



Resident Involvement Policy

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Introduction

The Tenant Services Authority expects that any major area of a housing association's work will be guided by a statement, strategy or policy, that sets its direction and describes the framework for achieving success. The purpose of this policy is therefore to outline the framework which will guide our involvement activities and against which we may measure their success.

Resident involvement links to business objectives:

- O4 - Providing services and products that people need.
- O5 - Openness, honesty and fairness.
- O6 - Recognising achievements and potentials.

These provide the high level focus for all involvement activities undertaken by the company.

The results of our last customer satisfaction survey demonstrate a high degree of satisfaction with opportunities for involvement, and should be used as a source of information for residents' preferences on methods of involvement that will inform the types of involvement activities we will undertake.

Aims of the Policy

- To ensure that we make information about our ongoing activities, new initiatives and company performance widely available to residents.
- To ensure that we provide a range of appropriate involvement opportunities for all residents to comment and play their part in decision making.
- To ensure that our company strategies reflect residents' interests.
- To ensure that we support residents in obtaining the knowledge and skills required to play an effective part in the management of the company.

Policy Statement

We are committed to delivering high quality services that meet residents' needs, and recognise that resident involvement should be the core driver for improvements to services. We are also committed to holding ourselves

accountable to residents, ensuring they are able to judge our services and tell us how we might need to change. Further, we believe that we have a duty to help develop Bentilee's social capital, and that involvement can help build links between residents and improve the confidence of the wider community.

We define residents as anyone living in one of our homes: this includes tenants and leaseholders. We define resident involvement as all of the activities and processes that we carry out to help us know what our residents want, enable residents to be involved if they want to, and enable residents to have more influence over decisions when they want it.

How we will involve residents

We believe that residents should be involved in a way, and at a level, that suits them. We will therefore offer a range of ways in which residents can be involved on their terms and to the level they desire, from receiving regular information through to actively influencing the development of the company. This will include as a minimum the methods outlined below.

Partnership

- Tenant involvement in management structure
- Newsletter committee

Consultation

- Service Improvement Panel
- Joint events with other local agencies
- 3 year customer survey
- Feedback forms
- Personal visits

Informing

- Policy leaflets
- Published service standards
- Newsletters
- Annual report
- Information bulletins
- Website
- Telephone/reception /email enquiries

We will promote involvement opportunities at every possibility, and maintain a mailing list of residents interested in involvement opportunities.

We will consider all known views and preferences when evaluating actions to take following the results of involvement activities. However, the Management Board will reserve the right to make decisions that it believes are in the best interests of the company and residents generally.

When we will involve residents

We believe that our residents have a right to influence any and all decisions that we make. This influence will operate on a regular basis via tenant membership of our Management Board. We will ensure that our methods of recruiting members are transparent and meet the provisions of this policy. We will also involve residents at an early stage of developing new initiatives in order to agree criteria for evaluating success and customer satisfaction with the final product.

We will carry out regular consultation with residents on our performance and their experience of our services. We will also carry out detailed consultation with residents on any issues that will materially affect them. As a minimum, this will include:

- Changes to services or the tenancy agreement.
- Policy reviews.
- Any new initiatives funded in full or in part by rental income.

We will provide information to residents and invite feedback in the course of day to day business. Where appropriate, we will handle negative feedback via our Complaints Policy. We will also publicise the results of involvement activities in order to demonstrate to residents the benefits of becoming involved and encourage further involvement.

How we will resource involvement

We will allocate staff resource to deliver regular involvement activities via duties outlined in job descriptions and staff work plans. For projects and new initiatives, we will identify staff and any other necessary resource as part of project budgets.

We will ensure that all staff receive appropriate training to allow them to meet the provisions of this policy in the course of carrying out their roles.

We will identify opportunities for partnership working with other agencies where appropriate, to reduce the risk of consultation fatigue and achieve more cost effective involvement activities.

We will provide training opportunities for residents interested in becoming involved, in order to provide them with the skills necessary to develop their capacity for involvement.

We will seek to benchmark the costs of involvement against other Registered Social Landlords in order to demonstrate value for money.

Equality and Diversity Statement

We are committed to ensuring and promoting equality of opportunity for all. We are therefore opposed to unfair discrimination on any grounds, including race, religion, gender, marital status, sexual orientation, disability, age, or any unjustifiable criteria. In accordance with this commitment, we will provide a range of opportunities for involvement, and make information available in a variety of formats, to ensure accessibility to all residents. We are also committed to developing a profile of our residents' needs and aspirations, and will use this information to tailor opportunities for involvement as appropriate.

Monitoring and Reporting

We will prepare an annual involvement statement listing priority outcomes for involvement over the year and the actions we will take to achieve these. We will monitor progress against this statement and provide a quarterly report to our Operations Committee on the effectiveness and results of our involvement activities.

We will produce an annual impact assessment evaluating the costs and effectiveness of activities undertaken against the priority outcomes listed in our involvement statement, as well as demonstrating the impact that residents have had on our planning and service delivery. We will use the results of the impact assessment to produce our involvement statement for the following year. We will also publish information on the costs and effectiveness of our involvement activities in our Annual Report.

Responsibilities

Resident involvement is a corporate responsibility, and as such all members of staff should demonstrate appropriate awareness of our involvement activities and opportunities. Responsibility for regular involvement activities will be identified in individual staff job descriptions and work plans. Responsibility for planning and

undertaking involvement activities in relation to projects and new initiatives will belong to the allocated project manager.

Accountability for all involvement activities will rest with the Operations Manager, who will ensure production of and appropriate monitoring against the annual involvement statement, as well as reporting progress to the Operations Committee and ensuring production of the annual impact assessment.

Review Mechanism

This policy will be reviewed every three years.