

Thanet District Council

Tenant and Leaseholder Services Resident Involvement Strategy 2022 - 2025



Introduction

We want to improve our housing services. The residents who use the service have the best insight on how we can do this.

The Tenant and Leaseholder Services (TLS) manages the Council's social housing stock, and we have the opportunity to tap into a wealth of knowledge and opinions. We must ensure our residents have the opportunity to question how we do things, feel motivated to do this and are confident that we will act on their feedback.

This three year strategy sets out our commitment to doing just that. The benefits are:

- To improve the housing service using influence and scrutiny from residents
- Improve satisfaction with the service.

Some residents want to get involved, whilst others only want to engage when they need to. We need to communicate with all groups effectively.

This strategy was co-developed with a resident focus group. In the sessions we used insight gathered from two resident consultations.

For the purpose of this strategy we refer to our tenants and leaseholders as residents.



Foreword from the resident focus group

We want this strategy to foster a culture of transparency and respect. Making sure as residents we have a wide range of opportunities to have our voices listened to and ensure those voices are valued.

Breaking down barriers to enable transparency, effective communication, involvement and having a stronger bond between resident and landlord. Working together to improve our neighbourhoods, quality of homes and bring communities together.

In co-developing this strategy we have listened to the outcome of consultations carried out with wider residents as to how they want to be involved and their improvement priorities. We've reflected on the existing and future requirements for landlords, as well as considering best practices.

We enjoyed the experience of getting involved in developing the strategy and look forward to seeing an increase in residents using their voice and getting involved to improve our housing services.



Our vision

Our Tenant and Leaseholder Services team cares about delivering the best landlord experience for our residents:

- Our team is proactive, collaborative and committed to providing great landlord services.
- Our dedicated officers are respectful, professional and take pride in their work.
- Our values are at the core of our vision and guide the behaviour of our team.

The team's vision is strongly linked to the Councils' Core Business Objectives and the role we play in 'delivering high-quality housing, safer communities and enhancing the health and wellbeing of our residents.'¹

The way we can deliver the best landlord experience is by asking our residents to scrutinise what we do and asking them how they think we can do things better. This strategy builds on our existing commitment, providing more informal and flexible ways for a broad range of residents to have their voices heard. Therefore this strategy sets its own aspiration or vision to:

'Bringing voices together - collaboration of residents and officers'

Objectives

Our Housing and Planning Service plan describes how we contribute to the council's priorities, it tells us that our key focus is 'to ensure the provision of a high quality, cost effective service to residents'². One of the ways we can measure this is through residents' satisfaction.

We know that involving residents in the design of services is a key part of achieving good resident satisfaction. The following objectives are in place to ensure our resident involvement is meaningful and successful:

- 1) To ensure residents influence services.
- 2) To develop a resident involvement structure that enables residents to influence and scrutinise services.
- 3) To ensure our services benefit from residents' involvement and residents feel valued.
- 4) To benefit from a broader range of experiences and ideas.
- 5) To support residents to get involved.

¹ Thanet District Councils' Corporate Statement, Core Business Objectives 2019 - 2023

² CS03 HOUSING AND PLANNING SERVICE PLAN 2019-2022

Objective 1 - To ensure residents influence services

We ensure that residents influence our services by enabling them to do so.

We will do this by organising resident involvement activities which provide insight that influences our housing services. Activities are outcome focused and are directly linked to corporate or TLS Service Plan(s).

Managers champion resident involvement and make sure any service changes are influenced by residents.

Resident involvement will influence the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- The formulation of housing-related policies and strategic priorities.
- The making of decisions about how housing-related services are delivered, including the setting of service standards.
- The scrutiny of their landlord's performance and the making of recommendations to their landlord about how performance might be improved.
- The management of their homes, where applicable.
- The management of repair and maintenance services.
- Agreeing local offers for service delivery.
- Procurement of key contractors in line with residents priorities.
- Decision making about their building's safety.

We will learn from complaints and compliments and use the insight to drive service improvements.



Objective 2 - To develop a resident involvement structure that enables residents to influence and scrutinise services

We want to make it easy for residents to get involved in a way that suits them.

We will use a flexible range of formal and informal opportunities for residents to influence and scrutinise services.

We will be clear about the involvement objective(s) and how much time or commitment is needed.

We will tailor our involvement opportunities as to how residents have told us they would like to get involved. Learning from best practice, we will trial new opportunities, monitor the impact and stop activities that aren't working.

We will monitor the diversity of involvement and use best practices to target under represented groups.



Formal involvement opportunities

Thanet District Council		
Housing Cabinet Advisory Group (HCAG)	Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet Member for Housing	Tenant and Leaseholder Services



Strategic umbrella groups with resident memberships		
Tenant and Leaseholder Group (TTLG)	TTLG Performance and Monitoring Sub-group	Resident representation at key contractor strategic meetings



Flexible consultation and scrutiny			
Focus Groups - Task and finish scrutiny and service improvement panel(s)	Online engagement - Residents Forum	Estate Inspections	Community Champions

Informal involvement opportunities

Feedback complaints and compliments	Annual perception tenant satisfaction survey	Transaction tenant satisfaction surveys
Consultation surveys (online, postal, face to face)	Service improvement suggestion box (online and at events)	Partnership/Community events and project trials
Contact us - call 01843 577262	Write to us at Cecil Street, Margate CT9 1XZ	Email myhome@thanet.gov.uk

Informed involvement opportunities

Tenant and leaseholder quarterly newsletters, online and mailed	High-rise building quarterly newsletters, hand delivered to residents	Involvement handbook and service information leaflets (printed and online)
Our annual report	High-rise building safety case report(s)	Community noticeboards
Visit thanet.gov.uk/myhome		

Objective 3 - To ensure our services benefit from residents involvement and residents feel valued

Residents provide feedback and experiences of living in their homes, communities and in accessing services, which shapes service improvement. Residents get involved for a number of reasons:

- Ability to hold us accountable as the landlord.
- Make a difference in their neighbourhood.
- Giving something back to their community.
- Voice community concerns.
- Get a better understanding of how the service works.
- Personal development and learning new skills.
- Meet new people.

We value the involved residents' and recognise their significant commitment and expert opinion. We are committed to listening to and working in partnership with residents. We will report on how their involvement has influenced services; and when it can't explain why.

We will demonstrate the impact resident involvement is having on housing services and feedback to residents in the following ways:

- Directly to involved individuals and groups.
- On our website.
- In newsletters.
- In our annual report.
- Communal noticeboards.

We will ensure the language used in all communication written or face to face is clear and builds a mutual respect.



Objective 4 - To benefit from a broader range of experience and ideas

Our service benefits from engaging with our residents with differing lifestyles, ages and backgrounds. We want to hear what all our residents have to say. Through the implementation of this strategy we aim to improve our ability to engage with different groups and thus support equality in the following ways:

Eliminating discrimination

A statement of equal opportunities and anti-discrimination will form part of all engagement activity, as set out in the Resident Involvement Code of Conduct and be included in the terms of reference for all formal groups.

We will measure satisfaction of different equality characteristics to ensure we provide a fair and equitable service.

Advancing equality

We will develop a process to collect and maintain a profile of our residents.

We will monitor the diversity of our engaged residents to ensure appropriate representation across our engagement activities and targeted engagement. For example, engaging disabled residents who live in high-rise buildings about safety decisions.

We will actively encourage engagement from under-represented groups in recruitment drives and through promotional activities.

We will aim to increase resident's capacity and willingness to engage by accommodating their needs and requirements, as far as reasonably practicable.

In engagement and promotion, this means asking whether any assistance is required, particularly in relation to:

- Unseen disability.
- Physical accessibility.
- Venue location.
- Diet.
- Language.
- Sight or hearing difficulties.
- Religious or cultural practices.
- Residents availability.

Fostering good relations between people of different characteristics

We will actively encourage wider representation at meetings and events to promote greater interaction and inclusion. Reaching out to hard to reach groups for example religious/LGBTQ+/minority groups.

Objective 5 - To support residents to get involved

We will enable residents to effectively get involved at a level that suits them. We will do this in the following ways:

Resident training

To support residents who wish to build their capacity to become more effectively involved, there is access to training, conferences, independent advice and best practice.

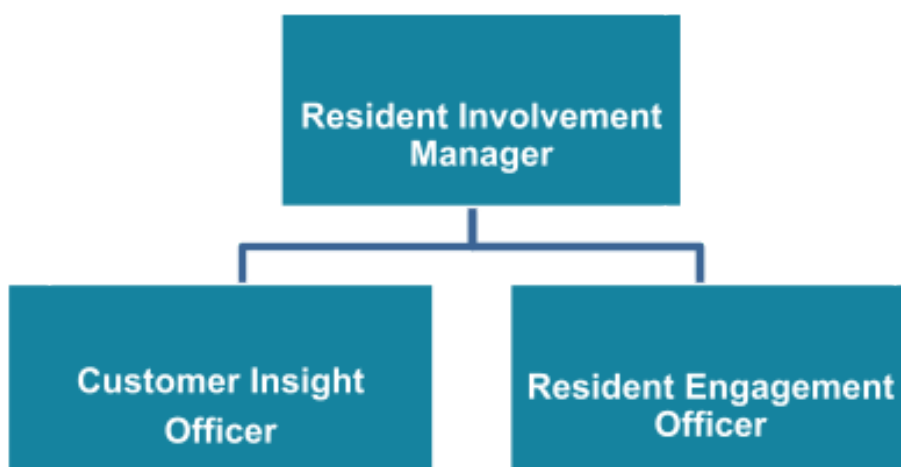
Expenses and incentives

A Resident Involvement Expenses and Incentive Policy is in place to remove financial barriers to formal involvement, encouraging broader engagement.

Resident Involvement team

A dedicated team and budget is in place to support resident involvement and engagement activities.

To benefit from a broader range of experience and ideas, the team will reach out to groups of residents that would not usually get involved. We will work with our residents to identify and break down barriers to involvement.



Measuring success and reviewing the strategy

We will measure the success of the strategy in the following ways:

- The completion of actions set out in the [strategy's action plan \(Appendix 1\)](#),
- Increase in resident satisfaction levels
- Ability to report on the impact of resident involvement

The TTLG Performance and Monitoring Sub-group will periodically monitor the progress against the strategy action plan.

We will consult residents every three years to review how we involve them in influencing and scrutinising the housing service, in line with the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard.

Appendices:

[Appendix 1 Action Plan](#)

[Appendix 2 Equality Impact Assessment](#)

[Appendix 3 Research and insight used](#)