

Homeowner Virtual Panel

13 January 2026, 18:00pm to 19:30pm

Minutes and Action Log

In attendance	Apologies
Catherine Jarrett (CJ) Regional Director – New Homes, Delphine Guillemeoteau (DG) Customer Engagement lead – West and Midlands, Viv Price (VP) Existing Homes Sales Manager, Daniel Fielding (DF) Marketing Executive- Existing Homes, Paul Coates (PC) Chief Customer Officer	Abigail Bennett (AB) Leasehold Services Officer

Minutes

1.	<p>Welcome, apologies and introductions</p> <p>CJ welcomed everyone to the meeting with PC in attendance to provide a strategic overview and vision for Place and homeownership going forward.</p> <p>We received one legacy Bromford query from a homeowner prior to the meeting taking place via the dedicated email homeownership.panel@bromford.co.uk which is closely monitored and responded to swiftly by the team. The query was from a shared owner about the 'staircasing' process and why a RICS surveyor is required. It was suggested that the type of queries we receive should be analysed so that we understand what homeowners are asking us about. This analysis has been started but DG to action to cover all queries received in 2025.</p> <p>A handful of homeowners attended the meeting.</p>
2.	<p>Customer Influence Panel</p> <p>DG explained that two homeowners sit on the strategic customer-led group known as the Customer Influence Panel which represents a clear commitment to amplifying the homeowner voice and ensuring it informs decision-making. The two customers are Jo Bateman (legacy Flagship and Shared Owner) and Tony Woolley (legacy Bromford and leaseholder). Jo and Tony will start chairing the meetings in April 2026 with support from colleagues. Everyone thanked CJ for her commitment to the group and for taking on the chair role from the inception of the panel two years ago.</p>

	<p>Action:</p> <p>We will look at ways of improving the frequency and content of the communication that goes out to homeowners before meetings take place. It is important to ensure we reach a large number of homeowners. Jo explained that she would like to be informed of the Panel dates much sooner so as to book the time off. DF suggested that 'social media' posts could also be used to promote the meetings. Tony suggested sending out newsletters explaining what the panel is about and what it's achieved.</p> <p>CJ shared that she believes it is key that we use different channels of communication as we all consume information in different ways: in-person, webinars, reports, etc.</p>
<p>3.</p>	<p>Roadmap 2026 - group discussion</p> <p>PC highlighted the fact that 10% of all our customers are homeowners and this number will grow significantly in the next few years. This makes the purpose of the homeowner virtual panel even more important for what will become Bromford Flagship Live West. Homeowner advocacy is low at 66% which is in line with other housing providers' ratings but this doesn't make it right. We must aim to do better and the roadmap should help us achieve this. Neighbourhood Coaches do have access to homeownership training but despite this their level of expertise is not always good enough as the majority of their customers are not homeowners (this will vary on the patch).</p> <p>Clarity of service and access to the right expertise first time:</p> <p>Homeowners have previously fed back that it can be difficult to reach the right team at the first point of contact, and that more colleagues should be trained to respond to queries from leaseholders and shared owners.</p> <p>PC explained that, over the next three years, a new way of working will be introduced at Place level. As part of this, a new Customer Officer role will be trialled to support homeowners. The role is designed to help leaseholders and shared owners thrive by providing dedicated expertise and acting as a clear first point of contact for their queries. This will be a fixed-term contract, with the Customer Officer working closely with other colleagues, including Neighbourhood Coaches, to provide joined-up support. The six-month trial is expected to begin in April 2026 and will take place in South Gloucestershire, specifically in Patchway and Little Stoke. Following the trial, senior leaders will review customer feedback to decide whether the role should be rolled out more widely. Jo and Tony, as members of the Customer Influence Panel, will play a key role in reviewing the feedback and informing future decisions.</p> <p>Working at a Place level should encourage customers to bring barriers down and to consider everyone as being part of the community- not one tenure or group of customers should claim to be more important than another.</p>

	<p>It was agreed that a review of website guidance on services, responsibilities, and who to contact should take place: this should be split; looking at the leaseholder and shared owner journeys separately. For instance, how easy is it to find the relevant information and navigate the content?</p> <p>DG, VP and CJ will update the roadmap to reflect the feedback from this meeting. It may be necessary to separate some activities for leaseholders and shared owners. For example, the Shared Ownership Code aims to create a more level playing field for shared owners as the model continues to evolve. Similar work is underway to understand the impact of the new government leaseholder legislation: we could consider organising a webinar to explore the implications of the leaseholder legal changes and what they mean in practice. PC added that by April 2026 the business will focus on the development of a new customer portal based on work that has already been carried out to understand customers' needs. Homeowners will need to be involved in these discussions potentially via the panel.</p>
<p>4.</p>	<p>A.O.B and date of next meeting</p> <p>Follow up Section 20 query with leaseholder Delia.</p> <p>The merger with LiveWest is planned for the 29 January. This panel will need to consider bringing in homeowners from LiveWest within the next 6 months. DG explained that LiveWest is experienced in the running of a similar panel so we will be able to learn from their experience. PC said that there is also a lot to be learned about the way they explain and deliver service charges to customers. We can tap into this knowledge. Once we have merged the business will have over 300,000 customers in total. This will help with all the investment that is needed as England's housing stock is old (one of the oldest in Europe) and needs a lot of investment which the combined resources of the three organisations will help with.</p> <p>Up until April, we will work to offer legacy Flagship homeowners the option to opt-into future communications. Jo mentioned that we need to be aware that the language we use needs to be considered as the East region has not had any similar engagement up to now. She added that if we offer in person meetings in one region then we should aim to replicate it in others.</p> <p>Tony explained that he feels Bromford Flagship could do more to encourage leaseholders to get annual gas safety checks carried out and also electrical checks. When customers live in the same building block this is important as if a fire starts then everyone will suffer the consequences. PC said that this has been explored before and that there are no legal requirements for Bromford Flagship to do so but he understands Tony's perspective. PC said that this can be picked up but at a later date when the organisation is less busy with integration. The question could be a wider one: should we be extending our service offer to homeowners? What range of services and products could we offer and why? Are there any offers of discounts that we could use?</p>

When collecting feedback from shared owners Jo asked if the feedback may vary depending on whether customers are still in the defect period or not (the defect period at legacy Bromford is 12 months). The feedback might be more negative during the defect period. This is something to explore.

Jo asked if a recap on the actions agreed at each meeting can be added at the start of each meeting. DG to action.

Date of next meeting: April 2026 (date tbc): Zoom, 6pm start (avoid half term)

Please send any individual queries to the following email:
homeownership.panel@bromford.co.uk