



Tenant Engagement Strategy 2023-26

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NORWICH
City Council

Introduction

We are pleased to introduce our tenant engagement strategy, which aims to give all our tenants the opportunity to scrutinise, influence and shape our services for the next three years. Your feedback is vital, and we are committed to putting you at the heart of everything we do to make sure all our communities thrive.

Your responses to our satisfaction survey responses, your comments, complaints, and compliments, as well as your community conversations, influence and shape the way we think about and deliver our services. We see first-hand the benefits achieved through our tenant groups, partnerships, and community connectors.

We hope you will share our aims and ambitions for engaging with and involving you, and as the action plan is implemented, we will all be able to see the positive impact and outcomes from engaging together. There are already many ways that the Housing service communicates, interacts, and engages with you. From responding to your enquiries, to visiting your homes to provide support and assistance, as well as getting out and about in our neighbourhoods to identify any improvements that need to be made.

It is essential we listen to, understand and act upon what you are saying about your housing services. Your views are key to developing excellent services and we will make sure you can have your say on the issues that affect you as tenants, and in a way that suits you.

There are many good examples of what can be achieved when we listen and work together beyond the terms of our tenancy agreement. We will ensure this strategy has the resources and momentum needed to keep it on track and delivering outcomes that will benefit the Council, our communities and most importantly you.

Delivering this strategy will increase resident satisfaction and quality of life by improving services and making better use of council resources.

Cllr Gail Harris
Deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing

Louise Rawsthorne
Executive Director for Community Services

Committed to talking and listening to you



1919

First council house in Norwich was built on Angel Road



2019

Our new build development at Goldsmith Street won the prestigious RIBA Stirling prize for the UK's best new building

We have a proud history of providing council housing in Norwich for over 100 years

This tenant engagement strategy is for you, our tenants. We recognise you are the experts on living in council homes and we must listen, understand, empower, and work in partnership with you to make sure housing services are continually improving and offer a warm, safe, and secure home - now and in the future.

We need a tenant engagement strategy to help us plan and set priorities to meet your expectations in terms of the opportunities for you to have your voice heard and be listened to.

We will understand your needs, aspirations and experiences to improve services, and to empower and support you to hold us to account, scrutinise our performance and help make decisions.

We want you to be well informed, involved in and actively influencing the services we provide and how we provide them to you.

This strategy is a great opportunity to modernize and tailor our approach to engaging with you and making sure we can reach out further to tenants who may not have been engaged before.

Successful tenant engagement should provide benefits for everyone involved, including tenants, Councillor's and officers, and should aim to create a respectful partnership, resulting in fewer complaints and higher satisfaction levels.



National & local context

Regulatory standards

Public body that sets standards that social housing providers must comply with

Grenfell and building safety

Dame Judith Hackitt's review of building regulations

Social Housing White Paper

Charter of seven commitments that social housing tenants should be able to expect from their landlord.

Social Housing (Regulation) Bill

Bill to enact legislative changes to reform the way tenants influence social housing services.

Housing Ombudsman

Resolve disputes involving the tenants of social housing providers.

Corporate plan vision

The council's corporate plan (2022-26) sets out the vision for the council and the city over the next four years.

In delivering its vision, the council is focused on enabling tenants & communities to thrive and make the changes they want, and the council gives a commitment to prioritising listening to tenants to inform council decision making.

Tenant population

27% of tenants over 65 years of age

28% of tenants have a disability

15% of tenants are from ethnic minorities

68% of tenants in receipt of financial support

40% of homes occupied by a single occupant

70% of homes do not have any children

25% of tenancies held for more than 20 years

Source: Housing Management database 2022

You said...

Most important factors:

- Repairs and maintenance
- Building safety
- Anti social behaviour

Interest in activities:

- Completing an occasional / one off survey
- Community based event

Preferences for taking part:

- Monthly Weekday daytime

Barriers to taking part:

- Health
- Work / studies
- Family commitments

Encouragement to get involved:

- Knowing views will make a difference
- Activities that don't take too long
- Able to take part without long term commitment

Source: Tenant Engagement survey 2022

Key Aims

Giving tenants the opportunity to scrutinise, influence and shape housing services.
The underpinning principles for all the priorities:

| Easy, accessible & inclusive | Meaningful, collaborative & effective | Valued & tenant voice at the heart |
|---|--|------------------------------------|
| <p>PRIORITY ONE: To strengthen engagement, participation and empowerment</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will embed co-designing and improving services to meaningfully involve and empower tenants and their communities. • We will systematically collect and use our everyday interactions with tenants to shape service delivery. • We will encourage a growing sense of community empowerment, with tenants becoming far more active as they experience a genuine sense of involvement and influence | |
| <p>PRIORITY TWO: To improve communication and interaction</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will find out what matters the most to tenants and the best ways to engage on these things. • We will identify the barriers that prevent tenants from participating in existing engagement activity and create new opportunities that encourage and empower tenants to engage. • We will achieve more diversity in tenant engagement to better reflect the household make-up in our homes and neighbourhoods. • We will review the ways we communicate and use more effective channels with a greater reach to share information between the Housing service and tenants. • We will strengthen digital solutions to improve access to information and to increase engagement through technology • We will link to the Council's wider Citizens Participation Strategy, sharing learning to maximise involvement and participation and working in parallel where appropriate. | |
| <p>PRIORITY THREE: To enable scrutiny</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will prepare to report against new national tenant satisfaction measures to make our performance as a landlord more visible to our tenants. • We will review the accessibility and availability of information for tenants to scrutinise our performance and hold us to account. • We will develop and support a tenant-led scrutiny process to challenge our Housing service and make recommendations for improvement. • We will offer support and training to those who want to engage in this way, helping to build knowledge and skills. | |

Key success measures



Your views will be heard, with feedback taken forward and implemented without you needing to participate in traditional consultative forms of engagement



You will have greater opportunities for your voice to be heard on the things that matter the most, through a channel that best suits you.



We will listen to any challenges that may be preventing you from more active participation, and we will act to remove or reduce those challenges.



You will have greater insight into our service delivery and operations and have more opportunities to shape and steer the direction of the housing service



You will have easier access to housing services digitally and will be able to interact through digital devices if that is your preference



You will receive improved communication and be able to take part in opportunities that are inclusive and shape service improvements for all.



You will be meaningfully involved in the way housing services are provided, ensuring that local priorities are properly understood and acted upon.



You will be better informed about the performance of the housing service and you will be supported and empowered to hold us to account.

Governance

Oversight

- Oversight for the delivery of the Strategy will lie with the portfolio holder and the Executive Director and ensure that it fulfils the requirements of the [Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard](#).
- Annually we will update tenants on our progress in delivering this strategy.

Engagement

- We will engage tenants, leaseholders, future tenants and partners in the formulation and development of actions where relevant and gather their feedback post implementation.

Action Plan

- In conjunction with our stakeholders, we will develop an Action Plan to deliver this strategy.
- Each action will identify a clear expected outcome.
- We will monitor satisfaction, performance and progress within the action plan.

Monitoring

- The Councillors and the Leadership team will be appraised of progress regularly.
- The Housing Leadership Team will monitor the delivery of the Strategy and its associated Action Plan.

Review

- We will review the Strategy every 3 years to ensure it remains fit for purpose.

Relevant policies & legislation

Regulator of Social Housing

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/regulator-of-social-housing>

Dame Judith Hackitt's report

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/707785/Building_a_Safer_Future_-_web.pdf

Social Housing White paper

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-charter-for-social-housing-tenants-social-housing-white-paper>

Social housing (Regulation) Bill

<https://bills.parliament.uk/bills/3177>

Housing Ombudsman

<https://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk>