

Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy: Draft Update December 2023

Intro from *tbc*

“We want tenants and leaseholders to be at the heart of what we do. Your views are important, and our aim is to deliver high quality services which you really value.

You should be able to influence what we do, be able to challenge us, tell us when we get it right and wrong and help us find better ways of delivering services.

There has been so much in the news over the past few years which has had a huge impact on attitudes towards tenant involvement. This has brought into sharp focus the importance of tenant voices being heard, and as a result the new Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 was introduced.

Tenant engagement has always been important to us, but we recognise that we need to do more to meet your expectations, and to meet the new regulatory requirements. We need to understand your views on how your homes are managed, and act on those views when designing services and making decisions.

The Engagement Strategy was originally developed in 2020 by tenants, leaseholders and local Councillors from across the city. We have recently consulted with you on its review, and this updated version is a result of the feedback you gave us.

It sets out how we are going to improve the way we engage with you. It explains our priorities for tenant engagement over the next 3 years, and how we will make it easier for all our customers to influence the services we deliver.

I am absolutely committed to delivering the Strategy’s promises and to involving tenants and leaseholders in making it a reality. This means truly listening to what you tell us and acting on those views.”

Insert name / job title

The Strategy

Priority 1: To provide easy and convenient access to information and engagement / involvement opportunities

Information about housing services and performance will be readily available for all customers. We will aim to remove all barriers, as far as possible, to people being engaged and involved. We will use plain language in all of our communications with tenants.

We will use a variety of creative engagement methods. Online engagement is important, but will not be our only channel. Our tenants have a diverse range of needs, and there will be opportunities for all to be involved in ways which suit them.

Priority 2: To ensure that customers and their communities can influence what we do

There will be an effective user-friendly framework for customer scrutiny, influence and assurance. To support this, we will improve joint-working across our different forums and meetings.

Engagement activities and topics will be influenced by customers – topics and agendas being driven by what matters most to customers – and the voice of tenants and leaseholders will be heard by those making decisions affecting them.

Priority 3: To engage effectively with local people and communities to improve what we do

There will be more engagement opportunities at a local level. All communication and consultation will be done in a way which specifically suits the local people or community.

There will be specific focus on engaging with the young people within our communities, as their voice often goes unheard. A wide range and variety of local service partners and community organisations will be encouraged to work with us and to be involved in shaping services in their communities.

Priority 4: To make sure that all involved in our services recognise and value customer engagement

Local Elected Councillors value customer engagement and will be encouraged and supported to become more involved in housing services.

The outcomes of engagement will be communicated – to customers, staff, the services, and external organisations who work with us. We will raise awareness of the benefits that customer engagement brings.

We will promote the opportunities to be involved, so that all our customers know how they can make a positive difference.

Priority 5: To support and resource customer engagement work so that it delivers outcomes

We will encourage, empower, and support customers to be involved. We will help people to feel confident in engaging with us and to be involved in a way which suits them.

We will support Tenants and Residents Associations and other community groups to work as effectively as possible so that they can achieve the greatest benefits for the communities they serve. We will help to maximise joint-working opportunities.

Evaluating the outcomes

We will regularly review the strategy to make sure it continues to reflect what we want to achieve.

There is an Action Plan which details the actions needed to meet those commitments. The Action Plan will be regularly updated, and the latest version will always be available on our website. We will also regularly share our progress against this Action Plan in our tenant bulletins and social media posts.

Menu of Involvement

We offer a range of involvement opportunities designed to offer 'something for everyone' – whether you only have a couple of minutes to complete a quick survey or would like to spend an hour or so per month being an active member of one of our panels.

Please see [Engagement HQ] or get in touch with us at GetInvolved@sheffield.gov.uk if you would like to know more.