

# Enfield Council Housing Resident Involvement Strategy

2022-2025

*'Unlocking potential of people and communities through meaningful engagement'*



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# Forward

## A note from Cllr George Savva

Enfield Council have always worked in partnership with residents. We are seeking to set out a path to build on the positive role our residents play in shaping housing services. We are continually trying to build on our commitment to involving residents in the design and improvement of services and support our wider commitment to the empowerment of residents and communities. We feel it's important for resident to have their say - and be heard and listened to.

We recognise the significant time and effort, as well as personal energy and drive that some of our more involved residents put into engagement activities and want to thank them for their support and commitment – the members of our Tenants' and Residents' Associations.

But we also want to encourage feedback and ideas from more tenants and leaseholders in the borough as we recognise the positive benefits of staying connected and so we can work together to make Enfield a better, happier place to live.

**Cllr George Savva - Cabinet Member for Social Housing, Enfield Council**

# Introduction

**This strategy seeks to set out a path to build on the positive role our residents play in shaping housing services. It reaffirms our commitment to involving residents in the design and improvement of services and supports our wider commitment to the empowerment of residents and communities in Enfield.**

Residents have told us that they are keen to understand how they can get more involved and, when they do, how this drives improvements across their housing service. This strategy sets out several ways that we will aim to do this, based on feedback and input from residents.

The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the power and impact that can be achieved when communities work together for a common aim, recognising the positive benefits of staying connected, and how playing an active role can support wellbeing and mental health. This strategy seeks to build sustainable and lasting partnerships with both individuals and community groups whilst increasing accessibility and flexible involvement through digital channels.

This Resident Involvement Strategy has been developed to fulfil the current and future regulatory requirements of social housing providers reflecting the requirements of the existing Tenant Empowerment and Involvement Standard, whilst also looking forward to future requirements from the Social Housing White Paper 'The charter for social housing residents'.

Whilst it reflects and seeks to ensure compliance with the regulatory standards the primary purpose is to recognise the powerful and critical role that the voice of 'lived experience' in delivering on our vision for transforming our customer relationships, homes and communities.



# Creating a Vision for 'Better Council Homes' in Enfield

Residents have worked with us to inform and develop this strategy. We have engaged with all Council Housing residents through a detailed consultation exercise and we have held discussions with existing resident involvement groups and forums, Tenants' and Residents' Associations (TRAs), Councillors, and Council officers.

We asked residents:

- what is working well in terms of resident involvement,
- what could we improve on,
- any ideas about new ways the Council could increase resident involvement.

## Tenants' priorities:

- Improve communication and responsiveness of resolving housing issues
- Repairs and maintenance in homes
- Reducing anti-social behaviour
- Condition of homes

## Leaseholders' priorities:

- Improve communication and responsiveness of resolving housing issues
- Cleanliness and litter
- Reducing anti-social behaviour
- Maintenance of internal and external communal areas
- Costs and perception of value for money

## Residents view on Involvement Opportunities

General needs tenants and leaseholders were both significantly more likely to say they are not interested in having a say or getting involved in what the Housing Service does:

- 30% of the total sample of tenants and leaseholders surveyed do not want to get involved
- 35% of tenants and 40% of leaseholders respectively would like to have more of a say in what housing services does
- About 1 in 10 tenants and leaseholders who completed the survey, would like to be actively involved in housing services
- 1% of tenants and 3% of leaseholders stated they already work for, or are involved with, housing services
- Nearly 1 in 4 residents 'don't know' currently if they want to be involved.

In exploring ways in which residents would like to be involved residents were asked to identify ways in which they would like to be involved:

Involvement Method	General Needs (%)	Leaseholders (%)
Receiving information, for example in the Housing News newsletter	64	58
Being involved in a resident association	36	29
Attending Annual Conference	30	34
Being Involved in Customer Voice, a group which represents Enfield Council tenants and leaseholders	26	35
Taking part in estate walkabouts	19	21

8% of residents cited either other or none of these options as being preferable.

Overall, it highlighted a need to rethink our service offer and involvement approach to ensure housing services are fit for the future and designed with residents and their voice at the heart.

## Ways to get involved



Key	
Purple	Participation and Development
Pink	Recommendation setting
Yellow	Representation & Community Networks
Green	Participation, Representation & Community Networks
Light Blue	Service Delivery Forums
Blue	Strategic Consultation & Decision Making

# Our residents said

*I find it very impossible to talk to anyone from the council about anything in my area if you do get to talk to someone from the council you will never hear back they never get back to you and I just forget you.*

*Just want to say thank you to all Enfield staff for all that you do.*

*There is need for a 'bible' of regulations, that is reviewed on a regular basis. Housing Management need to enforce their policies.*

*The Leasehold Service is excellent. To sum up my view, Enfield Council Housing is a bit like 'the curate's egg, good in parts'. The less good parts require working on!*

# Our commitment

## Vision

*What will resident engagement be like at Enfield Council in four years' time?*

We will strive to create effective avenues to enable us to listen better to residents, learn from feedback and insight and work in partnership to improve the services our residents receive.

Establish a culture of 'you said, we did' so that residents can see that the council is listening to them and acting on what they have said.

We want the Council to recognise that everyone's circumstances are different, and to look to innovative approaches to encourage feedback, collaboration, and co-creation with residents.

We aim for residents:

- To be treated with respect
- To have influence over decision making
- To have their voice heard by the Council
- To know how the Council, as their landlord, is performing
- To have their complaints dealt with promptly and fairly
- To be safe in their homes
- To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in
- To be supported to take their first step to ownership

## Objectives

These are our commitments to improving how residents get involved, and to ensure that when we do work together, you feel that it has been worthwhile.

- **Embed Resident Involvement** - We will improve how we work together within the Council, to embed the culture of resident involvement.
- **Better Communication** - We will look to maximise resident involvement by using communications channels chosen by residents.
- **More Involvement Channels** - We will provide different channels for involvement and we will make it easy to get involved, provide feedback and work with us to improve.
- **Improve Neighbourhoods & Communities** - We will work with residents to understand their priorities and facilitate avenues for neighbourhood improvement.
- **Influencing & Improvement** - We will encourage residents to work with us to influence, improve, and design Council Housing services.



# Objective I

## Embed Resident Involvement

Residents have told us that when they get involved, they want it to make a difference. Working effectively with residents to deliver our aims will ensure their success, and resident involvement provides staff with the tools to do this, supported by our dedicated team.

### What we will do

We will improve how we work together within the Council, improving our joint working and embedding the culture of resident involvement. To do this we will link the priorities outlined in the 2021 Resident's Survey with our business plan objective, service improvement framework and other key strategies that deliver this. We will work on empowering and enabling residents to influence and improve their housing service, promoting an effective circle of engagement.

### How we will do it

- We will make sure that residents (tenants and leaseholders) priorities inform future improvement projects across Council Housing.
- The top priorities for residents identified through surveys are:
  - Effective issue resolution
  - Good quality Customer Service and Communications
  - Caretaking - providing an efficient and reliable service in line with resident's requirements
  - Repairs – Damp, Mould & Heating
  - Decent Homes Standard works
- Develop a culture that listens to and values feedback and uses it to make services more easily accessible and as good as they can be.

Links will be made between involvement and our service improvement framework to ensure that where performance needs to be improved, we are working with residents to identify the best ways to do this.

- Establish a service improvement charter to clearly set out where and when residents will be involved with key decisions – tender evaluation, staff recruitment.
- Plan monitor and review involvement with Customer Voice representatives making sure that this reflects the profile of our residents.
- Focus on the continuity and renewal of the Customer Voice (CV) by establishing a 'pipeline' of future CV members.
- Making sure that we meet or exceed the expectations of social housing consumer regulations.
- Staff/Culture - Creating a resident centric culture requires us to ensure our commitment to resident involvement is set out in every job description and recognises the importance of exploring this in recruitment for customer facing housing roles.
- Ensure all feedback flows through local and strategic groups to ensure the resident voice is integrated in service planning, monitoring and improvement.
- Continuing to support existing TRA's and support the set up of new TRA's on existing and new build estates

# Objective 2

## Effective Communication

Residents have told us that we need to communicate better by promote engagement opportunities, keep things simple and make performance information more widely available.

### What we will do

We will look to maximise resident involvement by using communications channels chosen by residents. Will make sure that we feedback to all residents following consultations, service reviews and service changes so that it is clear how we have worked with residents to improve services.

Through the Resident Involvement Strategy consultation the following were identified as the preferred method of communication:

- Email 74%
- On-line meetings 43%
- Face to face 37%
- Telephone 31%
- Events and workshops 26%
- Text message 26%

### How we will do it

- We will work with our Customer Voice panel to make sure our communication is simpler and more effective.
- Increase access to information via residents preferred channel of engagement and allow feedback and information to be shared.
- Install electronic notice boards across estates to keep residents up to date on issues which affect them.

- Improve our online offer making it quick and easy to engage with us by:
  - Looking at different options to make online involvement easier to access
  - increasing the usability of the online housing (Orchard) Portal.
  - Increase the use of polls, surveys and discussion forums
  - Use online meetings and webinars to widen involvement in formal meetings and offer consultation opportunities to those at home
  - Find ways to improve how we engage on social media
- Promote the ways that residents can be involved:
  - Have regular campaigns to promote the ways that residents can be involved
  - Use all available communication tools to reach as wide an audience as possible
  - Share progress updates of how involved residents are helping to improve services
  - Celebrate where residents have made a difference.
- Improve the data that we hold so that we can channel communications in the most appropriate way.
- Communicate service improvements through 'you said, we did' campaign updates.

# Objective 3

## Improve Involvement Channels

Residents told us that you want more opportunities to talk to and engage with us about services and issues that concern you. We need to do this regularly and pro-actively using a variety of methods, including the option for face-to-face interaction when we can.

### What we will do

We will provide different channels for involvement and we will make it easy to get involved, provide feedback and work with us to improve.

### How we will do it

- Offer consultation opportunities to hear your views.
- Use different activities to suit different lifestyles.
- Improve our online tools to make getting involved simple and easy.
- Make sure feedback is representative of our communities.
- Recognise and support residents' groups
- Make our local services, offers and plans clearer.
- Provide a meaningful role for residents on formal groups such as Customer Voice and Leaseholders' Forum.

- Work together within Council Housing to give residents real influence over more shared services.
- Increase the number of residents that engage with us.
- Improve and increase our communication about involvement activities.

### You will be able to

- Share your views through 'Your home, your say' activities.
- Engage with us easily in a way that suits you, including online.
- Get support for your resident group if you have one.
- Know what additional local support Enfield Council offers.
- Sign up to get regular updates about involvement activities.
- Use online and informal tools to join in with meetings.
- Get involved with changing and designing more of our services, from start to finish.

# Objective 4

## Better Neighbourhoods & Communities

Residents have told us that they want to be involved in improving their neighbourhoods and local communities.

### What we will do

We will work with residents to understand their priorities and facilitate avenues for neighbourhood improvement.

### How we will do it

- Work with local stakeholders to deliver community engagement projects that are designed to meet jointly identified needs.
- Hold a programme of Estate Walkabouts, encouraging residents to attend, by sending direct invites, to discuss estates issues with Ward Members and Council officers
- Increase resident satisfaction with the overall appearance of their neighbourhood by encouraging input and enabling changes through the Estate Improvement Project.

- Facilitate involvement for residents in monitoring estate services contracts- this will increase accountability, improve the standard of service, and ensure they represent value for money.
- Improve the internal culture within the council to focus on the customer journey and joined up working between council departments.
- Develop and gather input from communities to initiate changes which improve the health and well-being of residents on their estate which was outlined as a resident priority.
- Explore the possibility of co-producing services with the communities they serve, residents have greater responsibility and involvement in developing their estate and environment.

# Objective 5

## Influencing & Improving

Residents have told us that they want to be more involved in influencing and improving their housing service. We recognise the value of our resident's experiences and we want to ensure that their involvement is meaningful and that in return we listen, act on and work together in partnership.

### What we will do

As recommended in the Social Housing White Paper (2020), we will invite residents to co-design services and influence improvement across their Council Housing services. Residents will also be able to hold us to account as their landlord in our decisions, performance, and conduct.

### How we will do it

- Encourage residents to get involved in their local walkabouts and inspections.
- Establish a Mystery Shopping programme to enable residents to drive change.
- Involve residents in choosing new contractors, services and staff.
- Share performance information openly, starting with services chosen by residents.
- Develop a new way for residents to check and challenge performance and value for money.
- Establish task groups work to work with us and improve Council Housing services.

- Allow residents to have direct influence over future housing strategies, policies and standards.
- Encourage residents to play a role in understanding complaints monitoring, working collaboratively with the service improvement team to suggest changes and make improvements.
- Provide clarity about the role of tenant and leaseholder influence and scrutiny within the organisation amongst councillors, staff, and senior management.
- Increase transparency and provide more accessible information to increase residents' understanding of council's processes.

### You will be able to

- Get involved in resident inspections of services.
- Help us to choose contractors and staff.
- Share your feedback on our performance and value for money.
- Read more about our involvement activities and the results.

# Value for Money

## What we will do

- work with residents to review progress every year, and, where required, to change our approach to meet resident's needs.
- measure the effects of the Resident Involvement Strategy to add value for stakeholders, communities and individuals.
- ensure that all activities are targeted to make best use of financial resources.
- assessment the of impact and the benefits of involvement an annual published impact assessment.

# Resources

## What we will do

- put the right support to put in place to enable effective involvement of tenants and leaseholders.
- introduce new staff to the role of resident involvement across Council Housing.
- promote resident involvement as part of housing staff's performance objectives where appropriate.
- promote opportunities for involvement, through a variety of media channels, including printed media such as direct letter-drops, web, social media, online portal, and events.

# Measuring Success

## What we will do

- create an action plan to ensure we achieve the commitments outlined in this strategy.
- link the actions with our Service Improvement Plan and Framework to ensure resident involvement is effectively embedded.
- report annually to residents on progress being made to achieve the above commitments.
- report on all relevant Key Performance Indicators to ensure transparency and build trust.



# Appendix

## Resident Involvement Structure

### The Customer Voice

The Customer Voice is the over-arching housing representative body for tenants and leaseholders for the borough of Enfield. The Customer Voice meets monthly and the main aim of the Customer Voice is to ensure that customers' views, aspirations and priorities are at the centre of the housing services delivered by the Council.

The Group also has responsibility for overseeing the annual Estate Improvement Programme budget (currently £210k). The group will draw on information and insight from across the involvement framework ensuring that is utilised at a strategic and operational level to influence service design and improvements. The group will also work with the Council's Corporate Communications Team to assist with the content of the Housing News. Housing News is a regular communication newsletter that is sent to all tenants and leaseholders.

*Frequency - Monthly*

### Operational Service Improvement Groups

Council Housing is changing the way we deliver our services to make sure we balance the individual needs of residents, with our role in place shaping and creating good quality and safe homes. These functional involvement groups will be led by the relevant service head and will be responsible for ensuring each key service area has an understanding of the needs and aspirations of residents and build this into the annual service improvement planning and measurement and delivery framework.

### Caretaking and Environment Services Forum

A quarterly meeting available for all tenants and leaseholders to meet, discuss and shape services involving Caretaking, Waste & Recycling, fly tipping and Parking.

*Frequency - Quarterly*

### Leasehold Forum

A quarterly meeting available for all leaseholders will continue to meet to discuss and shape services as they apply to leaseholders serving both resident leaseholders and absent leaseholders.

*Frequency - Quarterly*

### Building Safety Panel

The role of the panel is to provide a voice to residents living in high rise buildings, to support the Council in ensuring residents are safe and their views are reflected in the design and delivery of housing management services.

The Board are the representative body for residents living in High Rise Residential Buildings (HRRBIS) and plays a central role in ensuring residents views are taken into account regarding how we manage these buildings

*Frequency - Quarterly*

### Temporary Accommodation Forum

The Temporary Accommodation Forum is set up to ensure tenants housed in temporary accommodation are involved in planning and monitoring the temporary accommodation service. The Forum will provide a platform for raising and addressing issues of common concern to tenants that are related not just to Housing, but to all other relevant services.

*Frequency - Quarterly*

## Sheltered Housing Forum

The Sheltered Housing Forum is set up to ensure sheltered housing tenants are involved in planning and monitoring the sheltered housing service. The Forum will provide a platform for raising and addressing issues of common concern to sheltered housing tenants that are related not just to Housing, but to all other relevant services.

The group will work to identify effective routes to supporting individuals to build resilience, maintain independence and identify sustainable solutions. It will track and monitor outcomes delivered from people services and identify any groups where outcomes are less favourable and require additional action to address.

*Frequency - Quarterly*

## Youth Engagement Forum

Predominantly a digital group which seeks out the views of residents and tenants under the age of 25, to increase their voice and ensure their needs are taken into account.

*Frequency - Quarterly*

## Tenants and Residents Associations

Tenant and Resident Associations are made up of local tenants and residents who represent their area to bring about improvements in housing and related services. These Groups adopt a model constitution and are recognised by LBE and can access funding and other support to help set up and maintain the Associations.

*Frequency – Set by each group*

## Estate Walkabouts

An estate walkabout is a planned and publicised walk around your neighbourhood or street. It is a great way to highlight what could be improved and can be done with Housing Staff to ensure issues are recorded and actioned. Action plans with timescales will be issued to attending residents and ward Councillors.

*Frequency – Daily across the Borough*

## Mystery Shopping

Mystery Shoppers are a group of trained residents who test our services to make sure they are being delivered in line with agreed service standards and reporting back recommendations for improvements in the customer experience.

*Frequency – Ad hoc*

## Focus Groups and Public Meetings

From time to time we will set up focus groups or public meetings to look at a particular area of the housing service for example how to increase involvement of young people, each focus group should have a clear outcome and feedback should be provided on how the feedback has been taken into account.

*Frequency – Upon demand*

## Community Events

Bringing people together through well organised and structure community events and fun days that have clearly defined objectives, seeks to hear the voices of residents and promote community cohesion, whilst giving residents the opportunity to influence services and have fun.

*Frequency – Ad hoc*

## Online and SMS polls and Questionnaires

We will use a variety of service specific and Housing wide surveys on a periodic basis and includes online and SMS questionnaires to increase participation. In addition, the Council will carry out a full STAR survey every two years

## Conferences

Upon demand, leaseholder and tenants' conferences will be held. These events raise awareness about the services provided, ask residents for their views on service areas and provide opportunities to ask questions, it also represents a great opportunity to highlight other ways to get involved.



## Recycling and Green Champions

These trained resident champions will seek to build awareness around recycling and the Green Agenda.





**Contact Enfield Council**

Civic Centre  
Silver Street  
Enfield  
EN1 3XY

[www.enfield.gov.uk](http://www.enfield.gov.uk)

