



TENANT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

2015 – 2018

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LET A MEMBER OF STAFF KNOW YOUR REQUIREMENTS**

Cathcart & District Housing Association

Tenant Participation Strategy 2015- 2018

Definition of Tenant Participation:

Tenant participation is about tenants taking part in the decision make processes and influencing decisions about:

- Housing policies
- Housing conditions
- Housing services

It is a two way process which involves the sharing of information, ideas and power its aim is to improve the standard of housing conditions and services:

From “partners in participation”
The National strategy for tenant participation 1999

1.0 Introduction

Cathcart & District Housing Association is committed to providing good quality information and involving tenants in decision making. In order to demonstrate this commitment, the Association has developed this Tenant Participation Strategy in full consultation with tenants. The Strategy will explain to tenants, staff and committee members, how tenants can get involved and influence housing services. This Strategy will cover the period from 1st September 2012 to 31st March 2015.

As well as being good practice, a Tenant Participation Strategy is also a legal requirement, under Section 53 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. This Strategy takes account of a range of Performance Standards, specifically GS2.2.

2.0 Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the strategy are as listed below. These have been developed taking account of the views of tenants, staff and committee.

- To encourage greater participation in all aspects of the association’s operations.
- To encourage participation from as diverse a range of tenants as possible i.e. various ages, ethnicities, people with disabilities etc.
- To provide good quality information to tenants of Cathcart .
- To continue to communicate well with tenants on appropriate matters.
- To use a greater variety of consultation methods where appropriate.
- Development of skills and knowledge among tenants.
- To improve overall customer satisfaction

4.0 Information

The following list is just some of the information the association will make available to tenants;

- Newsletters
- Annual report
- Copies of relevant policies and procedures, accounts, Flyers and leaflets
- Tenants handbook
- Details of local events
- Money advice
- Applying for housing / internal transfer
- Right to buy
- Help, advice and support agencies
- Performance of the association
- Staff changes
- Committee changes
- Tenant satisfaction survey results

This list is not exhaustive.

5.0 Consultation

Cathcart has always been committed to consulting with tenants on changes to services that have a direct impact on them. The association wishes to develop a strategy that most reflects the wishes of our tenants.

CDHA carry out regular tenants satisfaction surveys and the information gathered feeds into the review of this strategy.

At first, the strategy may seem modest. However, this is based on the principle that it is much better that our formal strategy is realistic and achievable, as opposed to containing far too many different elements that, even at the outset, we know we are not going to achieve. It should also be noted that this is the approach recommended by The Scottish Housing Regulator in the publication from their national TP team.

6.0 Review of Strategy

The Association has carried out a review of our internal practices and procedures. We are constantly aiming to become more efficient. In our efforts to ensure that tenants receive up to date and meaningful information we will continue to

- Send out newsletters 3-4 times a year.
- Newsletters are used to provoke feedback from tenants on current matters e.g. rent increases, public meetings, newsletters, planned maintenance, community issues, policy reviews etc.

- Newsletters are also designed to generate tenants and prospective tenant involvement in policy reviews. This includes the review of this strategy as well as the allocation policy and the anti-social behaviour policy.
- We will be asking you the tenants in our survey what you think about our newsletters.
- Once the full tenant satisfaction survey has been carried out the final report will be published.
- AGM's have been reasonably well attended in the past. This year was the best attendance to date. We plan to use this venue as a platform to gain feedback from tenants in future years.
- Regular reminders are placed in the Association newsletters with a view to encouraging tenants to become involved in the management committee.
- The association publishes details of our website in our newsletter. We will also use our website to achieve feedback.
- A review of the Tenants Handbook was undertaken in 2012 and issued to all tenants
- Our Committee of management has run at full capacity for over 5 years and all vacancies have been readily filled.

7.0 Registered Tenant Organisations (RTOs)

The Association will be happy to encourage and assess applications for groups of tenants to form RTOs. However, it is apparent from past experience that residents in the area who wish to participate tend to join the Management Committee. The Association will, of course, view the setting up of any RTOs positively and will give appropriate financial and administrative support.

Given that the level of resources (in terms of the time and staff levels we have available) is finite and we therefore have to prioritise all the important elements that form our tenant participation strategy, it is viewed as more productive to concentrate on other aspects of TP. However, we will endeavour to encourage RTO's wherever possible in the newsletter or with interested parties.

8.0 Monitoring and Review

This strategy will be monitored on an ongoing basis. Outcomes in relation to targets set will be reported to the management committee in April each year. The Strategy will be comprehensively reviewed every 3years.

October 2012

Appendix 1

1. In general, do you find our newsletters informative? Yes No D/K
2. In general, do you feel that we consult you about matters that affect you and your tenancy, for example, repairs, allocations, rents? Yes No D/K
3. Do you know that you can stand for election to the Management Committee? Yes No D/K
4. Would you consider joining the Committee? Yes No D/K
5. Which of the following appeal to you as a means of keeping you informed/consulted on matters that affect your tenancy? (select all that apply).
- Regular Newsletters Yes No D/K
- Door-to-door surveys Yes No D/K
- Drop-in Days (Open Days) Yes No D/K
- Telephone Surveys Yes No D/K
- Public Meetings Yes No D/K
- Area Committees Yes No D/K
- Focus Groups or Working Parties Yes No D/K
- Management Committee Yes No D/K
6. On which of the following general areas would you like to be consulted?
- Allocation of housing
- Rent Arrears
- Day-to-day Repairs
- Major Repairs
- Rent levels
- Estate management
7. Would you find any of the following helpful?
- Large print
- On tape
- In Braille
- Translated
- Please specify..... Any other at all
8. Do you or your partner work more than 16 hours per week? Yes No
- If yes, are you in receipt of Housing Benefit? Yes No

**Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd.
Tenant Participation Strategy – Work Plan**

Finding	Task	Timescale	Lead Officer	Comments
Survey tenants to find out if they are happy with the format, content and length of the newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to send out quarterly newsletters 	Quarterly	Christine	
Survey tenants to find out if public meetings would be a popular choice to imparting information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include in survey form 	Three Yearly	Christine	
Past surveys said we were good at keeping tenants informed . Survey tenants to find out if still true	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to inform tenants using various methods including an annual report and web site etc. 	On going	Christine	
The Association has not yet received any definite enquiries from tenants or groups of tenants in relation to establishing RTO's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place regular reminders in newsletters with a view to encouraging local people to set up RTO's. Remind them of the support we will offer. 	Ongoing	Christine	

Finding	Task	Timescale	Lead Officer	Comments
We want to encourage tenants to participate in a way which suits them. It was on this basis that members approved the TP Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to investigate and promote as many ways as possible of allowing and encouraging tenants to participate e.g. in person, comments and suggestion box, surveys, questionnaires, focus groups, AGM, public meetings, web site etc. 	Ongoing	Christine	
We want tenants to know what their rights are in respect of tenant consultation and information. We want tenants to know how they can participate, should they wish to do so.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following on from the issue of the Scottish Executive leaflet, more information has been provided in the Tenants Handbook. Reminders about rights to information and consultation should continue to be publicised on the association website and in newsletters. 	Ongoing	Christine	Information permanently available on website.
The Association is keen to attract younger members onto the management committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and approach younger tenants when committee vacancies become available. 	As appropriate	Christine / Committee	