



As housing associations continue to refine services to improve the customer experience, customer journey mapping is increasingly used as a valuable insight tool which can aid the redesign of such services. Here we explore journey mapping and the value it can provide housing associations.

What is a Customer Journey Map?

Put simply, it is a diagram, in order, of the important touchpoints for a customer during a particular experience. It is not a process map, nor an internally created blueprint for how a customer should interact with an organisation to reach their objective. The key bit of the above definition is 'important touchpoints for a customer'. Not the important touchpoints for the organisation. To do journey mapping effectively you need to speak to customers, understand where they see the touchpoints (which can be more than just speaking to your people, they also include websites, posters, letters, social media, news material etc.), and understand what works well and what doesn't from their perspective.

Journey Mapping done well provides an ideal framework for insight, feedback and control and aids service design and innovation. They are also ideal for internal and external communications programmes. This is why housing associations are increasingly turning to journey mapping and considering them as part of their insight strategy.

So which journeys to map?

In social housing there are specific events or experiences which have a large impact on overall customer satisfaction, and indeed internal cost. Examples of such experiences include repairs, complaints, planned improvements and moving into a new home. All of these would be valid journeys to map and have been carried out by our social housing clients.

How to map a customer journey?

Speaking to customers! It is imperative a journey map starts with speaking to customers who have just been through this experience. We would recommend starting with some qualitative research to understand the journey from the customers' perspective. In social housing this is typically focus groups or depth face to face interviews. This stage is all about understanding the stages of the journey, what the different touchpoints are, what happened to the customer, what was good and what was bad. This qualitative stage can provide individual stories to bring the journey map to life which is useful when

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sharing the outputs with colleagues to win hearts and minds and drive change.

After the qualitative stage and identifying the different stages and touchpoints of the journey, it is important to quantify the map to enable prioritisation and performance tracking over time. This would typically involve some satisfaction surveys from which you can add some scores and comments to the map.

It is also useful to add some internal metrics or operational figures to the map to provide some context. For example, number of repairs relating to heating, volume of calls chasing up a repair visit or average time to fix a repair. These internal metrics or RAG ratings will provide performance insight, in addition to customer satisfaction scores. This intelligence can aid decision making when it comes to prioritising action.



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An effective journey map can tell you:

- 1) Where the problem is (touchpoint)
- 2) What to fix (satisfaction scores)
- 3) How (comments, experiences, internal data)
- 4) How much difference will it make (internal data)

Communicating the map with colleagues

It is important to share the map with colleagues so they understand the principles, what it shows them and more importantly what they need to do differently tomorrow. We recommend Customer Immersion Workshops to share the insights and journey maps. Ideally conduct different workshops with different employee groups, typically executive, influencer and front line. Walking through the map is important as is illustrating the points with customer case studies and experiences. Playing comments audio or visually can add to the theatre and create more impact and be more memorable. It is important to balance out negative

comments and stories with positive ones, and also be clear what the learnings are and what changes need to occur whether to systems, processes or behaviours.

To learn more about Customer Journey Mapping in social housing, attend one of our briefings. For full details and dates visit tlfresearch.com/briefings-events/