

## **Tenant Participation Strategy**

### **About Us:**

- 94% of tenants are satisfied with the service we provide (2018)
- 92% of tenants are satisfied with the opportunities given to participate in the Associations decision making process.
- Providing affordable homes in Lochend for over 25 years
- Manage and maintain 495 homes for rent
- Provision of 19 sharing owner, 5 home-stake, 30 owner properties
- Over the period 2017-2018 there were 337 housing applications on our waiting list
- Run by a Management Committee of volunteers

### **Our Core Values & Aims:**

#### **“Contribute to sustaining the local community of Lochend and promote social inclusion”**

- Ensure local decisions are taken by local people
- Provide a wide variety of high quality future proof homes
- Maintain our homes to the highest standard
- Demonstrate quality and value for money in all we do
- Engage and collaborate with tenants, the local community and key partners in wider community action
- Encourage a positive community lifestyle and enhance the quality of life for residents

### **What is Tenant Participation?**

Tenant participation is about you getting your voice heard. We genuinely care about your opinion and value your feedback as this helps us provide a better service.

Tenant participation comes from and promotes a culture of mutual trust, respect and partnership between tenants, Committee members and staff at all levels.

It exists when all these interests work together towards a common goal of better housing services.

Tenant participation allows you to take part in the decision making, processes and influencing decisions about your home. It is a two way process of communication between our tenants and ourselves whereby:

- Tenants are given a voice to help improve the services they receive
- Information and ideas are shared between tenants, the Associations staff and Committee members
- The quality of services provided are improved and the level of customer satisfaction increased.

We can help you in whatever way you feel comfortable participating. There are various methods for participation that we use, these vary from attending a one-off meeting, forming a residents group, joining an email group or returning a questionnaire or newsletter cut-off slip to us.

We want to make it as easy as possible to participate in and influence our decisions, at whatever level they feel comfortable.

### **What's in it for me?**

Being involved with the Association can build on existing skills and knowledge or provide you with new skills and knowledge.

We will provide any tenants/groups with any training or support needs.

Tenants have a choice in:

- The areas they want to participate in
- The level of participation
- Whether to be involved as an individual or as part of a group

Tenants have the opportunity to influence:

- Policy decisions that will affect you
- Decisions that will affect the community
- Services you receive
- The Association's business planning and identification of future priorities

### **What's in it for the Association?**

We recognise the importance of tenant participation and consultation as a way of monitoring both the effectiveness of our policies and the quality of the services we provide.

### **Who are the Association's Customers?**

- Tenants
- Sharing Owners
- Owners
- Housing Applicants
- Members of the Association
- Members of the public
- Contractors
- Local Authorities
- Other Housing Associations
- The Scottish Housing Regulator
- The Scottish Government and so on

## **How to Participate:**

### We encourage membership of our Association

Local people can become shareholders by purchasing a £1 lifetime share of the Association. Any members can attend and vote at the Annual General Meeting.

### Providing Information

We issue 3 newsletters to all tenants and sharing owners. The newsletter contains information about our services or schemes and tenants rights and responsibilities in relation to things such as right to repair and participation.

It invites comments over various issues such as proposed rent setting, new policies and informs tenants of any policy changes.

We carry out a tenant satisfaction survey every 3 years. The 2018 survey of 329 tenants chose letter as their preferred method of being kept informed.

We issue an annual report of our performance to the Scottish Social Housing Charter. This report contains the performance information and is distributed to tenants.

We have a user friendly website that is full of useful information and gives opportunity to leave feedback.

In 2018 we launched a more user friendly website. Sections include Housing Management, Noticeboard, Get Involved or Report a Repair.

The website can also be translated in to over 50 languages.

We provide information leaflets so that all our tenants are informed about policies and useful information. These leaflets are available from reception, on our website or can be sent on request. These leaflets are updated regularly alongside any policy changes that have been approved.

### Tenant Incentive Scheme

We believe in rewarding good tenants. The scheme is drawn 3 times a year and to qualify you must have adhered to the conditions of your tenancy, maintained a clear rent account or have been maintaining an agreed arrangement for a period of 3 months or more.

### Consultation

Consulting with tenants and tenants groups about where changes in policy or services are proposed which will affect tenants.

### New Tenant Settling in Visits

Settling in visits are carried out to new tenants who have been rehoused with the Association after 3 months. Settling in visits give tenants opportunity to raise any concerns, give feedback on the application process and allows the Association to make any future changes in the procedure or in relation to building new properties.

## **Registering your tenants' group with us**

There is criteria which must be met for applying to register your group with us as a Registered Tenants Organisation (RTO) under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

The group must be made up of tenants of the Association and must follow a written constitution that sets out how it will conduct its affairs.

The group must show that they can represent everyone living in the area and that their meetings are advertised, open to everyone over the age of 16.

## **Removal from the Register of Tenants' Organisation**

An RTO can be removed from the Register in any of the following circumstances:

- The tenant's organisation does not meet the registration criteria
- Relationship breakdown
- There is mutual agreement between us and the tenant's organisation

Notice will be served in writing to all registered members of the organisation, setting out the reasons for removal and the effective date of removal.

## **Appeals**

Any group that feels they have not been fairly treated should in the first instance put their appeal in writing to the Management Committee who will respond back in writing.

If you are not satisfied with the outcome, the appeals process will be considered by the Scottish Housing Regulator on behalf of the Scottish Government.

## **Resources**

The Association will:

- Assist groups identify alternative sources of funding
- Allow groups to access the Associations resources such as use of meeting space, computer and internet access
- Allocate a specific sum of money within its own budget for tenant participation and development
- Ensure that adequate staffing is allocated to tenant participation

## **Review and Monitoring of the strategy**

The strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure that the strategy remains efficient.

- Progress will regularly be reported to the Management Committee
- Continually promote and seek opportunities to develop tenant participation
- Set annual targets for Tenant Participation

## **Objectives:**

- Tenant Handbook
  - Aug 2019
- Street Representatives (Including Closes)
  - Ongoing Throughout Year
- Gala Day
- Promote Focus Groups
- Promote Management Committee
- Tenant Incentive Scheme
- Annual Garden Comp
- Wider Community – Christmas Card Competition (Schools), Community Garden
- Wellbeing Events – Chiropodist/Dental/Massage/Reiki/Mindfulness/Smoke Free/ Free, Fruit & Veg
- Dogs Trust (30<sup>th</sup> July 2019)
- Rent Review Consultation
- Easter/Halloween/Christmas
- Info Event – G-Heat, Citizens Advice, Gain, Fire Scotland, Glasgow Credit Union
- Jobs Fair – John Wheatley College