

TENANT CONSULTATION AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 We are committed to ensuring that all of our tenants:

- are as well-informed about our activities as possible;
- have the opportunity to be as involved as they wish to be in our decision-making processes.

1.2 We are therefore committed to promoting Tenant Participation in the development and provision of our housing services. Tenant participation can be defined in several ways. We have chosen to define it as follows:

“Tenant participation is about tenants influencing the decisions that we take about housing policies and services. It is a two-way process involving the sharing of information, ideas and plans. It gives an opportunity to empower tenants and makes us more accountable for our actions.”

1.3 We recognise that ‘participation’, or ‘taking part’, will mean different things to different people – ranging from simply providing the information that tenants need about our services in a way that can be easily understood, to tenants sharing in decisions about our services, for example through participation in Focus Groups.

1.4 This policy describes our general arrangements for promoting tenant consultation and participation. It is supported by a more detailed Tenant Participation Strategy (Appendix 1).

1.5 This policy should be read in conjunction with the Community Networks Participation policy.

1.6 This policy complies with Scottish Housing Charter Outcome 3 which states:

3 Participation

Social landlords manage their business so that:

- *tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord’s decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.*

2.0 TENANT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

2.1 Our Tenant Participation Strategy will be reviewed and updated annually. It describes the actions we propose to take over a three year period under the following headings:

- keeping tenants informed – through providing regular tenant newsletters and good quality, accurate, up to date and easily understood information, both in leaflet form and on our website;
- providing a variety of ways for tenants to make their views known to us – including major tenant satisfaction surveys, regular service feedback questionnaires, individual meetings and discussions;

- through a variety of techniques, consulting with tenants on a range of relevant issues, such as the annual rent increase and policies covering housing management, maintenance and other services directly affecting tenants;
- generally raising awareness of the various opportunities for tenants to participate in our activities;
- encouraging the setting up of groups focussing on specific issues (including website forums), or general Tenants Groups, and supporting them in practical ways;
- exploring ways of developing joint working on tenant participation issues with other housing providers in specific areas we operate in;
- providing training opportunities for tenants interested in becoming more involved in our activities;
- promoting membership of the Association and encouraging tenants to attend our Annual General Meeting.

2.2 We will follow the same principles in developing our tenant participation arrangements for both mainstream and supported tenants.

We recognise however that we may need to adopt different practical approaches when providing information or consulting with each group, to ensure that all tenants are able to participate fully in our activities, to the extent that they wish to.

2.3 Through our membership of the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) and Tenant Information Service (TIS) we will seek to:

- remain up to date with current 'best practice' in tenant participation;
- incorporate current best practice when implementing our Tenant Participation Strategy;
- contribute to the ongoing development of good practice both nationally and locally.

2.4 As part of the annual budget-setting process, we will identify a budget to support the Tenant Participation Strategy and current tenant participation activities.

3.0 IMPLEMENTATION AND REVIEW

3.1 The Housing Services Manager, in liaison with the Tenant Participation Officer, is responsible for ensuring that this policy and the supporting Strategy are implemented.

3.2 The Housing Services Manager will submit an annual report to the Housing & Property Services Sub-Committee on the implementation of the Tenant Participation Strategy during the previous year, at the same time as submitting the revised Strategy for the following year for approval.

3.3 The Housing Services Manager will ensure that this policy is reviewed by the Housing & Property Services Sub-Committee at least every 3 years.

Approved by the SMT:	January 2015
Approved by the Housing & Property Services Sub-Committee:	January 2015
Review of policy due by:	January 2018
Complies with:	SSHC Outcome 3

APPENDIX 1 TENANT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY - 2018-19

ITEM	TARGET DATE(S)
<p>Communication</p> <p>a) Issue 4 Tenant/Service Users Newsletters</p> <p>Consultation</p> <p>1. Policy Reviews – with tenants and Policy Review Working Party</p> <p>a) Void</p> <p>b) Sustaining Tenancies Policy</p> <p>c) Furniture Policy</p> <p>d) Allocations</p> <p>e) Annual rent increase consultation</p> <p>f) Tenant Involvement & Participation Policy</p> <p>2. Feedback</p> <p>a) Issue satisfaction surveys to new tenants who have moved into their home in the last 12 months.</p> <p>b) Follow up on actions within Action Plan from 2017 Tenant Satisfaction Survey.</p> <p>3. Scottish Social Housing Charter</p> <p>a) Established a core of tenants who are trained to be involved in the self assessment process to allow the Annual Charter Report to be provided</p> <p>b) Review & update the ARC annual tenants report and issue by the end of October.</p> <p>4. General</p> <p>a) Continue to promote Association membership and general awareness of participation opportunities.</p>	<p>March/April, June/July, September/October, December</p> <p>May 2018</p> <p>May 2018</p> <p>September 2018</p> <p>October 2018</p> <p>December 2018</p> <p>March 2019</p> <p>By March 2019</p> <p>By March 2019</p>

This Strategy will be reviewed and ‘rolled forward’ annually. As part of the annual review, the content of years 2 and 3 may be amended or added to.