

BRIEFING NOTE

Housing Service- Tenant Involvement Update

The Service Development Team have worked to establish tenant involvement after the pandemic diminished most existing methods of engagement. In the last 12 months, the team along with the support of housing colleagues has:

- Launched a new tenant newsletter, 'housing hub' which is sent every 6 months. 3 issues have been sent in the new format.
- Launched a tenants newsletter, 'Chatter' for those tenants in residence across our sheltered housing schemes.
- Hosted a meet and greet for tenants to meet the team and chat about tenant involvement in an informal setting.
- Developed a new tenant portal called 'MyHousing' for tenants to view their rent and manage their personal data online.
- Hosted 4 drop in events for tenants, with a primary focus on dealing with damp and mould. Other opportunities to speak to tenancy management, private sector housing, housing repairs and tenant involvement were available.
- Assisted with 2 consultations, hosting information events for tenants to 'drop in'.
- Consulted with tenants on one revised policy and one revised specification of work which are now in place.
- Supported 2 cost of living events and donated a raffle prize to older persons day.
- Created 6 roles for tenant involvement opportunities and recruited to those posts.
- Recruitment of 172 tenants into tenant involvement opportunities. Our involved tenants will respond to opportunities as they arise and take part in what interests them.
- Hosted a pop up event for Housing colleagues to learn about the new Consumer Standards from the Social Housing Regulator.

Tenant Scrutiny

Having built a strong foundation for tenant involvement to grow further, we have successfully recruited new members to our Tenant Influence and Scrutiny Panel. Plans to refresh our Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Strategy will take place later this year as a co-creation exercise with the panel.

Appendix 1

Tenant Involvement Roles:

Reading Panel - receive policies, documents, letters, and early access to web pages to provide feedback on the content. These are communications that will be used by officers to speak to our tenants, so you will be helping us to make sure that the language used, and the tone is appropriate and helpful, whilst delivering our services. This role is carried out in your own time, from home.

Editorial Panel – Housing Hub - be part of a team who choose topics or provide images and content for our 6 monthly Housing Hub Tenants Newsletter. This role is carried out in your own time, from home.

Neighbourhood Champions - someone who can help promote tenant involvement activities in their neighbourhood. This can be a range of activities from assisting with events we hold, and encouraging others such as your neighbours, to join in. This role will vary depending on your neighbourhood, some aspects may be online, and some may be in community centres or local meet ups.

Customer Experience Champion - A really important role where you will receive training and support to advocate for tenants who need help to provide feedback or raise concerns with the council. You could be helping with awareness of all the different ways someone can make a compliment or complaint to us, you may also get more involved by supporting another tenant directly with their complaint or concern. There will be a meeting twice a year, to review housing complaints, and what was done about them. This is a key role in scrutinising how we handle complaints, to ensure that we are fair in our response and that we are doing everything we can to put things right. This role will vary as some aspects may be by phone, in person, or online.

Tenant Influence and Scrutiny Panel - Become a member of our new Scrutiny Panel, where you'll get involved in inspecting and giving feedback on the housing service. The Scrutiny Panel will meet every 3 months, it will either be online or in person - depending on the consensus of the group. You'll have the opportunity to receive training and have plenty of support from our team.

Void Property Inspector - Visit void (empty) properties with staff to inspect and ensure they meet the standards and provide feedback. This will take place in the daytime, for approximately 2 hours per month, we can provide transport to and from the empty property and we will meet you there to inspect the property with you.