaction with Westworld</p> <p>Implement a reporting system to monitor uptake of services/ Consultations etc</p>	<p>+ 5%</p> <p>Baseline to be established 2024/25</p>	<p>Annual satisfaction survey</p> <p>Open rate/ clickthrough analytics on e-news/Westworld</p> <p>Create new recording system</p>
Enhance and protect the reputation of WSHA among key stakeholders.	<p>E-news readership</p> <p>Engagement rates across external stakeholder focussed social media, i.e LinkedIn</p>	<p>35% per campaign</p> <p>35% increase in LinkedIn Followers</p>	E-news analytics

If you require any more information regarding this strategy please contact Christine Irvine, PR & Comms Officer, 0141 550 5630 or christine.irvine@westscot.co.uk

Planned Annual Communication Activity – 2025/26

Over the next year, we have the following communication activity planned that will contribute to the identified aims:

Tactic	Aim	Stakeholder(s)	Deadline	Responsible
Maintain annual Health & Safety content calendar to highlight key information to tenants.	Ensure tenants and customers are kept fully informed via timely, meaningful and engaging communications	Tenants and customers	Apr '25	Jennifer Cairns/ Christine Irvine/ Scott Cunnigham/ Stephen Murphy
Develop customer 'personas' and associated communication plans to more effectively target our communications and engage tenants in a way that puts them at the heart of our service delivery	Ensure tenants and customers are kept fully informed via timely, meaningful and engaging communications	Tenants and customers Potential tenants, Internal, WSHA subsidiaries	Apr '25	Jennifer Cairns / Christine Irvine
Develop series of recruitment videos highlighting different job roles within the organisation, to highlight the variety of jobs available in housing and promote housing and specifically working within WSHA as a career	Enhance and protect the reputation of WSHA among key stakeholders.	Internal, Wider Externals, WSHA subsidiaries	ongoing	Christine Irvine/ HR

Review Media Enquiries and Crisis Media procedures	Enhance and protect the reputation of WSHA among key stakeholders.	Tenants and customers, Potential tenants, Internal, WSHA subsidiaries	Feb '25	Jennifer Cairns / Christine Irvine/ CEO and CMT
Undertake work to improve accessibility of website information	Ensure tenants and customers are kept fully informed via timely, meaningful and engaging communications	Tenants and customers Potential tenants, Staff, WSHA subsidiaries	Ongoing	Christine Irvine
Manage the production of Scottish Social Housing Charter Report video and associated PDF report	Ensure tenants and customers are kept fully informed via timely, meaningful and engaging communications	Tenants and customers, Potential tenants, Internal	Aug '25	Jennifer Cairns/ Christine Irvine
Re-establish the staff champions group that will represent their team/department and gather content for WSHA online and offline comms. Develop processes for gathering content from staff champions.	Deliver effective and meaningful internal communications to ensure all staff feel valued Ensure tenants and customers are kept fully informed via timely, meaningful and engaging communications	Tenants and customers, internals, WSHA subsidiaries	Feb '25	Christine Irvine

<p>Revise annual Communications Plan for Development and Projects Dept, particularly around Sustainable building practices, Net Zero and energy efficiency work</p>	<p>Enhance and protect the reputation of WSHA among key stakeholders.</p>	<p>Tenants, Potential tenants, wider external</p>	<p>Apr '25</p>	<p>Christine Irvine/ Development team</p>
<p>Develop Westscot Living brand strategy and associated communications plan</p>	<p>Enhance and protect the reputation of WSHA among key stakeholders.</p> <p>Raise awareness of our MMR homes to lead to a successful implementation of lettings plan.</p>	<p>Tenants, Potential tenants, Staff, wider external, WSHA subsidiaries</p>	<p>Apr '25</p>	<p>Jennifer Cairns / Christine Irvine/</p>
<p>Revise annual Communications Plan for Willowacre Trust</p>	<p>Enhance and protect the reputation of WSHA among key stakeholders.</p> <p>Promote the impact and work of the Willowacre Trust</p>	<p>Tenants and customers, Potential tenants, Internal, wider external, WSHA subsidiaries</p>	<p>Apr '25</p>	<p>Jennifer Cairns / Christine Irvine/ Linda Allan</p>

Trial new distribution format for Westworld (6 monthly printed editions + monthly newsletters) and monitor engagement	<p>Ensure tenants and customers are kept fully informed via timely, meaningful and engaging communications</p> <p>Promote the impact and work of the Willowacre Trust</p>	Tenants and customers, WSHA subsidiaries	Ongoing	Christine Irvine
Develop plan for celebrating WSHA's 60th anniversary	<p>Enhance and protect the reputation of WSHA among key stakeholders.</p>	Tenants and customers Potential tenants, wider external, internals, WSHA subsidiaries	Feb '25	Jennifer Cairns/ Christine Irvine/ CEO and CMT
Develop public engagement strategy to amplify WSHA's voice (and the voice of our tenants) in matters of the housing emergency and homelessness crisis	<p>Enhance and protect the reputation of WSHA among key stakeholders.</p> <p>Raise awareness of our MMR homes to lead to a successful implementation of lettings plan.</p>	Tenants and customers Potential tenants, wider external	Apr '25	Jennifer Cairns / Christine Irvine/ CEO AND CMT
Continue to develop the role of the Staff Consultation group and encourage further staff engagement with the group	<p>Deliver effective and meaningful internal communications to ensure all staff feel valued</p>	Internal, WSHA subsidiaries	Ongoing	Jennifer Cairns / Christine Irvine

