

Resident Influence Framework

Introduction

At Gateshead we believe that working closely with our residents is the most effective way to improve services. Our Resident Influence Strategy sets out our commitment to provide tenants and leaseholders with a range of opportunities to engage and influence the way we design and deliver services. The Resident Influence Framework describes how we deliver on our commitment.

We know that residents have diverse communication preferences, and we will therefore target and tailor our approach to engagement to ensure feedback reflects our wider customer base. This will mean making much greater use of digital engagement blended with more traditional forms of engagement.

The Strategic Housing Board

This is a formal advisory committee of the Council and considers and makes recommendations on a wide range of proposals relating to housing across all tenures in Gateshead. The SHB consists of 21 members including three tenant/leaseholder representatives who are appointed on a skills basis, annually.

Resident Influence Panel

The Resident Influence Panel (RI Panel) is the main customer group that oversees and supports delivery of our commitment to design services based on real customer experiences. The RI Panel includes tenants, leaseholders and officers who work together using customer insight and feedback to inform and commission engagement activity.

It meets on a monthly basis although this may vary depending on the tasks being undertaken. They are held as a mixture of in-person and online meetings.

A tenant/leaseholder representative of the Strategic Housing Board (SHB) is invited to every meeting to ensure a link is maintained between the SHB and the RI Panel.

Insight and feedback is provided to the RI Panel from a range of sources including:

- Resident surveys
- Performance data
- Complaints; key themes and trends
- Social Media comments and feedback
- Day to day informal conversations between officers and residents.

The RI Panel also consider Legislative and Regulatory requirements to identify areas of engagement and scrutiny.

The RI panel is not a consultative group but will identify areas to engage and scrutinise using a task and finish style approach.

The range of engagement tools that are used include:

- Resident and employee focus groups – these provide the opportunity to discuss issues in an informal setting delivered online where appropriate.
- Online Surveys – short single-issue surveys to understand residents' views.
- Customer journey mapping – to create a visual story of how customers interact with a service and to identify where service failure has occurred and why.
- Mystery Shopping – to reality check the processes and procedures used in the delivery of a service.

The RI Panel recruit participants from the Resident Voice Pool and the wider customer base using a variety of communication channels and promotional tools.

Whilst the RI Panel is the main formal resident group that will lead on delivery of the Resident Influence Strategy it is also recognised that there is a need to have some specialist formal engagement that focuses on key areas.

Multi-Storey Safety Group

The focus of the Multi-Storey Safety Group (MSG) is to ensure Gateshead Council delivers multi-storey housing that is safe to live in and provides relevant and up to date information to residents in accordance with the Building Safety Act.

The MSG will act as a steering group providing oversight as to how we deliver on the resident engagement requirements of the Building Safety Act. The MSG will not be a substitute for wider informal engagement with residents in each block.

The MSG will comprise of both tenants, leaseholders, and officers and we will aim to have broad representation from as many multi-storey blocks as possible. The group works on a task and finish style approach with meeting frequency reflecting work tasks.

The Building Safety Manager will attend meetings with representation from the Multi Storey Team, Home Ownership team and other officers as required. A designated officer from the Involvement team will provide support to the group as required.

Progress updates will be provided to the Resident Influence Panel. Any issues identified by the group that sit outside of the BSG remit will be referred to the Resident Influence Panel.

Equality Diversity and Inclusion group

Residents, Officers, and partners work together to ensure that the services we provide are fair, accessible, and designed around the needs of all our customers.

The group aims to ensure we understand and then respond to the diverse needs of tenants. Their work considers the requirements placed on Gateshead Council by the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Regulatory Standard, the Equality Act 2010 and the Public Sector Equality Duty.

The group supports the work of the Council's Employee Equality Network where resident engagement is required.

More broadly the group looks at how we can work to remove issues of stigma that residents may face in their communities and seek opportunities to engage nationally around important equality issues.

Updates will be provided to the Resident Influence Panel and any issues identified by the group that sit outside of their remit will be referred to the Resident Influence Panel.

Resident Voice Pool

This offers the opportunity for tenants and leaseholders to engage with us on their own terms. This is not a formal group; residents simply register with us and choose how and when they engage. Residents who sign up will be provided with the opportunity to receive:

- Latest news and updates
- Notification of consultations
 - Task and finish focus groups.
 - An invite to complete an online survey
- Live streamed meetings of the Resident Influence Panel
- Online training

By joining the RVP residents get the opportunity to work on a specific project relating to their homes, communities, and housing services for a short period of time, whilst potentially learning new skills.

In The Community

We will support and deliver a range of activities and opportunities for residents to engage in their local communities.

We offer a comprehensive programme of Estate Walkabouts that give residents the opportunity to meet up with Neighbourhood Housing Officers, report any issues, and suggest improvements to their estates.

Each estate hosts two walkabouts a year. These are on pre-arranged dates and times. The year's first inspections are in April and May and the second inspections are in September and October.

In addition we will host "pop up" engagement at Community events throughout the year to find out residents views about homes, communities and services.

Annual Review

We will discuss progress over the previous 12 months with tenants and leaseholders at an Annual Review event. This will provide the opportunity to thank residents for their time and commitment to working with us to improve services for Gateshead tenants and leaseholders. We will showcase examples of where engagement has influenced service design and delivery and discuss priorities for the coming year. An update will also be published in our Annual report.