



www.rykneldhomes.org.uk

Communications Strategy 2022-24



Rykneld 
HOMES
at the heart of communities

Introduction

Strong and effective communication with our customers and partners has always been a key priority for Rykneld Homes.

We are proud of our work to provide high quality services for thousands of people in our district - whether they are tenants or part of the wider community in North East Derbyshire.

This Strategy sets out how we will communicate our story and ensure the customer voice continues to be heard in the development of our business.

We believe that open, transparent, two-way communications play an important role in engaging with local communities, staff and the wider network of organisations that work in partnership with Rykneld Homes.

Our communications are committed to:

Promoting two-way communications - informing and listening to our customers

Being honest, open and accountable - in everything we do.

Offering choice - giving customers a choice of channels to learn about our services and provide their feedback

Being clear, concise and trustworthy - easily understood and jargon-free.

Being inclusive - by delivering consistent messages to customers, staff and partners.

Valuing our customers - by using customer feedback to help strengthen our services.

Promoting the work of partner organisations - to help people access opportunities across the district.

We will use a wide range of communication channels to help keep people informed about our services and provide a pathway for involvement and feedback.

Our strategy links to the priorities set out in our Business Plan and will also help to promote the community and housing ambitions of North East Derbyshire District Council and the wider national housing agenda,

We want to ensure that customers and communities are made aware of the opportunities available and how to access the support they need.



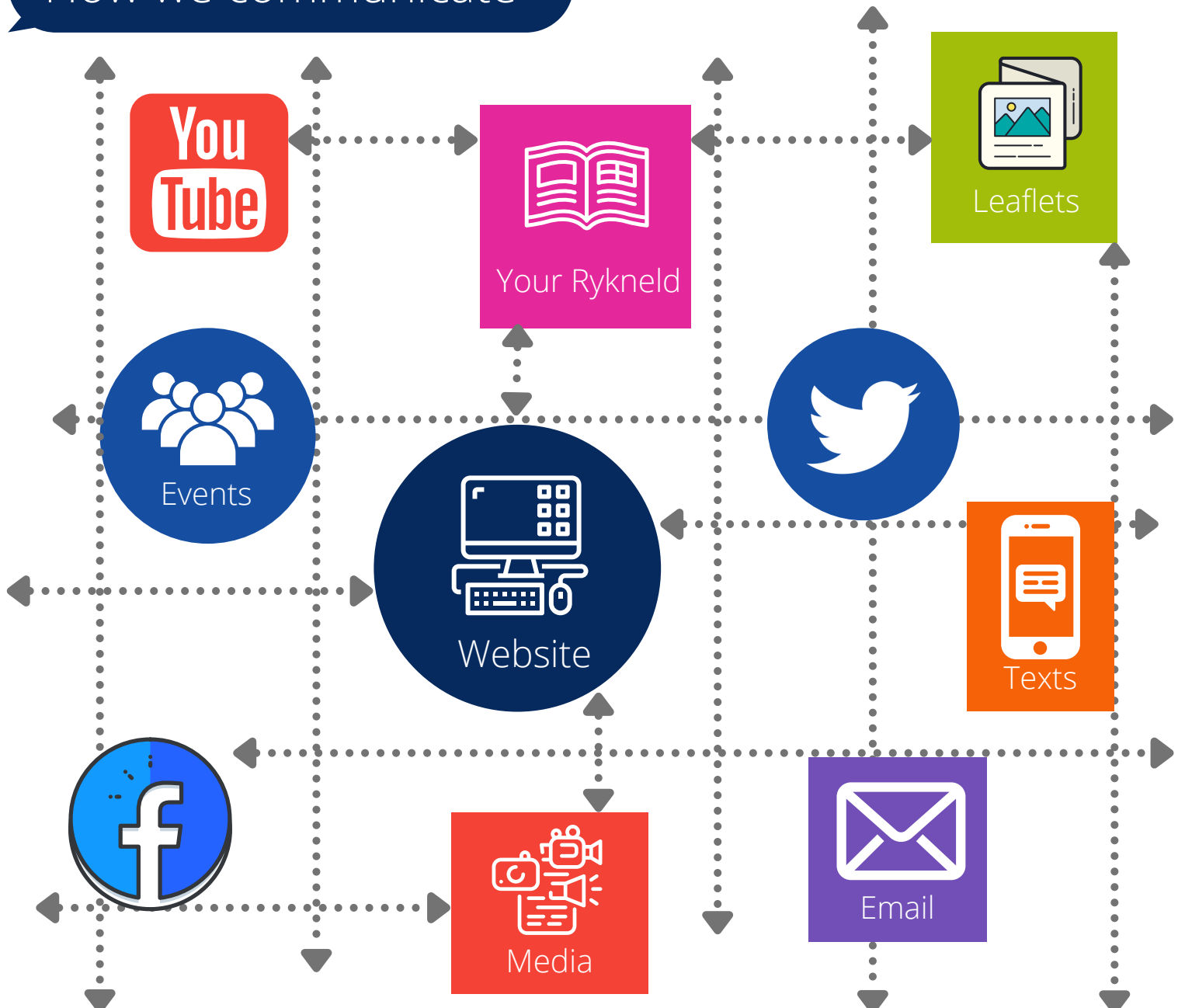
"Promoting two-way communication"

Why we communicate

We communicate to:

- Promote Rykneld services to maximise access to them.
- Maintain two-way communication with customers and local communities and address concerns.
- Keep everyone informed and up-to-date.
- Increase awareness and understanding of Rykneld Homes' and North East Derbyshire District Council's vision and aims.
- Address inaccurate and negative information
- Promote understanding and trust between Rykneld, Homes, its customers and local communities.
- Raise the profile of Rykneld Homes as a provider of good quality services
- Maintain and improve customer satisfaction levels.
- Support our partners to promote information and services for the benefit of the wider community

How we communicate



Service aims

Supporting services

We want customers and communities to be aware of the services we provide and the help and support that is available from Rykneld Homes and its stakeholders.

Communications will work with service areas to ensure timely information is distributed in an appropriate format and using the most effective communication channels.

We will also support services to receive customer feedback as part of Rykneld's ongoing commitment to understand customer needs and strengthen service delivery.

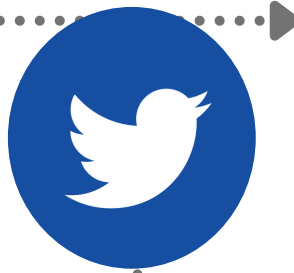


Upholding our reputation

Rykneld Homes values its year on year excellent customer satisfaction levels and will ensure systems are in place to help it retain its reputation for good service delivery.

We will monitor all media outlets and alert services to any negative and potentially damaging feedback. This will allow the organisation to make an appropriate response and address any issues raised.

By encouraging two-way communications Rykneld Homes aims to identify and deal with problems early and reaffirm its commitment to excellent customer service.



Communicating with staff

We recognise the powerful role that staff have to play as ambassadors of the organisation - able to inform and empower our customers and stakeholders.

Our communications ensure that staff are made aware of developments affecting the business and signposted to personal and professional development opportunities.

Issues affecting our stakeholders, local communities and the wider area are also communicated.

Staff meetings and events promote two-way communications and encourage cross-organisation working.

Brand management

A consistent and identifiable brand image together with high quality written and designed communications help to reinforce our standing as a professional organisation, delivering excellent services.

We work with service areas and partner organisations to ensure our brand is presented correctly and that messages are delivered in line with a consistent house style.



Open and accessible

Promoting fair and equal access to our services is a key priority for us in line with national standards that require everyone to have access and opportunity regardless of their circumstances.

We will ensure information about our services is available to customers in a language and format they can understand and access. Plain English will be used at all times.



How we communicate

Campaigns, promotions

Campaigns and promotions are among the communication tools frequently used by us to advertise and explain our services and policies. They are designed to be used across all media channels with different media targeting different demographics.

Campaigns are used to:

- raise awareness - such as promoting usage of the My Account tenant portal or our Community Alarm service.
- promote help and advice - such as the support available around debt and arrears.
- support the work of the Council and regional and national initiatives such as during the Covid-19 pandemic or changes to Universal Credit.
- support our community involvement initiatives in partnership with local groups and organisations - such as school holiday activity schemes or litter picks.



Printed information



Although many of our customers now prefer to access our services on-line we acknowledge that for some people this is either not possible or not the preferred method.

We want to offer our customers a choice and this includes continuing to provide traditional printed material, such as information leaflets, newsletters, fliers, advertising posters and publications like Your Rykneld.

We also support local community groups to develop marketing material and newsletters for their events.

Media, PR and Awards

We work with local, regional and national media outlets and trade publications to promote the positive achievements of Rykneld Homes. We showcase our work by entering regional and national awards - and have won accolades for our services, across the organisation.

We foster a positive and productive relationship with media organisations and work to achieve a balanced and accurate account of Rykneld Homes. Our approach is to be transparent and timely in our responses and ensure we consult with partner organisations, where appropriate, to provide consistent and co-ordinated messages.



How we communicate

Rykneld Homes Website

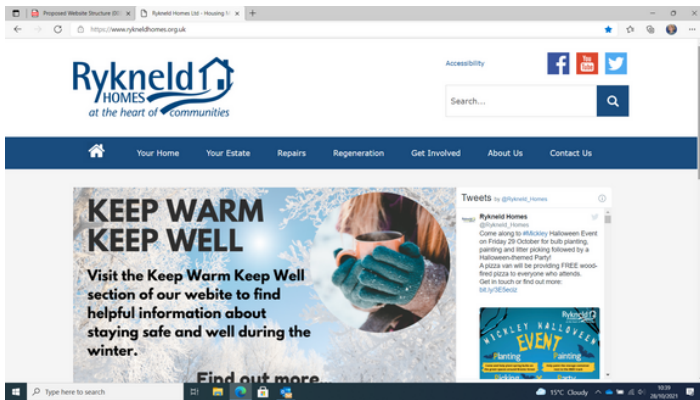
The website offers access to a wealth of information about Rykneld's services and policies and is our main channel of communication.

We are continually expanding our on-line delivery to meet the changing needs and expectations of our customers. We monitor and analyse website usage to identify strengths and weakness on the site and make adjustments to our content to ensure it remains relevant and accessible.

We provide a number of on-line self-service forms and have developed a tenant portal My Account, accessible 24/7.

Our Choice Move lettings service is accessed through the site, as are on-line payment channels. The website is compliant with regulations on accessibility and is available on any device.

We work with customers to improve our website and increase usage in line with the government's 'digital by default' agenda.



"Providing information at the touch of a button."

Your Rykneld



Our customer magazine Your Rykneld is an important communication channel ensuring key messages and information are made available and explained to everyone.

It is delivered regularly to all of our tenants and plays an important role in making customers aware of the services, opportunities and support available.

The magazine also promotes the work of our involved tenants, partner organisations and local community groups.

Social Media



Rykneld Homes uses the most popular social media sites to promote its work to as wide an audience as possible. They are a valuable tool for sharing information in real-time and tapping into the wider community network to help us deliver key messages.

We encourage our customers to send enquiries to us through our social media accounts and we aim to respond to enquiries as quickly as possible.

To avoid the media sites being used to spread disinformation about our services, we do not show public comments to our posts but we do respond to the comments we receive.

We currently use the YouTube channel to host a mix of videos promoting our services. We also feature How to guides - covering topics such as setting up a Direct Debit and accessing the tenant portal.

Internal communications



We want to empower our staff to deliver the best service possible to customers and colleagues.

Internal communications play a key role in keeping staff engaged and informed about Rykneld Homes' plans and priorities helping them to provide a professional service to our stakeholders.

We use all internal communication channels and invite staff to contribute to our staff publications, sharing best practice amongst teams and celebrating achievements, both at work and at home.



We have developed a staff extranet which contains a library of documents and policies available for staff to download. The portal also acts as a hub for promoting social activities and events.

Following the Covid-19 pandemic and an increased shift to home-working the extranet plays an important role in helping staff to access information remotely.

What our customers say

We are constantly looking for ways to strengthen our services and undertake customer surveys to find out how we are doing and what could be improved.

We invited our Digital Involvement Group to comment on our website and social media sites. The survey helped us to identify where improvements needed to be made. The results were posted on our website.



Digital Involvement Group survey results:



95% said the website met their needs



96% said they found it easy to find what looking for on the website



95% said the information on the website was easy to understand

Suggestions for improvements that we acted on:

