

The Effectiveness of Tenant Consultation Mechanisms - Task and Finish Group Update of Findings

Consultation requirements for social landlords are set out in the:

- Housing Act
- Homes and Communities Agency Regulatory Framework

and provide tenants with the right to information and consultation on:

- Rights and responsibilities (of the tenant and the landlord)
- Services, service levels and significant changes to these

Recommendation (1): All activities undertaken to consult tenants should reach as wide and representative an audience as possible; where possible, consultation should be direct, not indirect (through a representative) based on the proven success of this approach.

Recommendation (2): The group considers that greater care and strategy should be employed when deciding what to consult on, in line with regulatory and legal requirements, to make best use of limited resources. Consultation should therefore be targeted in terms of audience, approach and timeliness. As such, methods where regular meetings are set were deemed less effective as a consultation mechanism as they take place regardless of need.

Formal, Indirect Representation	Tenant's Associations and Representatives	Review: A separate task and finish group will be convened to carry out a grant funding review of community hub offices, the environmental fund and tenant associations and representatives and will incorporate a review of the tenant representative role.
	Partnering Contract Representatives	Action: Move to direct representation for setting specifications and service levels and for contract management <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • seeking views on service levels, customer care and training through informal methods • using tenant views already captured through surveys, complaints and compliments to manage performance
	Keynotes Editorial Panel	Action: Editorial control lies with Stroud District Council. The panel's role will be to ensure that articles are clear and engaging.
	Stroud Council Housing Forum	Action: To carry out consultation with the tenant body on the best way of involving tenants in the governance and scrutiny of the organisation's housing management service. This is required by 2.2.4 of the HCA's Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard. This is to ensure that the tenant views considered by Housing Committee when making decisions are as representative as possible.

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Informal, Direct Consultation	Question of the Month	<p>This approach to consultation was commended and considered to be effective and working well and the group recommends these continue.</p> <p>Significantly more people are giving their views and hard-to-reach sections of the tenant demographic are having input using these methods.</p> <p>Review: A range of different approaches are being considered at an operational level to enable tenants to input into the management and improvement of their estates more effectively.</p>
	Scheduled annual consultations i.e. Have Your Say events	
	Sheltered scheme meetings/drop-in sessions	
	Ad hoc consultations and events to address issues as they arise i.e. the anti-social behaviour road shows, sheltered asset review	
	Estate Walkabouts	

While not under this group's remit, we comment as follows on co-regulation activities:

Co-regulation	Mystery Shopping	Action: This activity should not be pursued as it is not deemed robust. There are other effective mechanisms in place that would trigger performance improvement activities as required.
	Tenant Inspection/ Repairs Tenant Inspectors	The group is satisfied that these roles are working well and producing effective performance improvement results.
	Scrutiny Panel	Review: Model currently being reviewed by a separate task and finish group. Group to reconvene in March to receive an update on research undertaken on different approaches.

A report will be brought to Housing Committee following consultation with tenants on the best way of involving tenants in the governance and scrutiny of the organisation's housing management service.

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