



**Minutes of Customer Committee Meeting held on Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> July 2025  
via Microsoft Teams**

<b>MEMBERS:</b>	Charlotte Haines (Chair) Ahmed Abdulmalek (AA) Cynthia (Bethel) Alloyda (CA) John Beattie (JBe) Jack Buckley (JBu) Keri Muldoon (KM) Marta Diaz (MD) Rashidah Owoseni (RO)
<b>OFFICERS:</b>	Sue Sutton, Executive Director of Customer and Landlord Services (EDCLS) Lorraine Giddings, Customer Service and Engagement Manager (CSEM) Christiana O'Brien, Customer Engagement Manager (CEM) Edward Sidley, Performance and Business Intelligence Manager (PBIM) Jamie Cockerham, Governance & Policy Officer (GPO), Minutes
<b>ATTENDEES:</b>	Martin Warhurst (MW) Fraser Campbell, CX- Feedback (FC)
<b>APOLOGIES:</b>	Gareth Evans (GE)
The meeting commenced at 18:04.	
<b>ITEM</b>	
<b>1.</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence and Declarations of Interest</b>
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.  Apologies were received from GE.  There were no declarations of interest.
<b>2.</b>	<b>Minutes of the Customer Committee Meetings held on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025</b>
	<b>The Committee approved the minutes from the last meeting held on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2025.</b>
<b>3.</b>	<b>Matters Arising and Action Tracker</b>
	The EDCLS noted that, due to low availability, the planned June Strategy Day had been cancelled. She noted that some materials due to be discussed on the day, including the updated Corporate Plan, had been circulated to members and welcomed any queries around these to be sent to her.  <b>The Committee noted the changes to the Action Tracker.</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>Chair's Update</b>
	The Chair provided members with the following updates:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Board Strategy Day took place on Friday 6 June. The day focused on mitigations and recovery planning, a merger statement as required by financial regulations, and an in-depth discussion and feedback session on the new Corporate Plan. Comments on accessible language and reflecting the diversity of the Salix customer base in photos have been taken on board and included in the updated version of the document, which has now been approved by the Board.</li> <li>• A number of updates to note were provided by the CEO at the Board meeting on Tuesday 24 June. The outcome of the Government Spending Review was noted, including investment in the Affordable Homes programme, a consultation on rent convergence and improved access to building safety funding for housing providers.</li> <li>• Further updates were provided in relation to GMCA plans for local councillor representation on Boards to be reintroduced, progress in relation to the consultation on the Cambridge Strategic Regeneration Framework, ongoing Executive recruitment and meetings by the CEO and EDCLS with residents of Newbank to resolve objections to the installation of the new sprinkler system.</li> <li>• The Chair noted that, at the June Board meeting, she had raised the necessity for the Customer Committee Chair role to be occupied by a Salix customer to be specified within the Governance Framework. Other updates at the meeting related to risk management, the actions of Audit &amp; Risk Committee, operational performance, management accounts and health and safety.</li> <li>• Following the interview panels on 19 and 20 June, three new members have been appointed to the Customer Committee, with a focus on enhancing the skills within the Committee and ability to represent the customer base. It is intended for the new members to attend their first meeting in September. The Chair noted that all applicants had been strong and thanked the CSEM and JBu for their support in convening the interview panel.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Committee noted the Chair's update.</b></p>
<b>5.</b>	<b>Scrutiny Action Tracker</b>
	<p>The CEM noted the following updates in relation to the Scrutiny Action Tracker:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salix's recently appointed People Services Talent Manager has provided an update to the CEM in relation to the exploration of formal qualifications and further professional development for colleagues. He noted that business-wide repositioning is taking place in relation to 1-1 meetings between colleagues and managers, so as to focus on ensuring regular conversations and support are being provided to identify and facilitate training opportunities. This focus is being looked at broadly, across all colleagues and teams.</li> <li>• The scrutiny piece in relation to customer communications on planned investment is ongoing. This has been informed by learning points following the Newbank sprinkler installation project and will be an opportunity to highlight and implement improvements in Salix's communication with customers on works that affect them. The recommendations from this work will be reported to the Committee in September.</li> <li>• In relation to recent recruitment to the Committee, it was noted that unsuccessful applicants had been engaged with to recommend their involvement with Salix's scrutiny pool. A number of candidates have expressed an interest in this.</li> </ul>

	<p>The following was noted during discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KM questioned whether colleagues are currently asked about their interest in training opportunities during their 1-1 meetings with line managers. In response, the CEM commented that this is included in the current 1-1 form and best practice is for training to be discussed on a regular basis. Salix's current focus is to ensure that these 1-1 conversations are being held regularly and consistently across all teams. The EDCLS further noted that requests for study or training are regularly received from colleagues, and that they are already supported in identifying these opportunities.</li> <li>• The Chair expressed support for engagement with unsuccessful Committee candidates to be involved in the scrutiny pool and other customer engagement opportunities. She noted that all candidates were strong and could add value to our customer engagement.</li> <li>• The EDCLS noted that she would be attending Newbank, along with the CEO and representatives from the local Fire Service, to discuss objections to the sprinkler installation with customers and highlight the importance of fire safety measures. KM expressed support for this type of communication with customers and queried whether this type of face-to-face meeting around fire safety would be implemented across Salix's blocks. The EDCLS noted that the meeting was for Newbank residents only to discuss their specific concerns, but that further engagement with the Fire Service would be done on an ongoing basis as and when it is required.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Committee noted the updates to the Scrutiny Action Tracker.</b></p>
<b>6.</b>	<b>Customer Committee Governance Overview</b>
	<p>The EDCLS provided members with an overview of the Committee's governance arrangements. She highlighted the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some policies relevant to Committee members have been reviewed and updated recently, including the Whistleblowing Policy and Board Member Grievance, Dispute, Complaint and Disciplinary Policy. These will be shared with members, and a Teatime Committee session could be held to discuss these in further detail if required.</li> <li>• Members were reminded of several key documents outlining expectations of members as representatives of Salix, including Member Service Agreements, the NHF rules, and the NHF Code of Conduct.</li> <li>• Members were reminded of Salix's core values and their associated competencies: Successful (informed and collaborative), Inclusive (advocate and respectful) and Trustworthy (accountable and integrity). It was noted that colleagues are nominated for Living Our Values awards quarterly, often based on feedback directly from customers. It was further noted that the EDBSI will attend the September meeting of the Committee to provide an update on Salix's key activities in relation to inclusion.</li> <li>• In particular, members were reminded of their responsibilities to be considerate of their conduct during meetings but also of their wider role as ambassadors for Salix, such as when talking to neighbours or through their use of social media. The EDCLS noted the process that would be followed in case of a breach of Salix's</li> </ul>

	<p>policies and procedures, including the investigation process and the potential consequences of a breach.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Members can contact the EDCLS, CSEM or Governance Team at any time if they have any queries regarding specific documents and policies, or broader questions around Salix's governance arrangements.</li> </ul> <p>The following was noted during discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Chair agreed with the importance of regularly reminding members of the requirements around professionalism, behaviour and considerations of representing Salix and our values in the local community.</li> <li>The EDCLS highlighted the importance of being aware of other people's views. The Chair supported this and commented that social media posts in particular can have different reactions or cause offence differently based on an individuals' views or beliefs. It was noted that members should continue to be conscious of this as they can be perceived as speaking on behalf of the organisation.</li> <li>The Chair noted that key governance documents and relevant Salix policies can be found in the One Advanced resources area by members.</li> </ul> <p><b>The Committee noted the Governance Update.</b></p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Update Policies and Procedures to be shared with members via the One Advanced resources area.</b></li> </ul>
7.	<p><b>Customer Insight Framework</b></p>
	<p><i>The PBIM joined the meeting at 18:44.</i></p> <p>The PBIM provided members with a summary of Salix Homes' Customer Insight Framework. He highlighted the following key points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The collection of customer insight data is crucial in allowing Salix to make better decisions, by understanding what our customers want and why they want it. The Social Housing Act 2023 and subsequent Consumer Standards set out clear expectations for landlords to better understand their tenants through the collection of relevant data.</li> <li>Recent examples of the successful usage of customer insight data include Mastercard pivoting their marketing and bonus schemes towards activities and events by identifying increased spend amongst their customers on these things, and Greggs using analysis of spending habits through their app to inform their scheduling and rotas for staff. The PBIM noted that these principles of understanding customers are equally applicable in the housing sector.</li> <li>Salix has conducted an extensive 'Getting To Know You' project to improve our customer data, using a mix of door-knocking, phone calls, letters and surveys of our customers.</li> <li>We are now entering the business-as-usual phase of ensuring that data continues to be collected and used effectively to support all service areas. The implementation of a Customer Insight Framework will be key in pulling together the work done so far to enhance Salix's data-driven decision making.</li> <li>Members are invited to make suggestions to support the development of the Framework.</li> </ul>

The following was noted during discussions:

- KM queried whether Getting To Know Your surveys will continue to be provided to new tenants, and whether it could be simplified to improve accessibility and relevance to individuals. The PBIM commented that surveys will continue to be used, with a number of actions being taken to simplify the process. These include sending information directly via text to customers, aligning the survey with other ongoing face-to-face interactions such as stock condition surveys and tenancy audits and investigating the use of tablets to allow operatives to collect data during visits to customers' homes.
- KM further queried if any specific gaps in Salix's data collection had been identified and how this could be addressed. In response, the PBIM noted that, while there is some variation in response rates between areas or blocks, this is not significant or cause for concern at this stage. He noted that the current focus is on collecting data on a risk basis, for instance by targeting high-rise blocks with fire safety concerns first, but that the collection has a wide focus across all Salix properties.
- KM questioned whether physical suggestion boxes are still used by Salix in our buildings. The EDCLS confirmed that some had been removed or replaced by metal boxes in some buildings as a recommended fire safety measure. JBe noted that there is a suggestion box in his building.
- MD questioned whether customers could be contacted to seek their availability for in-person meetings when conducting surveys, as this would support customers who may not be available at regular times. The PBIM noted this suggestion and commented that Salix does try to identify convenient times for customers, such as by including data collection surveys within works that are already planned to take place.
- AA expressed interest in how Salix can identify broader trends or gaps in our data around age, ethnicity or gender categories, particularly as it pertains to non-engagement with Salix or falling into arrears. The PBIM noted this suggestion and commented that it will be important to identify these trends in our data going forwards to be able to address these gaps.
- RO noted that Salix uses standard questioning during contact with customers to support data collection around issues such as damp and mould, and queried what insight has been gained from this so far. The EDCLS noted that Assets & Sustainability Committee receives regular updates on damp and mould, and that an example of this could be shared with members to exemplify how data is being used by the organisation.
- The PBIM noted further examples of how data is already being used across the business, including analysis of trends in complaints received and the use of data to support reporting around Tenant Satisfaction Measures.
- AA made suggestions to enable the further interrogation of data by colleagues. These included; detailing the data sets used to identify where data may be skewed by increased reporting around certain categories, the break-down of broad groups into smaller categories (e.g. noting the different cultural context of Black-Caribbean and Black-African), and noting the substance sitting behind data such as in relation to complaints. He noted that colleagues should be reminded of the ways in which data can be skewed, for example if multiple people from a household report on an issue they may have different levels of information around Salix's responsibilities and any actions already taken.
- KM highlighted the importance of sharing data through CRM to ensure that all colleagues are aware. The PBIM noted that self-service reports are being made available to colleagues through Power BI so that they can use and learn from data on a daily basis.
- The PBIM noted that the Framework would include the objectives and scope of

	<p>data collection, the insight and analysis gained from it, an action plan for implementation and an outline of performance monitoring. He welcomed feedback from members at any point to identify any additional information for inclusion and noted that the development of the Framework would continue to be reported on to members.</p> <p><b>The Committee noted the update on the Customer Insight Framework.</b></p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>EDCLS to share an example Damp and Mould Report from the Assets &amp; Sustainability Committee with members.</b></li> </ul>
<b>8.</b>	<b>Customer Voice &amp; Online Engagement Tool</b>
	<p><i>FC joined the meeting at 19:31</i></p> <p><i>CA and the PBIM left the meeting at 19:30</i></p> <p>The CSEM and CEM provided an overview of Customer Voice and proposals regarding a new Online Engagement Tool. The following key points were highlighted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community Connectors have previously been used by Salix as a means to work closely with our customers on key issues. However, engagement with this project has waned over time, with Housing Managers reporting a lack of clarity on the aims and objectives and having noted that, anecdotally, some customers had used this as a forum for complaints rather than for constructive criticism. It has also been noted that engagement with in-person customer-facing activities has reduced more broadly since the COVID-19 pandemic.</li> <li>• To address this, and improve on our current customer engagement, it is proposed that Salix invests in an online engagement tool, to be able to communicate with customers with a more direct and targeted approach. This intention is aligned with many of Salix's peers across the wider housing sector.</li> <li>• A number of online engagement tools are available. Salix has determined that Engagement+, created by CX-Feedback, is currently the leading option amongst the housing sector. Implementation of this tool would allow Salix to run service-specific consultations, contact customers around events within their specific geographic areas and enable colleagues to tailor customer communications in more targeted ways overall.</li> </ul> <p>FC provided a demonstration to members of CX-Feedback's Engagement+ Module. In particular, he demonstrated the user dashboard displaying customer data trends, the ability to communicate with customers based on specific categories (e.g. age group, street, postcode, membership of groups) and the ability to push messaging based on specific requirements (e.g. targeting communications on damp and mould to customers in properties with an increased risk level).</p> <p>The following was noted during discussions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• KM and JBe raised queries in relation to digital exclusion and how this could impact customers who struggle with online engagement. FC noted that the Engagement+ system does not require user login or MFA to support ease-of-use, and that customer engagement levels range from around 70-90% based on their current clients. JBe suggested that, if Salix were to implement an online engagement tool, customers could be supported through schemes that allow for the distribution of re-conditioned smartphones but noted that this would incur costs for the organisation.</li> </ul>

- KM highlighted that some customers may be overwhelmed if communications from Salix increase as a result of the online tool. The CEM noted that she had previously raised this point and received assurance that the system would allow Salix to track how often customers are being engaged with and reduce this as required. The EDCLS noted that this would also be a continuation of our current approach to communication with our customers, for instance by continuing to contact customers in the methods that suit them.
- KM raised a query around the costs to Salix of implementing an online engagement tool. FC noted that texts issued through the tool would cost 4.5p, with no costs for emails. The CEM noted that colleagues would be able to track the costs of the communications they issued via the online tool, and that this could represent a saving in comparison to printed materials.
- JBe questioned whether customers would trust the tool, particularly in the context of increased awareness of phishing scams. FC noted that Salix would be supported in the initial stages to communicate with all customers and confirm then legitimacy of the online tool and set expectations for customers to be contacted in this way in future.
- The Chair raised a query on the safety of customer data within the online tool, and whether this would be shared with other social landlords who also use the tool, for example in benchmarking. In response, FC confirmed that data sharing agreements are already in place between CX-Feedback and Salix and that Salix would have complete control over the customer data within the system, based on legal requirements and for the avoidance of reputational damage to the host organisation.
- AA questioned whether the tool could be integrated with CRM to ensure consistency across customer information is maintained and that manual updating of both systems is not required. FC commented that the tool does enable integration with CRM, and that data would refresh overnight on a daily basis to ensure consistency across both systems. AA queried whether customer communication preferences would also be fed back to CRM automatically from the online tool. FC commented that Engagement+ would generate a report and notification directly to a Salix colleague or team if a customer updates their communication preferences. He noted that this could be automated but is complex and would likely form part of Stage 2 of the roll-out of the system.
- AA further queried whether customers are able to instigate contact with Salix through the online engagement tool. FC confirmed that communication is only one-way unless Salix specifies otherwise, such as when publishing a survey for customers to complete. The CSEM noted that customers would continue to contact Salix via the current routes, rather than through the online engagement tool.
- AA questioned whether translation services are available through the Engagement+ tool. FC confirmed that there is a translation option for customers to use, and that this can be tailored by Salix to include the languages most-often required by our customer base.

The Chair thanked FC for attending the meeting and demonstrating the Engagement+ tool for members.

*FC left the meeting at 20:15.*

In summary, the CSEM confirmed that the intention is for the implementation of an online engagement tool to consolidate and simplify Salix's current customer engagement approach. She noted that the presentation and a series of feedback questions would be shared with members, to provide the opportunity for further comments to be made prior to

	<p>the purchasing or implementation of any potential online engagement tool.</p> <p><b>The Committee noted the Customer Voice and Online Engagement Tool presentation.</b></p> <p><b>Actions:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>CSEM to share the presentation and feedback questions with members.</b></li> </ul>
<b>9.</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>
	Members agreed that the September meeting of the Committee should take place in-person at Diamond House.
	<b>Date of Next Meeting</b>
	Tuesday 2 <sup>nd</sup> September (Diamond House)
<p>The meeting closed at 20:24</p>	