

May 2020

Communication and Engagement Policy

**North West Cambridge Development
Version 1.0**

1 Introduction

The University of Cambridge (“the University”) is committed to ensuring that, where possible, there are open and transparent communication channels to residents, stakeholders and visitors at the Eddington site on the North West Cambridge Development (“Eddington”). It is also important that stakeholders are able to provide feedback on the delivery of services and, where necessary, consultation processes are used to gather that feedback.

This policy does not affect the statutory consultation processes that Local Authorities are required to undertake, e.g. the formal planning process.

This policy is intended for both internal and external use and application. This policy will be made available on the Eddington website for the public to access. This policy will be reviewed periodically or in line with changes in relevant legislation and updated without notice.

This policy applies to the University and its wholly owned subsidiaries with responsibilities at Eddington, namely Portal Estate Management Limited (“Portal”), Core Sustainable Heat Management Limited (“Core”) and Lodge Property Services Limited (“Lodge”). It does not apply to commercial organisations outside of the University’s control which operate on the Eddington development, for example the University of Cambridge Primary School, Eddington Nursery, Storey’s Field Centre, or businesses that occupy shops at Eddington.

1.1 Aims

This policy sets out the approach to communication and engagement at Eddington. This includes communications with Eddington residents and stakeholders on matters which may affect their health, safety and wellbeing, complaints and consultations.

1.2 Definitions

The following definitions apply in this policy:

Consultation – a formal or informal process which seeks to identify the impact of a decision or change from the perspective of those who might be affected by it, in advance of making such a change, with a view to supporting the change or mitigating its impact.

NWCD – North West Cambridge Development

Harassment – party whose unreasonable pursuit of complaints that appear to be targeted over a significant period of time on one or more members of University staff and/or cause ongoing distress to individual member(s) of University staff.

Persistent complainant - party who complains about issues, either formally or informally, or frequently raises issues and whose behaviour is unreasonable. Such behaviour may be characterised by:

- Actions which are obsessive, persistent, harassing, prolific, repetitive.
- Prolific correspondence or excessive e-mail or telephone contact about a concern or complaint.

- An insistence upon pursuing unmeritorious complaints and/or unrealistic or unreasonable outcomes.
- An insistence upon pursuing meritorious complaints in an unreasonable manner.

Stakeholders – users of Eddington, including but not limited to: residents, staff, business owners and visitors.

2 Roles and Responsibilities

The University is committed to communicating and engaging in a fair and inclusive manner. In order to achieve this there is investment in the professional development of University staff to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to conduct effective communication relating to matters on the estate.

2.1 NWCD Operations Director

The Operations Director will:

- Ensure that sufficient resources are provided to undertake effective and inclusive communications and consultation.
- Review and, where necessary, respond to complaints in relation to this policy.
- Trigger review of this policy, if required.

2.2 NWCD Communications Coordinator

The Communications Coordinator will:

- Ensure all communications are conducted in line with this policy.
- Review and respond to all NWCD-related complaints and appeals, in accordance with this policy.
- Undertake consultation, in line with this policy, where it is decided appropriate to the decision-making process.
- Ensure representations and responses are considered fairly.
- Report all complaints and consultation results on a monthly basis to the Operations Management Boards.

3 Communication

3.1 Residents and stakeholders

The University's NWCD team have several methods of communication with its residents and stakeholders, as listed below:

- The Portal website (portal.eddington-cambridge.co.uk) is a resident-only area which provides information for residents (Home User Guide, local events, transport, community, etc) and links to other stakeholder websites and information. The Portal website also allows residents to contact the estate management team to report non-urgent issues.
- Residents and stakeholders can contact the estate management team 24 hours a day via telephone 03332 079 501.
- Staff can also be contacted via email for any non-defect related queries.
- Every two weeks a newsletter is sent out to all residents and stakeholders via the Portal website. The newsletter covers events, reminders and notices, as well as repeating key news updates if necessary. Emails are also sent as necessary with important updates and information regarding estate management.
- Information evenings are held quarterly for newer residents. These evenings cover key topics of concern to residents and any estate management problems or queries.
- Stakeholder engagement meetings are held quarterly for businesses and other stakeholders at Eddington. These meetings cover key topics of concern to stakeholders and any estate management problems or queries.

3.2 Public

The University's NWCD team have several methods of communication with the general public, as listed below:

- The Eddington website (eddington-cambridge.co.uk) provides information for visitors and links to other stakeholder websites and information.
- Staff can be contacted via email at info@eddington-cambridge.co.uk with any general queries.
- Social media channels (Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn) are regularly updated with information for visitors, news and events.
- Every month a newsletter is sent out to all those who have subscribed via email. The newsletter covers events, news and notices.
- Twice a year a paper newsletter is dropped through the doors of residents at Eddington and the neighbouring areas. The newsletter covers key events, news and notices.

4 Complaints and appeals

Any resident or stakeholder wishing to complain about an issue at Eddington may do so, using the relevant complaints and appeals process specified, as stated in the NWCD;

Portal Customer Charter at: <https://portal.eddington-cambridge.co.uk/customer-service-team/charter/NWCD%20Portal%20Customer%20Care%20Charter%20Oct%202020.pdf>

Core Customer Charter at: [core.eddington-cambridge.co.uk/downloads/Custom Charter Document 2019 v8.pdf](https://core.eddington-cambridge.co.uk/downloads/Custom%20Charter%20Document%202019%20v8.pdf)

Lodge complaints procedure at: [https://www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk/Content/CMS/file/Complaints%20Procedure%20for%20NWC%20Tenants Oct %202020.pdf](https://www.accommodation.cam.ac.uk/Content/CMS/file/Complaints%20Procedure%20for%20NWC%20Tenants%20Oct%202020.pdf)

4.1 Persistent or Unreasonable Complainants

University staff may take one or more of the following actions as necessary in the case of a persistent complaint or harassment:

- Inform the complainant orally or in writing that their behaviour is considered to have become unreasonable and may be considered to fall under the terms of this policy.
- Inform the complainant in writing that their behaviour is now considered to fall under the terms of this policy and that the complaint will not be investigated further until it is pursued in a manner the University considers to be reasonable.
- Triggering the NWCD Anti-Social Behaviour Policy.

Legitimate new complaints, if pursued in a reasonable way, will still be considered even if the person making them is, or has been, previously considered a persistent or unreasonable complainant and/or subject to one or more of the above actions.

5 Consultation

Consultation may arise from feedback received through engagement as set out in Section 3 above, or from internal NWCD directed management and process review. The University will ultimately decide whether it is necessary to conduct a consultation into any proposed decision or change affecting Eddington.

5.1 Methods of Consultation

The methods used to consult shall be proportionate to the scale of the impact of the proposed change.

Depending on the consultation one or more of the following methods may be used:

- Self-completion surveys
- Text messaging
- Social media
- Telephone interviewing
- Face-to-face surveys or interviews
- Focus groups
- Service user panels
- Workshops
- Feedback forms or comment boxes or show of hands
- Open days or drop-in events
- Consultation days, exhibitions and roadshows
- Community forums
- Public meetings

The University will ensure that the methods of consultation are inclusive and the format will be suitable for the audience in accordance with the NWCD Vulnerable Persons Policy.

5.2 Who will be Consulted?

We will use best endeavours to ensure that the consultation, where required, provides for early engagement with key stakeholders and includes a representative cross-section of views within the community. If a consultation is required, the University will direct the process to those identified as being most affected by the proposed change, i.e. people or groups who are likely to be affected by, or have an interest in, the focus of the consultation. It is unrealistic to consult all residents and users for every proposed change.

All data regarding consultations and responses will be in accordance with the University Data Protection Policy¹.

¹<https://www.information-compliance.admin.cam.ac.uk/data-protection>

5.3 Results of Consultations

Results of consultations shall be communicated to Operations Management Boards, including the following information:

- Who was consulted?
- What methods were used?
- How the data was used.
- How the consultation affected the decision taken and the next steps.

Results of consultation will be communicated to participants who provided contact information, as well as residents and users who may be affected by the decision.

When reporting the results of consultations, the format will be suitable for the audience in accordance with the NWCD Vulnerable Persons Policy.