

DRAFT Tenant Participation Strategy 2020-23

Involving You



Introduction

Welcome to the draft City of Edinburgh Council Tenant Participation Strategy, which will cover the period 2020-2023. It's been developed with tenants and builds on previous strategies, achievements and activities.

The Strategy is part of our commitment to listening to local people and working together with local communities. It also supports the Edinburgh Partnership's role to improve wellbeing and secure high quality public services for the city; the Tenant Participation Strategy will develop to fit with the city's new local community planning arrangements, including the neighbourhood networks.

Context

The [Housing \(Scotland\) Act 2001](#) requires social landlords to “consult tenants on proposals that affect them, and take account of their views”. Tenants' groups can register with their landlord to strengthen their rights to information and to take part.

The [Scottish Social Housing Charter](#) requires social landlords to ensure that “tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with”.

The [Scottish Housing Regulator](#) checks tenant participation, emphasising the importance of tenants and social landlords scrutinising services together to improve performance and ensure value for money.

The [Community Empowerment \(Scotland\) Act 2015](#) aims to ensure that everyone can get involved and help make important decisions; it sets out community planning arrangements and how people can request to participate.

The new Strategy will meet [equalities legislation](#) and an Impact Assessment will be carried out and findings included before the Strategy is finalised.

The new Strategy will comply with the [General Data Protection Regulation \(GDPR\)](#).

The results you and we want to achieve

Housing is important to people and their quality of life. It's essential that we understand tenants' views to help to shape and improve housing conditions and services. We want to make sure that tenants really:

- know the different ways they can become involved
- can take part and influence decisions if they want to
- have the support and resources they need to take part
- can help to develop quality services.

Tenants developed these outcomes and a recent survey confirmed that they want us to continue to aim for these results - with increased transparency and accountability to tenants and greater tenant influence.

Keeping you informed

We will keep you informed and updated in a range of ways, including:

- the Tenants' Courier delivered to every tenant at least twice each year
- the Tenant Handbook provided to all new tenants, on request and online
- a landlord performance report made available to all tenants every year
- providing a copy of the annual Assurance Statement as required by the Scottish Housing Regulator
- a newsletter provided to the Tenant Panel and Registered Tenants' Organisations (RTOs) at least three times each year.

Gathering your views

We will consult with you on any changes to housing management related policies and procedures, including:

- your rent
- repairs and maintenance
- allocations
- estate and tenancy management
- the Tenant Participation Strategy
- improvements to your homes and environment
- housing strategy, including new build council housing.

We will provide plain language information in a range of formats, at an early stage, to enable tenants to understand any proposals.

We will allow at least six weeks for feedback.

The findings will be reported to tenants on the Tenant Panel and RTOs, as well as senior managers and the relevant Council committee as appropriate.

Ways you can be involved

You can become involved in different ways, for example:

- Tenant Panel
- tenants' groups
- Edinburgh Tenants' Federation (ETF)
- events and meetings
- surveys and consultations
- online
- community council
- neighbourhood networks



To find out more, please call 0131 529 7805 or email tenant.panel@edinburgh.gov.uk

Resources

The Council will provide direct and indirect funding to support tenant participation, ensuring a value for money approach. This will include help from council officers as well as independent support. It will also include financial support for City of Edinburgh Council tenant groups.

Key areas of work

Key areas of work over the term of this new Tenant Participation Strategy will be:

- making it easier for all tenants to become involved and ensuring that tenants are updated on actions taken because of tenant feedback;
- an increased focus on ways for tenants to become involved locally;
- continuing to develop and strengthen tenant scrutiny of services;
- bringing the benefits of the internet to all tenants while continuing to provide traditional methods of contact for those who are not online;
- developing and delivering the tenant grants programme with tenants;
- clarifying and developing the role of the Tenants' Panel, and
- continuing to work with RTOs, ETF and the Neighbourhood Alliance (NA). (The NA focuses on locality based place making and regeneration in Craigmillar and Portobello).

Performance monitoring and evaluation

Progress will be measured by monitoring and evaluating:

- tenants' understanding of the ways they can take part and influence decisions;
- the support and resources provided for tenants to take part, and
- tenant satisfaction with services provided.

An annual report will be produced to show how tenants' views have been taken in to account when decisions are being taken about their homes and services.

Registering as a Registered Tenants Organisation

Groups representing City of Edinburgh Council tenants will be invited to register. Each registration lasts three years and groups' contact details are publicised in the Register of RTOs. The Register is a public document and available online at www.edinburgh.gov.uk/tenantpanel The Council will support non-registered groups.

Edinburgh Tenants Federation

Edinburgh Tenants Federation (ETF) represents tenants and residents across the city. ETF is a membership based organisation run by and for its members. It can help you to set up a group. Contacts: 0131 475 2509, info@edinburghtenants.org.uk,

Key Actions

	Action	Timescale	Measure
Working locally	A conversation with your Housing Officer (HO)	At least once each year	% of tenants offered the option
	Options to be involved locally promoted by HOs, including in the Neighbourhood Networks.	At least twice yearly	Increased awareness of option
	Locality housing roadshows organised with tenants	At least twice yearly	Post event evaluation
	List of RTOs maintained and HOs made aware of groups active in their areas	Ongoing	Tenant Satisfaction Survey
	HOs provided with information on tenant participation and attending tenant group meetings	Ongoing	Feedback from RTOs
	Tenants and tenant groups encouraged to submit suggestions for the Neighbourhood Environment Programme (NEP)	Variable	Increased awareness and involvement
Scrutinising services	Continued support for tenant led inspections. Findings reported to tenants, councillors, and managers in appropriate formats.	Annual inspection	Completed report
	Continued support for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Scrutiny Group	Annual check HRA.	Completed report
	Estate walkabouts organised and promoted locally with feedback provided to participants	Variable	Tenant Satisfaction Survey
	Mystery shopping considered as an approach to checking services	Tbc	Tbc
	Training in place for tenants inspecting and scrutinising services	Annually	Evidence of training
	Tenant Scrutiny Framework updated to align the different approaches.	Year One	Framework
Working digitally	Action	Timescale	Measure
	Resources to help tenants get on line explored	Ongoing	Increased use
	Tenants updated on progress via the Tenants' Courier	Annually	Update produced

Resources	Approach to managing funding for tenants' groups reviewed in discussion with tenants	Year One	Report produced
	Participatory budgeting explored as an approach in discussion with tenants.	Year One	Report produced
Tenant Panel	Role of the Tenant Panel reviewed and promoted	Year one	Report produced
	Tenant Panel promoted	Ongoing	Promotion examples
	Tenant Panel provided with regular feedback	Ongoing	Feedback
RTOs	RTO register maintained	Ongoing	List of RTOs
	RTOs encouraged and supported to take part, locally and city wide	Ongoing	Feedback from RTOs
	Continued work with ETF to shape and improve services	Ongoing	SLA
Other ??			

Involvement is an overall term used to describe citizen engagement at any level

Information is the basis of good communication and strengthening Council-tenant relationships

Consultation is seeking customers' views and ideas, taking account of those views and providing feedback

Participation is when tenants actively engage in decision-making from planning through to implementation



Call ITS on 0131 242 8181 and quote reference **19-5480**