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@edinburgh tenants.org.uk,
### Key Actions

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

**Working digitally**
### Resources

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<tr>
<th>Approach to managing funding for tenants’ groups reviewed in discussion with tenants</th>
<th>Year One</th>
<th>Report produced</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participatory budgeting explored as an approach in discussion with tenants.</td>
<td>Year One</td>
<td>Report produced</td>
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### Tenant Panel

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<tr>
<th>Role of the Tenant Panel reviewed and promoted (Year one)</th>
<th>Year one</th>
<th>Report produced</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tenant Panel promoted</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Promotion examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tenant Panel provided with regular feedback</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Feedback</td>
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</tbody>
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### RTOs

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<tr>
<th>RTO register maintained</th>
<th>Ongoing</th>
<th>List of RTOs</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RTOs encouraged and supported to take part, locally and city wide</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>Feedback from RTOs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continued work with ETF to shape and improve services</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
<td>SLA</td>
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### Other

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### Involvement

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

- **Information**: The basis of good communication and strengthening Council-tenant relationships
- **Consultation**: Seeking customers’ views and ideas, taking account of those views and providing feedback
- **Participation**: When tenants actively engage in decision-making from planning through to implementation

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

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Happy to Translate!