

Tandridge District Council
Resident (Tenant and Leaseholder)
Engagement Strategy
2023 - 2027

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Introduction

This strategy has been developed to identify the expectations of Tandridge District Council tenants and leaseholders' and set out the requirements from the Regulator of Social Housing, owing to the need to put tenants and leaseholders at the centre of everything we do.

We want our Council tenants and leaseholders to feel that we are listening and working with them and therefore, we need to improve our approach on how we engage with them and better understand their needs.

In practice, this means we want our tenants and leaseholders to contribute to how services are being delivered, we want them to recognise that we are listening and trying to improve our services and that we are creating a culture that values our tenants and puts them at the centre of the Council's strategic direction and priorities for housing.

Aims

- To develop a culture that recognises and values tenant and leaseholder engagement.
- Improve customer satisfaction as we gain feedback from our service users.
- Focus on tenants and leaseholders' priorities and therefore provide better value for money.
- Increase the number of tenants and leaseholders engaging with us.
- Develop an engagement approach which is developed through customer insight.
- To make the best use of technology and digital tools.

Context

As a registered provider of social housing, there are several regulatory requirements that the Council must adhere to in relation to tenant and leaseholder engagement. These are set by the Regulator of Social Housing which stipulates the two key requirements are set out within the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment standard 2017 and The Charter for Social Housing 2020.

The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment standard sets out three required outcomes:

- Customer service, choice and complaints
- Involvement and Empowerment
- Understanding and responding to the diverse needs to tenants

This means as a social landlord, we must:

- Provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of our tenants and leaseholders in the delivery of all standards.
- Have an approach to complaints that is clear, simple, and accessible that ensures that complaints are resolved promptly and fairly.

- To ensure tenants and leaseholder are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in housing-related policies and strategic priorities, help to decide how housing services are delivered, scrutinise performance and make recommendations of how performance can be improved in the management of their homes.
- Treat all tenants and leaseholders with fairness, respect and demonstrate how we understand the different needs of tenants and leaseholders in relation to equality and those with additional support needs.

The Charter for Social Housing 2020

The Government published its Social Housing White Paper in November 2020 and legislation was passed in June 2022 bringing its requirements into law. Called 'The Charter for Social Housing Residents', it sets out seven key themes for tenants, leaseholders, and landlords on values around transparency and accountability. For the Council, this means engaging in conversations around the accessibility of our engagement structure and considering how best to communicate performance and engagement successes beyond the annual report to Housing Committee.

:

- To be safe in your home.
- To know how your landlord is performing in terms of complaints, repairs, and safety and how it spends its money so that the landlord can be held to account.
- To have your complaint dealt with promptly and fairly and with access to the Housing Ombudsman who will assist tenants and leaseholders when needed.
- To be treated with respect and improved consumer standards for tenants.
- To have your voice heard by your landlord.
- To have a high-quality home and neighbourhood to live in and which your landlord keeps in good repair.
- To be supported to take your first step to ownership should your circumstances allow.

Improvement of Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement

To ensure we are putting our tenants and leaseholders first and are effectively engaging with them, we will adopt the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) National Tenant Engagement Standards. These standards will help us ensure we have the right behaviours and attitudes running throughout the housing service in order for engagement to take place. TPAS has developed a framework of seven key elements for effective engagement:

- Governance
- Scrutiny
- Business and Strategy
- Complaints
- Information and Communication
- Resources for engagement

- Community and Wider engagement

We will adopt these principles so that our ambition for effective engagement can be met. To further support this, an action plan has been developed which can be found at the end of the strategy.

Better value for money by focusing on customer priorities

Investing in our tenants and leaseholders' priorities will increase customer satisfaction. We will undertake a regular Satisfaction of Tenants and Residents (STAR) survey and introduce a range of transactional and perception surveys of customers using our housing services to identify where our strengths and weaknesses are. We will be pro-active in gaining understanding of our customers' priorities and their views on how our services are developing by using methods such as one-to-one interviews and focus groups. These interactions will use the most appropriate channels including digital and social media.

Understanding more about our tenants and leaseholders

Traditional forms of involvement can result in a 'one size fits all' approach that fails to gather useful data and can be expensive for the landlord to administer. In addition to perception surveys required by regulation, we want to ask recent service users about their experiences to enable us to collect good quality data on what is working well and what is not. We also want to ensure we proactively contact tenants and leaseholders from traditionally under-represented groups, using the most appropriate methods.

To do this we need good quality profiling and contact information. We have started to identify gaps in our current data and seek to complete them within two years from the publication of this strategy, by maximising all the opportunities to interact with our customers. We will then ensure all data is protected and kept up to date.

Measuring achievements

In setting the actions, we need to set targets to demonstrate we are increasing our reach within the community and gathering a cross section to views. To do this, we will set a number of measures which include:

- Number of contacts we have with our tenants and leaseholders designed to improve our services.
- Number of tenants and groups actively involved in improving their estates and neighbourhoods.
- Analyse which groups are represented within the different surveys and tenant groups and then aim to increase engaging with underrepresented groups.
- Publish the outcomes of consultations on the Council's website and via the various groups, panels and forums that tenants and leaseholders engage in.
- Monitor performance against the action plan contained within this strategy.

Performance against these measures and the action plan contained within this strategy will be reported to the Housing committee as part of the annual review of the implementation of the strategy. This strategy will be reviewed annually.

Related strategies

- Tandridge District Council Housing strategy
- Housing Revenue Account Business Plan
- Digital Transformation Strategy
- Decent Homes Standard and other compliance

Next steps

A Steering Group will implement the Action Plan below:

Action Plan

Standard	Where we are now	What we are going to do to make a difference	Timescales
Governance and Transparency	Limited Transparency but with good governance	<p>Provide an annual report to tenants and leaseholders.</p> <p>Publicly share how the council learns from tenants and leaseholders so that they can hold the council to account.</p> <p>Provide a clear route for all to hold the council to account.</p> <p>Provide regular assurance as to how the council keeps them safe in their homes and meets regulatory requirements.</p> <p>Publish information regarding the roles and responsibilities of senior members of staff.</p> <p>Offer a range of engagement topics identified as priorities by tenants and leaseholders.</p>	<p>September 2023</p> <p>September 2023</p> <p>December 2023</p> <p>Life of Strategy</p> <p>June 2023</p> <p>April 2024</p>
Scrutiny	Very limited scrutiny of our service from tenants and leaseholders	<p>Create forums, resident associations and working groups to scrutinise the Council's work.</p> <p>Provide performance information to enable our tenants and leaseholders to examine our performance.</p> <p>Culturally embrace that scrutiny is designed to improve services and increase efficiency.</p>	<p>April 2024</p> <p>September 2023</p> <p>Life of strategy</p>
Business and Strategy	Decisions are not based on tenant and leaseholder priorities	<p>All parties are engaged in the on-going creation, monitoring, and review of the Council's engagement strategy.</p> <p>All parties are meaningfully engaged in the development, monitoring and review of policy, services and strategic development.</p> <p>All parties are clear on the purpose and outcomes of all</p>	<p>Life of strategy</p> <p>Life of strategy</p> <p>Life of strategy</p>

		<p>engagement activities with timescales provided.</p> <p>Provide a clear and consistent method for feedback on any engagement activities.</p>	September 2023
Complaints	<p>Clear policy at a council wide level, but with room for improvement as to when feedback should be noted as a complaint. Monitoring needs improvement and outcomes need to be more measured.</p>	<p>Ensure our complaints policy is widely publicised and accessible to all,</p> <p>Provide information about the housing ombudsman in a clear manner,</p> <p>Ensure complaints are documented, communicated, and published to all stakeholders including tenants,</p> <p>Actively encourage tenants and leaseholders to be part of the complaint review process to enable a review of our current policy.</p> <p>Demonstrate to residents the service improvements made as a result of our analysis of complaints.</p>	<p>June 2023</p> <p>June 2023</p> <p>Annually from April 2024</p> <p>September 2023</p> <p>Annually from April 2024</p>
Information and Communication	<p>Very limited data on satisfaction of the services provided</p>	<p>Undertake STAR and other perception surveys Surveys of customer experience following a transaction eg repair satisfaction.</p> <p>Ensure any information provided is clear and in an understandable format.</p> <p>Provide an accessible route for requests of information on services delivered.</p> <p>Provide regular and up to date information including tenancy satisfaction measures as defined by the regulator.</p> <p>Maintain a log of rectified complaints to use as a tool to learn from our mistakes.</p>	<p>Annually from June 2023</p> <p>Life of strategy</p> <p>December 2023</p> <p>Annually from September 2023</p> <p>April 2023</p>

		Ensure the Council's website is easy to navigate and provides useful information.	Life of Strategy
Resources for engagement	More resources need to be dedicated to Tenant engagement	Provide sufficient resource for effective engagement by having dedicated officers, e-mails and website facilities channelling all engagement via one service. Offer relevant training and advice for involved tenants and leaseholder to enable them to shape priorities and strategies.	January 2024 Life of strategy
Community and wider engagement	No opportunity for residents to engage with the delivery of housing services.	Provide an appropriate range of engagement activities. Provide opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to engage in emerging housing policy issues. Keep tenants and leaseholders informed about any planned regeneration or improvements. Provide a clear approach to promoting and supporting community action.	Life of Strategy Life of Strategy Life of Strategy December 2023