



Our brand **voice**

Our brand is more than how we look – it's the experience we create in each showhome visit, brochure read, and noticeboard message.

We share a great ambition – for everyone to have a home where they love living. How we speak and write helps make a brighter, happier future a reality today.

We create brand recognition by being consistent in how we speak with customers, residents, colleagues and partner organisations, expressed through our choice of words, tone and style.

This brand voice guide is for everyone at Anchor Hanover. We each speak in our own personal style, but when we speak on behalf of the organisation, it's important that the Anchor Hanover brand is recognisable.



Appendix

1. Our brand voice, p3
2. Who is Anchor Hanover?, p4
3. Our brand voice in action, p.7
4. Some pointers on audiences and channels. p10



What do we mean by 'brand voice'?

Working with the visual elements, **'brand voice'** is a key tool for building a brand. Whatever message or medium we use, there should be a common thread of our 'style' running through our communications.

A well-defined brand voice can help bring messages to life by influencing the way an organisation uses words to create depth, texture and life. This helps us build the brand and develop relationships with our key audiences.

Projecting our style into the world

A brand's 'voice' is defined by its status and style. We want to express our personality in our messages, so that we stand out and connect with our audiences in a noisy world.

Good communication means being clear, using plain English, and considering our audience. Communicating in our brand voice is more than that. It's about expressing who we are at the same time, every time.

The following pages define the style and brand voice for Anchor Hanover. Our organisation's style words (or personality traits) combine to create our distinctive brand voice.



Who is Anchor Hanover?

We believe everyone should have a home where they can LOVE LIVING IN LATER LIFE.

How people enjoy living is individual, and we want to speak to each person as a valued individual. Our brand encourages people to live their lives, their way.

Warmth and relevance are key. However, we balance warmth with a professional, straightforward approach so that we are not overly chatty or long-winded. We'll always choose the simpler word or phrase so that our language is inclusive and accessible.

Our style is:

Caring

People should be able to tell from what we say and how we say it that they are not a number in a 'system'. We actively welcome, listen, and show patience – so that people of all backgrounds feel valued as part of the Anchor Hanover community. While we are driven to help, we are never patronising, and always communicate as one adult to another.

Empathetic

How we communicate across channels is tailored to our audience. Sometimes more explanation is needed, but usually fewer, emotionally engaging words have more impact.

Can-do

Our language reflects a can-do attitude and a willingness to make things better for our residents. As we are committed to solving any issues quickly, we keep our language friendly, easily readable, and to the point.

Life-affirming

Our goal is for everyone to love later life. Our residents can expect that we'll bring a positive warmth to any challenge or conversation, and assurance that we'll find the best solution. We celebrate joy in the everyday and believe in the uplifting power of sharing stories of people loving living. Authenticity is key.

Down to earth

Our language and sentence form is natural, and with our customer audience, slightly informal. We enjoy sharing fun, but don't try to be funny. Our audiences find it easy to connect with us as our language is always grounded and relatable. While we remain friendly in all our communication, we use a more formal tone in professional and corporate communications.

These style words reflect our organisation's values of being **accountable, respectful, courageous, and honest.**



Creating brand voice



To project our style into the world, we need to look at the types of words we choose and how we structure our language. Details matter. As a starting point, we have some baseline writing principles:

Make it **simple**

Use Plain English and avoid jargon. If you have to use technical language or abbreviations, explain them. The Plain English Campaign has an A-Z of alternative words on its website we encourage colleagues to use (such as replacing 'commence' with 'start' or 'begin'). See also the following sections of this guide.

Make it **succinct**

Use sentences of no more than 20 words and use full stops in preference to semi-colons. Break up written text into more easily-readable paragraphs. If a word is not adding anything to the sentence, remove it!

Make it **friendly**

Use personal pronouns such as I, we and you rather than non-personal terms, such as 'Anchor Hanover wants colleagues to...'. Write like you would speak (within reason!) by using contractions, namely you're instead of you are and avoid old-fashioned words such as whilst (use while instead). We avoid using them wherever possible, to stay connected to our audience, and recognise individuality.

Make it **clear and actionable**

Get to the point. Use the first sentence or sentences to explain what someone needs to know or do differently. Never leave this to the end. Begin sentences with the subject of the action rather than the object ('We create great homes and support' and not 'great homes and support are created by us.')

Make it **trusted**

Communicate the why as well as the what of any change ('we're doing this because of...'). People are more likely to do something when they understand the reason. Be realistic by not over-promising.

Make it **inclusive**

See the inclusive language section of the separate *Anchor Hanover Language and Style Guide*

Our brand
voice in action

Our brand voice

► Examples often help

Below are some examples of writing in the Anchor Hanover brand voice, and how our style can be flexed for corporate audiences.

For a community event, we'd use a simple, down-to-earth descriptor such as:

"Fish and Chip Fridays"

Rather than a more formal, distant descriptor such as:

"This Friday, we will gather to eat a fish and chip dinner".



► Why?

We are passionate about building community. Therefore, we speak in a way that is relatable, shareable and inclusive. We get straight to it. Our aim is to capture the joy in the everyday, joy that everyone can share in. A vibrant image alongside a simple, down-to-earth headline really helps communicate positivity.

We are not a government service provider, so we don't need to sound like one. We are more personable, and aware of the emotional benefits of what we offer – such as taking the stress out of everyday life.

When speaking to a potential resident, we would say: **"care centred around you"**. This focuses the benefit on the person we are speaking to and creates a greater sense of connection. More formal terms such as **"person-centred care"** may be appropriate for professional audiences.

When speaking to our core audience – people in later life – we avoid using labels wherever possible, even in jest. We recognise that people at all stages of life don't want to be stereotyped. Demonstrating a shared attitude helps build connection, and keeps the tone adult to adult, without patronising.

For example, to promote an activity, we would avoid a copy line such as

"old dogs, new tricks" or "the grey curious" –

both which could alienate. Instead, use a life-affirming tone in copy, such as:

"we live, we learn".



Our brand voice in action

► **For some audiences** – such as corporates – we can flex the tone of voice to be slightly more formal. However, we do need to check that our written language sounds natural and not stilted.

We inherently have authority as England's largest provider, therefore we can be confident in what we say. Most important is being succinct and relatable. A good test is: if I said these words in a phone call, rather than wrote them in a document, would my listener be engaged?

For example, the more informal tone we would want to take with non-corporate audiences might be:

"At our Buckley care home, we organised Easter activities and invited in our neighbours to experience our community"

Rather than something more formal that might be used in a press release for a local paper:

"A care home in Buckley organised a variety of Easter activities as part of an open day on Wednesday 10 April, so members of the public could find out more about its thriving community."



We can be succinct yet express our warmth and welcoming personality. Remember also to use the personal pronoun ("at our care home, we..." rather than "at the care home, the organisation..."). The personal pronoun is key to building relationship and relevance.



When something goes wrong, we want to be empathetic, but to the point. Our focus is assuring our audience we will do what it takes to resolve the issue quickly.

For example, we may say:

"We know sometimes things go wrong, so we're here to help 24/7"

In our written and verbal conversation, we want to emphasise that we care about the little things that matter to each person.

We ask questions such as "What are you looking for in your next home? How do you enjoy spending time? What makes the biggest difference to you?"

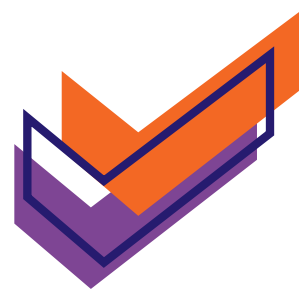
We listen well to discover how we can create great service experience for each customer and their family.

Some pointers on audiences and channels

► The baseline of good communication is connecting with our audiences

When you are speaking with or writing to a particular audience – for example, a care home resident, or potential new staff member, think:

- Who am I trying to communicate with?
- What am I trying to achieve?
- Does this communication project our style into the world?
(I.e. would I get the sense that this brand really cares?)



► For social media (Facebook, Instagram)

Clear, emotionally-engaging headlines capture attention.

The necessary functional information can follow underneath. Be more friendly than formal. Use an active rather than passive voice. People like and share life-affirming stories that celebrate moments of joy.

Variety in our posts reflects that we are all about choices – encouraging people to live how they want to. We don't want to come across as sales-y or too 'us' focused. Think – what stories are uplifting? **Write positively!**

► For social media (Twitter)

Twitter is likely to have both users with an appetite for uplifting, joyful content, alongside a more corporate following. As with Facebook it should be used to share active, life-affirming stories, but also interesting soundbites of thought leadership related to later life – either from our own publications, or re-tweeting what interests us – will most likely also interest our audience. Are we sharing thinking that's interesting and informative? As that's what our audience will enjoy learning about too.

► For our website

Our website will have a mix of audiences, many of who will be members of the Anchor Hanover community and their children. Think friendly rather than corporate speak. What language would you use if you were showing a family around a new development?

When introducing residents and potential residents to a new brand activity such as '10 Today' – emphasise the emotional benefit. Journalist-style headlines work. Brevity helps with clarity and increases engagement!

For example, the landing page descriptor could be

'Out of the armchair and into good health.

10 minutes of exercise a day, for a longer, healthier, more sociable life'

Rather than something more formal that might be used for the press release or with professionals:

'10 Today aims to increase physical activity amongst older people across the country, helping to reduce social isolation and improve the physical and mental wellbeing of participants – all starting with 10 minutes of exercise.'



Example of resident letter



Anchor Hanover
2 Godwin Street
Bradford
BD1 2ST

0800 731 2020
anchorhanover.org.uk

12 November 2019

Dear Mrs Jones,

At Anchor Hanover we are considering introducing a new service to communicate with you each day and make sure that everything is okay. It's a free service similar to a morning call and is called 'OKEachDay'

OKEachDay is already used by thousands of people all over the country and has received great feedback so far. As it's new to us, we'd love to hear what you think. We'd like to invite you to a meeting where we will share more information about OKEachDay and give you the opportunity to try it out for yourself.

Please come along on **Wednesday 20 November** at either:

10:00 – 11:30 **Hanover Close**, Toller Lane, Bradford, BD8 9DF

12:30 – 14:00 **Abbey Court**, Stallabrass Street, Bradford, BD8 8EF

All meetings will be held in our communal lounge with refreshments provided. Members of the OKEachDay team will also be available to answer any questions you may have.

Your feedback is really important to us. If you're unable to attend, your manager will be able to provide more information.

We look forward to seeing you on the **20 November**.

Kind regards,

Amy Peters
District Manager

Patron: HRH Princess Alexandra. Registered office: Anchor Hanover Group, Suites A & B, The Heal's Building, 22-24 Torrington Place, London, WC1E 7HJ
A charitable housing association registered as a society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, No. 7843 and registered with the Regulator of Social Housing, No. LH4095. www.anchorhanover.org.uk

Personalise to name wherever possible

Information is as bite-sized, jargon-free and succinct as possible.

Acknowledges the opinion may not be shared by each resident

Instead of '**Anchor Hanover**' use a more friendly personal pronoun

Valuing the opinion and individual choice of the resident

'**we will share with you**' is softer and more adult to adult communication versus '**where we will tell you**'

Use '**our**' as a personal pronoun instead of '**the**'





For more information on our brand please contact
the Marketing & Communications team

Marketing@anchorhanover.org.uk

For our new branding, creative and design services
please contact:

Design@anchorhanover.org.uk

anchorhanover.org.uk

Anchor Hanover Group is registered as a charitable housing association with registered
society no. 7843. registered Provider No. LH4095