

Resident Engagement Policy



Reference:	HS_POL_CCC_RES_1.0	Author:	AD Housing & Resident Engagement & Resident Empowerment Manager
Scope:	Board Members Employees Residents	Approved by:	Board
Legislation:	Bribery Act 2010 Data Protection Act 2018 General Data Protection Regulation (UKGDPR)	Date of approval:	July 2024
Regulatory/ Governance:	RSH Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard RSH Neighbourhood and Community Standard Equality Act 2010 The Charter for Social Housing Residents NHF Code of Governance 2020 Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2024 Building Safety Act 2022 Code of practice – consumer regulations	Date of next review:	July 2027
Related Policies:	Volunteer Policy Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Vulnerable Customer Policy Data Protection Policy Whistleblowing Policy Professional Boundaries Policy Safeguarding Policy Domestic Abuse Policy Resident Engagement Strategy		

1. Policy statement

- 1.1 **We want our residents to shape our services:** residents to hold us to account and support the delivery of the service we provide. We want to co-design solutions that focus on overall satisfaction through listening to our residents' feedback, ideas and updating them on how their suggestions have been considered. This policy supports our Corporate Strategy and sets out the principles of our approach to resident engagement. We will work alongside the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards and the National Housing Federation guidance on engaging with our residents.

Our three pillars of resident engagement are:

Engagement	Involvement	Influence
Engage with residents much more effectively across Housing Solutions profile	Provide our residents with multiple accessible opportunities to share their feedback.	Actively listen and be accountable to resident feedback, acting on the results, and feed back to residents on the changes that have been delivered, creating strong feedback loops with measurable impact.
Improve the way we communicate with residents, listen and act on their preferences providing impactful services that better meet their needs	Meet the regulatory standards (safety and quality, transparency, influence and accountability, neighborhood and community and tenancy standards) and key legislation on engaging and listening to residents	Ensure residents have influence over the way we deliver our resident services by promoting a range of easy to accessible channels to have resident voices heard and treating resident lived experience with respect.

- 1.2 **We will work with all our residents:** This document refers to 'residents' and much of the work we do will be with tenants of the organisation, but due to the nature of the work we do, the tenures we manage and our wider community activities we will also engage and listen to those stakeholders who are not 'tenants'. That include, Community Organisations that provide services to our residents
- 1.3 **We will work in partnership with our communities:** For Housing Solutions, Resident Engagement is a way in which we can work collaboratively with people who live in the homes we provide, working closely together to deliver solutions. We will work in partnership with all residents and create an environment and culture where we continuously listen to concerns, so that we drive forward continuous improvement
- 1.4 **We will be resident focused:** We are a community based, resident focused organisation and resident engagement is a key part of our objectives within our Corporate Strategy – safe, satisfied and sustainable. Our vision is to make our

residents proud of where they live and our colleagues proud of where they work.:

- Safe, to keep residents and colleagues safe
- Satisfied, value for money services for residents and fulfilling careers for colleagues
- Sustainable, deliver more effective services and more efficient homes

1.5 We are committed to listening to our residents: Housing Solutions is committed to listening to the voice of the resident and is committed to the promotion of resident engagement in empowering residents to participate in the work of Housing Solutions in different ways. Whether you are living in social housing, sheltered accommodation, a supported property, a shared owner, or you are a leaseholder who owns their home, we want residents to have a real role in how Housing Solutions operates, which helps the organisation to deliver effective services and meet the needs of the diverse communities it serves.

We have several different forums in which residents can get involved and are seeking to develop these further as part of our commitment to engagement, listening to residents on what are most effective for them, and in doing so overcome the barriers to engagement. Our current forums are;

- Scrutiny and Improvement Team (SIT)
- Community Living Panel (Older Peoples Housing)
- E-Panel
- Homeowner Panel
- Estates Panel
- Complaints panel

We plan a number of local community engagement events throughout the year which focus on demographic and local need We also plan to develop a Young Peoples Panel and explore the establishment of Residents Estate Inspectors who can join staff on Estates Walkabouts. Training will be provided to enable individuals to participate effectively and represent the residents on their neighborhood. In line with our Equality, Inclusion and Diversity Strategy priorities we will use these forums and events, to increase resident data in the categories where we hold least information so that we can develop a deeper understanding of both current and future resident needs. As we evolve the quality of data held, we will seek to improve how we can use resident satisfaction data to identify, target and work with underrepresented groups.

- 1.6 **We want to provide a range of opportunities for our residents to engage:** Residents will have and will be made aware of a range of opportunities for engaging with Housing Solutions both formally, and informally. We will ensure that residents can meaningfully influence service delivery, by facilitating input into the development and monitoring of services and measuring the effects and improvements of our approach. Ensuring that residents are supported and encouraged to engage and become involved, providing the budgets and staffing resources that will deliver, provide access to -training opportunities and support of key activities

There is a clear information flow between the Board, staff, residents, and the wider community. It is crucial that the ‘voice’ of the resident can clearly be heard at all levels of the organisation

2. Scope of the Policy

- 2.1 The Resident Engagement Policy applies to all Board Members, employees and residents of Housing Solutions.
- 2.2 The policy applies to all our resident engagement activities, which will include residents of all tenures, prospective residents and the wider community in which we operate.
- 2.3 The milestones of our policy are

Engagement	Involvement	Influence
Reviewing policies due for update and feedback to residents how their comments have been considered and actioned	Establish a clear feedback loop to residents for policy development by working with key staff accountable for the service delivery area	Start to shape the resident of the future – through our demographic data profile
Youth panel campaign – establish and develop an involvement platform for young Housing Solutions residents	Work across operational teams to hold events which are targeted to need	Use data to profile to encourage resident involvement
Encourage under represented residents to have a voice by linking data and using appropriate methods of communication	Include Community organisations in the message delivery of Communication Campaigns	Communication campaigns ensuring residents formats and platforms are considered
We will work with our leaseholder and shared owners on engagement and how we can represent their needs and views.	Work with teams to Establish or re-establish Multi agency forums with external stakeholders	Provide progress report on Resident Engagement work streams

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
The Board, Chief Executive and Executive Team	Responsible for demonstrating a clear and active commitment to resident engagement, listening and reporting to residents regularly on delivery of our commitments under this policy.
Assistant Director of Housing and Resident Engagement	Responsible for ensuring this policy remains effective and up to date and in alignment with the Resident Engagement strategy provides a pathway for continuous improvement on engagement.
Resident Empowerment Manager	Responsible for ensuring their teams are aware of and abide by the wording and the principles set out in this policy, and the wider Resident Engagement strategy
Resident Empowerment Manager	Responsible for day-to-day activities and reporting in support of this policy.
Employees	Responsible for considering how residents can be more involved in their service area and promoting opportunities for involvement wherever possible
Residents	Will hold us to account to ensure we are committed to resident engagement and meeting actions and targets set out within the Resident Engagement Strategy

4. Legislation / Regulation / Governance

- 4.1 It is a regulatory requirement for Housing Solutions to have meaningful resident engagement, including mechanisms for co-regulation where it is clearly demonstrable that there can be a direct influence on services.
- 4.2 We also have to make residents aware of these opportunities and are given them a wide range of opportunities for engagement and influence including;
- Formulation and review of appropriate policies and strategic priorities
 - Setting of service standards
 - Scrutiny of Landlord performance
 - Management / monitoring of repair and maintenance tasks, giving feedback and agreeing local offers around service delivery

4.3 Housing Solutions will ensure that we remain compliant with all regulation and guidance set out on page 1 of this policy. We will also ensure that the policy will be updated if there are any changes in legislation, guidance, or best practice, including:

- Satisfying the Together with Tenants Charter from the National Housing Federation.
- Satisfying the Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards (below)

Consumer standards

- **Safety and Quality Standard** – which requires landlords to provide safe and good quality homes and landlord services to tenants
- **Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard** – which requires landlords to be open with tenants and treat them with fairness and respect
- **Neighbourhood and Community Standard** – which requires landlords to engage with other relevant parties so that tenants can live in safe and well-maintained neighbourhoods and feel safe in their homes.
- **Tenancy Standard** – which sets requirements for the fair allocation and letting of homes and for how those tenancies are managed and ended by landlords.

5. Recognition and Reward

5.1 We believe in recognizing everyone's time and effort and rewarding those who work with us to help improve our services to residents. We incentivise residents to engage with us as a part of our resident involvement offer. We understand that recognition of residents' work and time commitments through various means, including rewards and incentives, goes a long way to building stronger partnerships.

5.2 To make our rewards structure as fair as possible to all residents, monetary compensation is not provided as involvement activities are not considered as paid work. Remuneration in the form of monetary payments would also be deemed as a salary, which would have tax and benefits implications, for both residents and Housing Solutions.

5.3 Rewards and incentives offered may include:

- Thank you, events,
- Vouchers for those who participate on our Panels or Task and Finish Groups
- Seasonal gifts
- Prize draws
- Opportunities to attend conferences and other events
- Training opportunities

- 5.4 Any rewards or incentives are given in addition to expenses (see Volunteer Policy for further details on expenses).

6. We will recognise the contribution of residents

- 6.1 We value the contribution of all our residents and will regularly communicate and promote activities and involvement in a variety of formats. We will ensure that residents are appropriately supported and encouraged to get involved with Housing Solutions' service delivery and community-based activities.
- 6.2 We will consider all comments and suggestions made by residents.
- 6.3 We will highlight where changes have been made due to resident involvement, and give reasons if something cannot be implemented.
- 6.4 We will provide training and practical support to residents so they can gain new skills within their volunteering role.
- 6.5 We will encourage involved residents to attend relevant training and conferences with external providers and partner agencies.
- 6.6 We will work to ensure full participation of residents in line with our commitments to diversity and inclusion, seeking to identify and remove barriers which may prevent some groups or individual from engaging. This will be achieved by providing tailored support and resources, taking account the diverse needs of the communities where we provide homes and services. This includes;
- Funding, staffing and training – with a commitment to delivering and supporting key engagement and involvement activities
 - Creating and funding training opportunities to increase resident skills and confidence.
 - Assisting with recruitment to tenant bodies, both 'corporate' and local.
 - Promoting the ways in which tenants / residents can join the various involvement groups
 - Organising a regular Tenants Conference including reasonable adjustments to make the event as accessible as possible.
- 6.7 Implementing the actions above, will enable residents to fully engage fully with the organisation at a level, and in ways that suit them.
- 6.8 We will promote digital inclusion for our residents to access services and opportunities to provide feedback, via use of apps, social media platforms and HS Portal. We will work with residents who do not have communication preferences

in digital formats and create opportunities to provide feedback in person. We will utilize our data on communication preferences and demographics to better meet diverse need.

Areas where we won't engage with our residents

- Pay and bonus awards for Housing Solutions staff
- Mandatory compliance tasks and policies as outlined by regulatory standards
- Some Legislation requirements
- Disciplinary and performance related review for Housing Solutions staff

7. Procedure

7.1 The Resident Engagement Strategy and action plan will support and develop the overall aims and objectives of this Policy, along with relevant timescales.

8. Vulnerable residents

8.1 We recognise that residents will engage with us in different ways so our approach must adapt and be flexible to accommodate the needs of all residents, especially those who are more vulnerable. We will work closely with colleagues and partners to engage with residents sensitively while aiming to make involvement activities fully accessible. For further details refer to our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and our Vulnerable Customer Policy.

8.2 Housing Solutions will work with external stakeholders to understand the needs of vulnerable residents, the additional services they provide to them and how we can share best practice

9. Equality & Diversity

9.1 Housing Solutions recognises the needs of a diverse population and always acts within the scope of its own Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy, and the Equality Act 2010. Housing Solutions works closely with its partners to ensure it has a clear understanding of its resident community with clear, regularly updated service user profiles. Housing Solutions will record, analyse, and monitor information on ethnicity, vulnerability, and disability.

10. Confidentiality

10.1 All personal information, however received, is handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation. This includes:

- anything of a personal nature that is not a matter of public record about a resident, client, applicant, colleague, or board member
Confidential business information will also be treated sensitively.

10.2 Housing Solutions' employees will ensure that they only involve other agencies and share information where there is a relevant legal basis for processing the information.

11. Review

11.1 This policy will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis or more frequently in response to changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, good practice, or changes in other relevant Housing Solutions' policies.

11.2 Our performance in relation to the delivery of the services and activities set out in this policy will be monitored on an ongoing basis through our established reporting mechanisms to our Senior Management Team, Executive Team, Board, and associated committee

