

Brentwood Borough Council

Resident Engagement Strategy

2022 to 2027

Introduction

The Resident Engagement Strategy sets out how the Council intends to engage with its tenants and leaseholders and the people who live in the communities to which the Council has responsibilities towards, both as a landlord and as a registered provider of social housing.

Background

The investigation into the Grenfell Fire Tragedy in June 2017 put into focus the relationship landlords have with their tenants. One of the findings of the investigation was the need for tenants be given a strong voice with which to hold their landlord to account for the services they provide and for residents to also have a stronger platform to scrutinise service delivery.

The Government is to reflect this in the updated social housing legislation and the proposed changes to regulation. One of the principles of the proposals set out a number of ways to ensure resident's voices are heard these included a call for landlords to make performance information accessible and clear to residents and a regulatory review.

For Local Authorities, there will be a change to the level and type of regulation, with an emphasis on proactive engagement on these issues from the Regulator.

The Council encourages involvement from our tenants to provide feedback on our services by traditional methods such as surveys and meetings but understand that resident involvement needs to adapt to the way residents engage with information, digital change is happening, in 2019 93% of all UK households have access to the internet.

We will provide a choice of how tenants engage with the Council, through online platforms, estate specific engagement with the aim for the Council engaging directly with residents.

The Council will invite tenants from a wide variety of backgrounds to influence service delivery. We will endeavour to ensure that no group is under-represented.

We hope that by implementing these measures we will continue to improve service delivery, help tenants to maintain their tenancies and encourage resilience in communities.

Property Portfolio

Our current housing stock is made up of the following tenants/leaseholders

General Needs	2045
Sheltered Housing	435
Leaseholders	449
Shared Ownership	14
Total	2943

Profile of Residents

The age profile of our tenants is as follows:

Age group of lead tenant	Percentage
18-30	8.0%
31-50	31%
51-64	26%
65-80	25%
Over 81	10%

The gender profile of our tenants is as follows

Female	63%
Male	37%

The aims of Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement

This strategy is to ensure the following aims for the engagement with tenants and leaseholders.

Aim	Method
To be local	We will meet residents on estates and have an active presence in the areas where we have properties through our front-line housing teams and our contractors.
To be relevant	The Council will ensure that we are listening to what our tenants and leaseholders want by consulting them on the service we provide and provide opportunities to provide feedback and make recommendations.
To act on feedback	We will continue to monitor feedback on the services provided (i.e., what is provided and how it is provided). The Council will confirm how tenant feedback and recommendations have led to service improvements.
To be open	We will publish key performance information through the Council's website and listen to the feedback from residents. Where changes are made following feedback, this will be provided on the website, through a "you said, we did" approach.
To encourage independence	The Council will assist tenants and leaseholders who want to engage locally by providing resources to support this.
To use technology	Where appropriate the Council will use technology for surveys and meetings, enabling feedback and engagement in resolving issues and improving services.

Measures of Success

To ensure that this strategy delivers for tenants and leaseholders, the Council will be focused on the following measures of success.

Measures of Success
Tenants and leaseholders are satisfied that their views have been taken into consideration.
There are good return rates for satisfaction surveys (when compared to other Registered Providers).
That specific comments made on satisfaction surveys are followed up and acted on.
There are examples where the Council has acted on feedback, through a “you said, we did” approach.
A variety of methods are used to engage residents.
A variety of residents engage on housing issues, providing feedback, and taking an active role.
A decrease in complaints

Resident Engagement Structure

The following methods will be used to engage with residents. Some of the methods are less formal and with less time commitment, whereas others are more formal in nature and require a higher level of commitment and time.

Area	Method
Co-design with residents – Task and Finish Groups	Engaging with residents on the areas that need to be improved within services and how residents are involved. To co-design the services and their design with residents, so that services are adapted to meet local circumstances and needs. Task and Finish groups set up to address a specific issue
Routine Satisfaction Surveys	These are satisfaction surveys that are used on a regular basis to receive feedback on performance. In the main, these relate to routine repairs and gas servicing.
General Satisfaction Surveys	<p>These are surveys that are used to receive feedback on residents' satisfaction in general terms with the services and properties provided, as well as the area in which residents live.</p> <p>The Council and its contractors will follow up on the learning from the surveys and the specific comments that are made.</p> <p>A Star survey was carried out in September 2021 and an Action Plan will be developed to look to raise satisfaction. The survey will be completed in September 2023.</p>
On-line forum/portal	Customers who are happy to do so can take part in email responses to questions to help us gain insight into particular issues or aspects of the service

Area	Method
Estate Walkabouts	Tenants and Leaseholders are invited to join the Council's staff on estate walkabouts. Sometimes these events are run jointly with other organisations.
Tenant Talkback	<p>An involved group of residents will be asked their views on specific areas of action and service delivery.</p> <p>This group will help to provide a scrutiny role on anything before it is presented to the Environment, Enforcement and Housing Committee.</p>
Tenant Safety	Engaging with residents on the safety of their homes, what the Council does to keep tenants and leaseholders safe and is the information on safety clear and easy to understand.
Contractor Reviews	Residents are involved in assessing the performance of the repairs and maintenance contractors both during contracts and at the procurement stage.
Regeneration	Where there is a need to regenerate a building or areas, we will engage residents as part of the decision-making process and to help design how the regeneration is delivered.
New Developments	Residents impacted by the development of new homes will be engaged as part of the process for planning the new properties.
Activities provided by contractors	We will seek contractors to provide social value through activities that supports the Council's aims and those of the contract or partnership in place.
Out and About	We will work with Health and Well Being team and utilise the trailer to go out and about to talk to residents in the community
Local Offers	Performance measures reported to residents quarterly on website on measures agreed by residents that are important to them.
Data insight	Analysis of complaint trends, satisfaction survey results to inform trends.
Annual Report and newsletters and information on website	<p>Residents involved in the design of the Annual Report to residents and the performance information included.</p> <p>Information provided to residents on services on website and regular newsletters.</p>