

Terms of Reference

Service Improvement Group (SIG)

1 Purpose

The Service Improvement Group (SIG) has been established to provide oversight and evaluation by customers of the services provided by whg. The group works collaboratively with whg colleagues to ensure services are delivered effectively, efficiently, and in line with the Regulator of Social Housing's standards.

2 Aims and Objectives

- To work with whg to review and improve services on behalf of whg customers
- To ensure that services are delivered to the highest possible standard, with customer voice at the heart.
- Monitor the performance of whg against agreed targets, standards, and benchmarks.
- Provide evidence-based recommendations for service improvements, policy changes, or other actions that could enhance service delivery and customer satisfaction.
- Help ensure that whg is held accountable to its customers, ensuring transparency and responsiveness in its operations.

3 Membership

- The SIG will consist of a maximum of 15 members, with a balance of skills and experiences.

3.1 Diversity and Inclusion

- The SIG will promote diversity and inclusion, ensuring that a wide range of voices are heard and respected, and that the group reflects the diverse backgrounds and experiences of whg customers.

3.2 Eligibility

- Members must be current whg tenants, leaseholders, or shared owners of a whg home.
- Must be over the age of 18.
- Must not have any recent tenancy agreement breaches (e.g., no significant rent arrears or anti-social behaviour).
- Must commit to attending regular meetings and participating in training sessions.
- Should have the ability to contribute effectively (basic communication and group work skills).

3.3 Selection and membership

- We will actively encourage applications from under-represented groups to ensure diverse membership, with new appointments being sought annually, with an option to be members for a period of up to three years.
- There should be a gap of 12 months between completion of a three-year term and any further re-appointment to the SIG.

- Membership of the SIG does not contribute to any future tenure as a Board or Committee member as part of the formal governance structure at whg.

4 Meetings

4.1 Frequency

- The SIG will meet quarterly, or more frequently if required, with meetings lasting approximately two hours.
- Meetings will be called and arranged by the Customer Engagement and Inclusion Manager.

4.2 Quorum

- A minimum of seven members and the Customer Engagement and Inclusion Manager (or an approved deputy), must be present for the meeting to be quorate.

4.3 Agenda and Minutes

- Meetings will be facilitated by the Customer Engagement and Inclusion Manager (or approved deputy). The purpose of meetings will be to discuss possible areas for a review based on data and evidence, and for reviewing Action Plans previously agreed.
- The agenda will be prepared in collaboration with group members and circulated at least seven days in advance, along with the information packs for review. Minutes will be noted by a whg colleague and shared with the group following the meetings.

5 Board and Customer Services Oversight Committee

- On an annual basis the SIG members will be invited to attend a joint session to review progress of the SIG Workplan, it is not compulsory for members to attend. Other attendees include whg Board and Committee members, and Group Executive members.

6 Workshop and Wider Participation

- When a review is deemed necessary, a workshop approach will be taken, inviting the wider customer base to participate. SIG will be invited to attend to support, but it is not compulsory for members to attend. The recommendations from customers during these workshops will be discussed with the relevant service manager at the time. Agreed recommendations will form action plans for that service area.

7 Action Plan Monitoring

- SIG will monitor the implementation of agreed action plans each quarter, to ensure whg adheres to their commitments.

8 Confidentiality and Data Protection

- All members must maintain strict confidentiality, ensuring that any information shared or discussed during all SIG activity must not be shared outside of the group and must only be used for its intended purpose.

9 Support and Resources

- The Customer Voice Team will support the group, assisting with co-ordination, administration, and reporting.

- SIG will have access to specialised scrutiny training via TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service) and other online resources, such as 'Alison' an online learning platform, to help develop the skills necessary for the role. Members will also be encouraged to attend relevant events and conferences to further enhance their understanding and effectiveness in the role. These role specific opportunities will be funded by whg and should be discussed with the Customer Engagement and Inclusion Manager prior to any booking.

10 Annual Review

- To ensure SIG is working effectively, each year the group will be asked to carry out a simple self-assessment of its own effectiveness. This will link into the annual appointment process and ensure that the right mix of skills, experience and knowledge is available in the group.
- Performance, contribution and attendance will also be assessed and appointments will be confirmed by the Customer Engagement and Inclusion Manager and the Head of Inclusion and Organisational Culture.

11 Expenses and Reimbursement

Attending meetings and other events may involve associated travel costs, so whg offers the following:

11.1 Public Transport

- whg will either provide a day ticket for the bus or train, or reimburse you based on your receipt and the completion of a claim form. If you have access to a free bus pass, it is expected that you use this. Taxis will only be provided in occasional circumstances.

11.2 Mileage and Parking

- Where customers choose to use their own transport to attend SIG activity, whg will reimburse mileage and parking costs on completion of a claim form. This does not extend to covering any costs associated with parking or traffic fines. Customers should check with their insurance company whether their cover is appropriate for use of vehicles for this activity.

11.3 Caring responsibilities

- There are some instances whereby whg will consider covering the costs of caring responsibilities to support a customer in engaging with SIG activity. Such requests are to be made directly to the Customer Engagement and Inclusion Manager prior to attending any SIG activity.

11.4 Reimbursement Process

- Members are to complete a reimbursement form (provided by Customer Voice Team) and including any applicable receipts, within two weeks of the meeting/activity.
- Payments will be processed via a bank transfer, a minimum of seven days after submission. For this to be completed, whg requires proof of correct bank details. Customers will therefore be asked to provide a photo of their bank card or the top of their bank statement showing the account number and sort code for payment to be transferred to.

12 Appreciation

- SIG is a voluntary role however whg appreciates the time and effort customers put into these roles. A thank you token will be provided annually in recognition of the hard work and effort.

13 Code of Conduct

- Members are expected to adhere to a code of conduct that promotes respect, inclusivity, and constructive dialogue. Any breach of the code of conduct will be investigated by the Customer Engagement and Inclusion Manager as per the SIG Disputes and Grievance process.

14 Review of Terms of Reference

- These Terms of Reference will be reviewed annually by SIG to ensure they remain fit for purpose and will be agreed with the Customer Service Oversight Committee.