Customer Experience & Engagement Strategy

For further information regarding this strategy or to discuss how your team can become more customer focused, email the Customer Experience team at: customerexperience@naturalresourceswales.gov.uk

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Foreword by Sarah Jennings

It is now more important than ever that NRW puts the customer at the heart of all that we do. We live in a society of interconnected networks and this strategy outlines our ambition to strengthen and deepen those relationships. Energising the movement to tackle the climate and nature emergencies will only be successful with the collective strength of our partners, stakeholders and customers. We must seek to truly involve people in what we do and believe in, to create a strong unified voice at this critical moment in history.

We want to improve what we do now as well as continue to horizon scan, anticipate trends and adapt for the future. We must to listen to what matters to our customers and become
responsive and agile, providing a personal and professional service, and building lasting and meaningful relationships. We already do this well in some areas and there is a great foundation on which to achieve our aspiration of continuous improvement.

Every single member of NRW staff is vital to delivering this ambition every contact counts. It is the quality of the daily customer contact across the breadth of what we do that will make that positive change. The everyday conversations with our customers and public, the Public Service Board discussions with our partners, the big conversations across the breadth of Wales on long term vision and action, all matter.

This type of involvement takes time and can feel challenging, as the kaleidoscope of different lenses through which people see the world means we all have different views. But it is exactly in this space that we are able to understand and unite around what we do agree upon. We must start by engaging the heart before the brain if we are to play our part in energising the movement to address the climate and nature emergencies we face. We will need to grow our storytelling, becoming thought leaders and humble listeners if we are to solve these complex issues together.

This strategy provides a high level view of what we will do to enable us to achieve this ambition. We hope you will join with us as we turn out, reach out, connect and involve.

Sarah Jennings
Executive Director of Communications, Customer and Commercial

Introduction

As the largest Welsh Government sponsored body with over 2000 member of #TeamNRW and a myriad of functions including a regulatory role, NRW operates in a complex environment with an ever changing landscape.

With increasing pressures on public finances and continued focus on the climate and nature emergencies, it is imperative that we build customer and stakeholder trust in the context of transparency, so that the people of Wales have confidence in the work of NRW and in our ability to deliver public value.

Developing that confidence relies on an awareness of the good practice across all our business at all levels, and on developing trust between the organisation, our partners, our customers and the people whose lives are affected by our work.

This strategy replaces the Customer Focus Strategy of 2018 and previous stakeholder engagement frameworks, and promotes an outwardly focused culture so we can become an organisation who values our customers and stakeholders and their perspectives, and continually uses their insight to drive innovation and change to achieve successful outcomes.

We are signalling our commitment to involving in a way which is inclusive for all, and to making it easy to participate in this ongoing dialogue. How we do this will develop constantly, depending on with whom we are engaging and how different individuals and groups prefer to be engaged with. We will endeavour to place each issue and individual at the centre of our approach, using all the creative techniques available to us, as well as those traditional face to face conversations that build lasting connections.

What is customer experience?

> **Customer Experience is the "cumulative impact of multiple touchpoints over the course of a customer's interaction with an organisation."**
> **(Forbes)**

A positive Customer Experience is achieved when each touchpoint experience meets or exceeds customer expectations. There are direct touchpoints such as a visit to a website or a conversation with a staff member, and indirect touchpoints such as media reports, word of mouth or advertising. The whole of all these interactions creates a perception of an organisation for a customer, which becomes the customer's version of the brand. Positive customer experiences lead to customers who are more loyal, more likely to advocate for and have more trust in an organisation.

Effective Customer Experience management involves having an in depth understanding of the end to end journeys that customers undertake and crucially, how they feel when they are doing business with an organisation. Understanding why customers use services, means an organisation can ensure their services are continually meeting the needs of customers and providing value for money. This can only be done by giving customers a voice. There are many ways of gathering feedback to achieve a holistic view, and different methods should be used at different times, depending on the type of interaction or relationship.

Once these journeys are understood, removing any "pain points" and maximising the "moments of truth" for the customer is the next step in effective Customer Experience management. The aim is to deliver services that are fit for purpose and to reduce the amount of effort a customer has to exert to successfully achieve their outcome.

Listening to the customer voice, journey mapping, and measuring performance are part of the Continuous Improvement cycle of monitoring the constantly evolving needs and expectations of our customers. Internally, managing the customer's experience allows for reduction of complexity and costs through removal of unnecessary process steps and systems to achieve a set of streamlined services, greater staff engagement and productivity.

What is stakeholder engagement?

Stakeholder engagement involves considering the different interests and values that people and organisations have when approaching relationship management. Engaging the right people in the right way can make a real difference to the continuing success and reputation of an organisation.

Effective stakeholder engagement is about building sustainable relationships with people who are affected by our actions and our services, and who have a contribution to make with regards what we deliver and how we deliver it. It relies on integrity, transparency and a mutual commitment to communicate openly and honestly with stakeholders.

Doing this successfully enables better informed policies, projects and services. Using the sustainable development principles of the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act as a guide to our ways of working, this collaborative approach should result in benefits for both ourselves and our stakeholders, recognising the need for the support and expertise of others to reach our mutual goals.

Who are our customers?

NRW has a very wide range of customers and stakeholders who are interested in, affected by, or work with us on various aspects of our work. This brings a complexity to our relationships which means that groups are different, but this strategy looks at the key principles that we should employ across all of our interactions to ensure that we improve and create as good an experience as possible for those that interact with us.

Customers and Stakeholders have been defined and included in the Stakeholder Engagement plan which supplements this strategy.

> "We are moving from a chain of command to a web of connection, from competition to collaboration, from markets to networks and stockholders to stakeholders, and greed to green."
>
> (Anodea Judith)

Vision and approach

Cyfoeth Naturiol Cymru
Natural Resources Wales

👁 NRW's Customer Experience (CX) Vision

By putting the customer at the heart of everything we do, we're making sure that the environment and natural resources of Wales are sustainably maintained, enhanced and used, now and in the future.

Wellbeing Objective **7** Develop NRW into an excellent organisation delivering first class customer services.

Principle 1
Make it quick and easy to contact and engage with the right person in a way that works for the customer.

Principle 2
Make our information easy to find, access and understand.

Principle 3
Inspire our customers to engage with us through utilising the right tools and techniques.

Principle 4
Be proactively open, honest and clear with our customers at all times.

This strategy will be reviewed and refreshed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose.
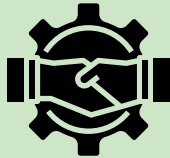
Cyfoeth
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Cymru
**Natural
Resources**
Wales

Strategic Objective 1

Listen, understand, respond.

Strategic Objective 2

Greater inclusion, enabling big and small conversations.

Strategic Objective 3

Building stronger relationships and trust through innovative ways of working.

Strategic Objective 4

Uniting NRW to deliver outstanding customer experiences.

Year 1

Get the basics right and listen. Build a solid foundation.

Year 2

Implement change based on year one results.

Year 3

Embed as business as usual.

SMNR Principle

Adaptive management

SMNR Principle

Public participation

SMNR Principle

Multiple benefits

SMNR Principle

Collaboration & engagement

SMNR Principle

Evidence

SMNR Principle

Thinking long-term

SMNR Principle

Scale

SMNR Principle

Preventative action

SMNR Principle

Building resilience

This strategy will be reviewed and refreshed annually to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

Strategic Objectives

1 **Listen, understand, respond**

We will listen more deeply to our customers to understand their perspectives and respond more effectively to their needs where possible.

How:
Carrying out an extensive **Customer Journey Mapping Exercise** in year one will provide us with an in depth understanding of the end to end journeys our customers take when interacting with us. We will combine this with the other insight and evidence that we already hold, and that which we will gather through other mechanisms to understand the "as is" situation for our customers. This insight will drive much of the action in year two and three as we embed customer perceptions, needs and wants into our day to day decision making.

Consolidating and understanding our data:
Our customer data will be gathered, consolidated and cleansed and centrally stored within the CRM. This will become the one source of customer data and will provide a single view of the customer.

Developing the NRW Feedback Framework:
This will be our holistic view of the customer voice. This will enable us to understand both cross cutting and individual themes so we can enact customer focussed and effective plans and to achieve maximum internal and external benefit.

Closing the Loop:
We will follow up with customers who have taken time to provide us with insight, opinions and ideas, either on an individual or group basis. We will instil in our customers the knowledge that they are on the journey with us, their input is valued, that action is taken and they are at the heart of everything NRW does.

Strategic Objectives

2 Greater inclusion, enabling big and small conversations

We will reach out to a more diverse audience, engage all communities across Wales and involve the seldom heard in our decision making.

How:
Undertaking stakeholder analyses and heat mapping exercises will enable us to better understand our audience's perspective and motivation, so that we can plan more strategically and target our efforts more effectively. It will also help us to identify gaps in engagement allowing us to focus on those communities with whom we have yet to reach.

Social listening:
Using social media channels to help us reach out to different audiences and to take the conversation to places where they are, rather than expect everyone to come to us, enabling us to engage with stakeholders at all levels in the right ways, and at the right time for them.

Being clear about our statutory responsibilities to engage and transparent about decision making, using robust evidence and data.

Focusing on story telling and listening to the narratives of others, enabling big and small conversations about environmental challenges and opportunities, at a local and national level.

Strategic Objectives

3

Building relationships and trust through innovative ways of working

We need to constantly evolve and innovate as we learn more about our customers and how they engage with us. We will use the best technology to help us listen, engage and evolve our approaches.

How:
Exploiting our technology:
We will utilise the full functionality of our existing platforms and explore emerging technologies to help improve our Customer's experience of NRW. These could be externally facing solutions, such as the provision of self service options, or new interactive channels and internal tools, enabling our teams to deliver the highest levels of service at each and every touchpoint. This will make us both easier to work with, and easier to work for.

Harnessing the benefits of technology to support better transparency of our work with external stakeholders will also help raise awareness of our engagement activity internally, and reinforce consistency of messaging and understanding across the organisation.

Community asset mapping and actively building networks:
We will harness the expertise of others, utilising the trusted networks of community groups, third sector and youth organisations, influencers, industry and public sector partners which already have strong roots in Wales.

We will reach out to those groups and key individuals and meet them in their place and space. Our place based teams and many others across our organisation already have strong local connections and networks, and so this strategy underpins the organisation's commitment to empower our staff to go further and continue to engage.

Strategic Objectives

4 Uniting NRW to deliver outstanding customer experiences

This strategy is for the 2000 #TeamNRW members who all play a daily role in delivering services to our customers, the people of Wales. This strategy aims to take us from good to great.

How:
Working collaboratively:
Embedding a focus on customer experience across NRW will involve each and every one of us. For some, this may mean working directly with or alongside the Customer Experience team. For others, it will be developing an understanding of their own role in delivering outstanding customer experience and using the Customer Experience team as a source of knowledge and expertise.

Making once, using many times:
Once our data is of a high quality and fit for purpose the new approach will be to get the most value out of the data and information we already have before we go out to gather more. This will be more cost and time effective for staff but will offer more valuable insight due to less survey fatigue within our customers base.

Applying consistency to front line customer services:
A full review of our customer facing services will be undertaken to ensure there is consistency of approach across all channels. We will ensure that the highest levels of service are being delivered, that we are using every interaction as an opportunity to promote our brand and our key messages and that the customer is getting value from the services we provide.

Raising the profile:
Raising awareness of our customers, who they are, why they use us and what matters most to them, is key to helping everyone understand where and how they fit into the customer's journey. We will develop a wider understanding of the purpose of engagement to ensure that it aligns with our business plan priorities and so that our decisions are evidence based, with clarification of relationship ownership criteria and escalation processes. We will promote the NRW brand so that our customers understand our role and responsibilities and what that means for them.

Stakeholder definitions

Customers	Anyone who receives products, services or outputs from NRW. The relationship tends to be transactional and the aim is that this 'transaction' is user-centred and as easy and painless as possible for the customer. Often, our customers have no option but to receive the service from us, e.g. regulated customers.
Commercial customers	Anyone receiving products or services from us that is of their choosing and commercial in nature. These include: wind energy and other energy providers, recreational customers, timber customers, and people buying our analytical services. These customers have a choice whether to buy our service or not.
Suppliers	People and business who we pay to deliver a service. This is a B2B relationship where both parties have mutual expectations – ours is in terms of emphasising the circular economy and green credentials. Offering value for money and high-quality delivery. Theirs is of good contract management, fair procurement and prompt payment.
Partners and potential partners	Organisations we already work with or want to work with. This includes PSBs, LAs, eNGOs, grant-funded organisations, Welsh Government, etc.
General public/ people of Wales/ potential customers	These are people who are not yet engaged and/or who are affected by either potential or existing work that we do. They include communities that we want to engage and harder-to-reach, seldom heard communities, that we want to engage to improve our representation and diversity.
Elected representatives	All levels of elected politicians.
Online Influencers	These are people we want to work with, because of their potential influence on some of our other target audiences and/or because they are a window into harder-to-reach audiences.
Internal	This includes staff, Board, senior leadership, Trade Unions.