



NORWICH
City Council

Tenant Engagement Strategy 2023-26

Published: Norwich City Council, May 2023

Introduction

We are pleased to introduce our tenant engagement strategy, which aims to give you the opportunity to scrutinise, influence and shape your housing 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 our communities thrive.

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

We will listen, learn, and act on what you tell us because your views are key to developing excellent services. Together, we can make our housing services better for everyone.

This tenant engagement strategy is to make sure you have your say on the issues that affect you in a way that suits you.

We expect the outcomes of this strategy to improve your housing services, make better use of council resources, and provide a better quality of life for our whole community.



Cllr Gail Harris

Deputy leader and cabinet member for social housing



Louise Rawsthorne

Chief Executive, Norwich City Council

Listen, learn, and empower

This tenant engagement strategy is for you, our tenants.

We recognise you are the experts on living in council homes and we must listen, learn, empower, and work in partnership with you to make sure your housing services continually improve 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 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 and actively influencing the services we provide and how we provide them to you.

This engagement strategy is a great opportunity to update and tailor our approach to reach 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.

Local and national context

Table 1: Local and national context		
<p>Our council</p> <p><u>Corporate plan vision</u></p> <p>The council’s corporate plan (2022-26) sets out the vision for the council and the city over the next four years.</p> <p>In delivering its vision, the council focuses on enabling tenants and 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.</p> <p>Tenant population</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p><i>Source: Housing Management database 2022</i></p>	<p>You told us...</p> <p>Most important factors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repairs and maintenance • Building safety • Anti-social behaviour <p>Interest in activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completing an occasional or one-off survey • Community based event <p>Preferences for taking part:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly, weekday, daytime <p>Barriers to taking part:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health • Work and studies • Family commitments <p>Encouragement to get involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowing views will make a difference. • Activities that don’t take too long. • Able to take part without long term commitment. <p><i>Source: Tenant Engagement survey 2022</i></p>	<p>Regulations</p> <p><u>Regulatory standards</u></p> <p>Public body that sets standards that social housing providers must comply with.</p> <p><u>Grenfell and building safety</u></p> <p>Dame Judith Hackitt’s review of building regulations.</p> <p><u>Social Housing White Paper</u></p> <p>Charter of seven commitments that social housing tenants should be able to expect from their landlord.</p> <p><u>Social Housing (Regulation) Bill</u></p> <p>Bill to enact legislative changes to reform the way tenants influence social housing services.</p> <p><u>Housing Ombudsman</u></p> <p>Resolve disputes involving the tenants of social housing providers.</p>

Key Aims

Table 2: Three guiding principles and priorities underpin the tenant engagement strategy. Tenants can scrutinise, influence and shape housing services.		
Easy, accessible, and inclusive	Meaningful, collaborative, and effective	Valued and tenant voice at the heart
<p>Priority 1 To strengthen engagement, participation, and empowerment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will embed co-designing into improving our services to meaningfully involve and empower tenants and our 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 being far more active as they experience a genuine sense of involvement and influence.		
<p>Priority 2 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 taking part in engagement activity and create new opportunities that encourage and empower more tenants to get involved.• We will achieve more diversity in tenant engagement to better reflect our community.• We will review the ways we communicate and use more channels with a greater reach to share information with tenants.• We will strengthen digital solutions to improve access to information and to increase engagement using 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 3 To enable scrutiny</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We will 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 recommend improvements.• We will offer support and training to tenants who want to engage with us, helping them to build their knowledge and skills.		

Key success measures

- Your views and feedback will be heard and used to make services better.
- You will have more ways to share views on the things that matter most on the communication channels you prefer.
- You will gain greater insight into how we operate and have more opportunities to shape and steer the direction of your housing services.
- You will have more online housing services that you can easily use on your digital devices.
- You will receive better communications and have opportunities to shape service improvements for all.
- You will be involved in the way we deliver housing services, so that local priorities are understood and acted on.
- You will be better informed about the performance of housing services, and we will support and empower you to hold us to account.

Governance

Oversight

- The Council's portfolio holder and Executive Director will have oversight for the delivery of the tenant and engagement strategy. They are responsible for making sure it fulfils the requirements of the **Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard**.
- Each year, we will update you on our progress in delivering this strategy.

Engagement

- We will engage tenants, leaseholders, future tenants, and partners in creating and developing actions, and gather their feedback after we implement the actions.

Action Plan

- Collaborating with our stakeholders, we will develop an action plan to deliver the tenant and engagement strategy.
- Each action will identify a clear expected outcome.
- We will monitor satisfaction, performance, and progress within the action plan.

Monitoring

- The housing leadership team will monitor the delivery of the tenant and engagement strategy and the action plan.
- We will regularly update you, councillors, and leaders on progress.

Review

- We will review the strategy every 3 years to make sure it remains fit for purpose.