

Mid Devon District Council

Tenant Involvement

Policy Number: HSG v3

February 2015

Version Control Sheet

Title: Tenant Involvement Policy

Purpose: To inform residents of our approach to tenant involvement

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Status: Review of Policy

Review Frequency: 3 yearly

Next review date: **February 2018**

Consultation **This document was sent out for consultation to the following:**

Cabinet Member
Scrutiny and Improvement Group
Management Team
Decent and Affordable Homes PDG

Document History

This document obtained the following approvals.

Title	Date	Version Approved
Cabinet Member	02/2015	
Scrutiny and Improvement Group	12/02/2015	
Management Team	03/03/2015	
Decent and Affordable Homes PDG	16/06/2015	
Cabinet	N/A	

1. INTRODUCTION

All registered providers must meet the Homes and Communities Agency's (HCA) consumer standards. One of these standards is the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment standard, as set out in the regulatory framework for social housing in England from April 2012. The regulatory framework for social housing required outcomes for this standard relate to:

- Customer service
- Choice and complaints, Involvement and empowerment
- Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants

2. SCOPE

This policy applies to how we will develop greater involvement of tenants in the decision-making processes of the Housing Service leading to service improvement and improved tenant satisfaction.

3. RELATED DOCUMENTS

- Tenancy Agreement
- Section 105 of the 1985 Housing Act
- The regulatory framework for social housing in England

4. The POLICY

This policy demonstrates our commitment to tenant involvement and to providing better homes and communities. The aim of this policy is to develop our structure to ensure we have effective involvement with tenants, and include leaseholders, in developing and improving services to meet their needs, ensuring that tenants have a chance to scrutinise the work of the housing service, and to strengthen our communities.

- This policy has been developed to ensure that the regulatory framework, set out in the National Standards informs the work of the Housing Service. We will demonstrate this by:
- Working in partnership with tenants in all aspects of housing management, by offering a menu of involvement shaped around the diverse needs of our tenants and offering opportunities to review the work of the Housing Service and to make recommendations to elected members
- Creating and developing a culture of mutual trust, respect and partnership between all parties at all levels

Making the best use of the resources available being mindful of the need to spend funds available wisely

We will involve tenants in housing management by a wide range of methods including:

- Making information easy to access, written in Plain English and, where possible, jargon free

- Acknowledging that many tenants do not wish to get involved and respecting their right not to do so. We will provide formal involvement methods, whilst promoting maximum inclusion through other less formal methods
- Finding the most appropriate way to consult individually and collectively and being clear about the choices on offer

5. INFORMATION

Tenants will be provided with information in a variety of ways, regarding the following:

- Issues affecting their homes and tenancies
- Housing management policies and practice
- Any proposals for change
- Rent increases

6. CONSULTATION

The Council is obliged to consult secure tenants on certain aspects of housing management. Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985 requires public sector landlords to have arrangements to inform and consult secure tenants who are likely to be affected by some proposed changes in matters of housing management. We also have a commitment to keeping tenants informed about other matters and to offering choices and opportunities to make recommendations to elected members. We will therefore provide information about:

- Major improvement or repair programmes
- Changes to policy and strategies
- Performance targets and priorities
- Activities for tenant involvement
- The timetable for newsletters
- The Annual Report

7. PARTICIPATION

Tenants will have ample opportunity to participate and play an integral part in:

- Scrutinising and challenging how services are managed and provided
- Giving us their opinion on how to improve service delivery

8. SUMMARY

Establishing meaningful involvement is not always about attending a meeting or saying yes to every idea put forward. It is about working in partnership to make better decisions in the work that we do to improve our housing service for all tenants. Tenants will be able to give us their views by various methods:

- Social Media and email
- Face to face
- Telephone
- Written
- Tenant involvement events

9. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

As a registered provider of social housing, the Council has an equality duty and is bound by the provisions of the Equality Act 2010. This means we must ensure that there will be no discrimination or unfair treatment on the grounds of gender (or gender reassignment), background (e.g. gypsies and travellers, asylum seekers) race, colour, ethnicity or national origin, faith, sexual orientation, marital/civil partnership status, age, disability, social position, politics, trade union membership or social disadvantage. We will not tolerate any discriminatory remarks or actions and will challenge anyone who behaves in that manner. Tenants will be excluded from any further involvement if they continue to behave in an offensive or discriminatory manner.

10. REVIEW

This Policy has been written in line with and meets current relevant legislation. Unless there are changes to such legislation beforehand, the next review of this policy is due February 2018.