

Tenant engagement plan 2026 to 2029

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Contents

1. Foreword.....	2
2. Introduction	3
3. Inclusive engagement and diversity	3
4. National context	4
5. Local ambitions	4
6. Who lives in our council housing.....	5
7. Governance and oversight of council housing	6
8. Our tenant engagement approach	6
8.1 Formal tenant engagement structure.....	6
8.2 Informal tenant engagement activities	6
9. What's working well	7
9.1 Communication with our tenants	7
9.2 Minority focus groups	8
9.3 Tenant scrutiny panel	8
9.4 Local engagement.....	8
9.5 Leaseholder meetings	8
9.6 Question of the month	8
9.7 Key customer programme	9
9.8 Block champions	9
9.9 Tenant satisfaction measures (TSM's)	9
10. Lessons learned and what's matters to tenants	9
11. Area of focus.....	9

12. Service improvement priorities for 2026-2029.....	10
13. How we prepared this framework.....	12
14. Monitoring impact and reviewing focus	12
15. What success will look like	12
16. Tenant engagement action plan 2026/29.....	13
17. Appendix: tenant engagement strategy and action plan	13
Priority 1: create a culture that recognises and values tenant engagement	13
Priority 2: offer opportunities for meaningful tenant and involvement, scrutiny and influence.....	13
Priority 3: Improve communication with tenants	16

1. Foreword

Councillor Alia Khan – executive councillor for housing

In Luton, we believe housing is about so much more than bricks and mortar. It's about people, families, communities, and the opportunities that come from having a safe, secure place to call home. Everyone deserves to live with dignity, feel proud of where they live, and know that their voice matters.

As portfolio holder for housing, I care deeply about our tenants and residents. I want every resident to receive high-quality services, have confidence that repairs and issues will be addressed quickly, and feel listened to when decisions are made about their homes and neighbourhoods. Our tenants are at the heart of everything we do, and their experiences help shape the services we provide.

That's why we've launched our new tenant engagement plan, a commitment to working alongside tenants as partners. We're not just listening, we're creating more opportunities for tenants and leaseholders to influence decisions, co-design services, and help shape the future of housing in Luton.

Residents have told us what matters most: better communication, responsive repairs, cleaner and safer neighbourhoods, and a stronger voice in how services are delivered. We have listened, and we are taking action. We are making it easier for people to get involved, supporting resident-led ideas, and building stronger connections between communities and the council.

Together, we can create neighbourhoods where people feel safe, valued and respected; homes that provide comfort, security and dignity; and communities that are stronger, more connected and fuller of pride. Together, we can make sure that every resident in Luton can thrive and feels confident that their voice helps shape the place they call home.

Pam Holes, Chair, Tenant Partnership Board

We all want to feel proud of our homes and communities, and that starts with having a real say in the decisions that affect us. We have a responsibility to listen to us and respond in a timely and respectful way. That's why I believe our tenants and leaseholders should be at the heart of everything the council does as our landlord.

I can confirm that the tenant partnership board and a wide range of tenants and leaseholders have been involved at every stage of the development of this tenant engagement plan. Working together like this ensures everyone feels valued and heard and this will help us to build a future where housing services not only meet our basic needs but exceed our expectations.

I have always felt strongly that people should have a say, and this led to me joining my local tenant group and helping to improve my local area. I then moved on to my current role at the centre of having a say in housing services are delivered. During my time as a tenant representative, I have developed new skills and learnt a lot about housing and how Luton housing services works. It's interesting and I have made new friends. I feel that through work with other likeminded tenants and staff we have made a real difference to tenants' homes, neighbourhoods and the services they receive.

The plan sets out how we will ensure your involvement is easy and meaningful and make sure tenants can take pride in shaping their communities. I hope more tenants will take the opportunities to get involved.

Let's create lasting change, together.

2. Introduction

We value the views of our tenants and leaseholders and recognises that your voices are essential to improving housing services, neighbourhoods and homes. We want to empower our tenants to work with us in a collaborative way, (as equal partners) to help shape and design services. Our vision is that tenants and leaseholders are informed, listened to, able to influence, scrutinise and challenge decisions that affect their homes and communities.

This tenant engagement plan sets out our commitment to create a culture where all our staff recognise that tenant engagement is 'everyone's business'.

While this is a three-year plan, we recognise that tenant priorities and challenges change. As the culture around tenant engagement evolves and we actively increase participation to reflect the diverse needs of our tenant population, we will ensure that the strategy too evolves.

This will be done by;

- reviewing progress annually
- refreshing our priorities to reflect tenant views and their changing needs
- adjust our approach where engagement is not effective to:
 - proactively maximise opportunities to improve services
 - enable tenants to hold us to account about the way we shape and deliver landlord services

3. Inclusive engagement and diversity

Here in Luton, we believe that people should be involved in the decisions that affect their lives. We get better solutions when we share power and make decisions together to co-produce services with the people and communities that use them. Luton's ambition is for a stronger and more meaningful voice for all residents to shape the vision and direction of the town.

Our Luton 2040 [Fairness Strategy](#) commits the council to working with citizens and partners to advance social justice and tackle inequity in access and outcomes. Through this, we all gain - reducing inequalities for the most marginalised, creates benefits for the whole community.

Our ambition for Luton to become a disability friendly town will also promote inclusion for people who draw on care and support.

We recognise that some tenants face barriers to engagement, including those where;

- English is not their first language
- tenants have disabilities; including those with sensory, physical, mental health or learning needs

- digital inclusion and working patterns are barrier to tenant engagement

We commit to ensuring that opportunities are made available to involve tenants in a way that works best for them, based on their time, circumstances and practical needs, such as childcare, travel, disabilities or internet access.

We will do this by:

- understanding our tenants better and identifying their diverse needs
- understanding how tenants prefer to engage and what works best for them
- offering reasonable adjustments and alternative formats
- monitoring engagement to identify underrepresented groups
- developing targeted engagement approaches where needed
- working with specialist tenant groups to improve accessibility
- recognising 'communities of interest'
 - where people are connected by shared experience, goals and/or identity
 - actively engage with them on specific topics to inform
 - influence on common matters that may affect them

This will be reviewed annually through a regular tenant engagement impact assessment.

4. National context

The voice of tenants and leaseholders is central to how social housing services are regulated and improved. [The Social Housing \(Regulation\) Act 2023](#) strengthened tenant rights and introduced new expectations that landlords:

- listen to tenants
- act on feedback
- are open about performance
- are accountable for service quality

The regulator of housing's consumer standards is an integral part of the inspections. As part of this, we are required to meet the regulator of social housing's consumer standards, including:

- safety and quality
- transparency, influence and accountability
- neighbourhood and community
- tenancy
- rent

See here for more information on the [consumer standards](#). We must also collect and publish **tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs)** annually and demonstrate how tenant feedback drives service improvement.

Through this engagement plan we can ensure that all aspects of the standard are incorporated into the delivery of our housing services. This plan also considers our responsibility as a social landlord under the [Housing Act 1985](#), [Housing Act 1996](#), [Equality Act 2010](#), and the [Human Rights Act 1998](#).

5. Local ambitions

Luton's long-term ambition is clear by 2040, Luton will be a healthy, fair and sustainable town where everyone can thrive, and no one lives in poverty.

Luton 2040 focuses on three shared priorities that reflect what matters most to the town: jobs, homes and safety.

The Luton 2040 ambition is underpinned by the values that guide the council, the CARES values define how the council leads, makes decisions and works with others to deliver meaningful change.

The CARES values are:

- collaborative: work as one team and in partnerships to deliver great results for Luton
- ambitious: determined to improve lives every day
- respectful: be open, honest and embrace change
- empowering: trusting our own decisions and those of others
- supportive: help each other to reach our full potential

The council has set objectives and key results (OKRs) to monitor performance towards these three areas of focus. Of these there are two that the tenant engagement work feeds into as follows:

- deliver active citizenship and participation work so 60% of residents feel they can influence their neighbourhood
- increase community cohesion so more than 83% of people feel Luton is a town where people from different backgrounds get along

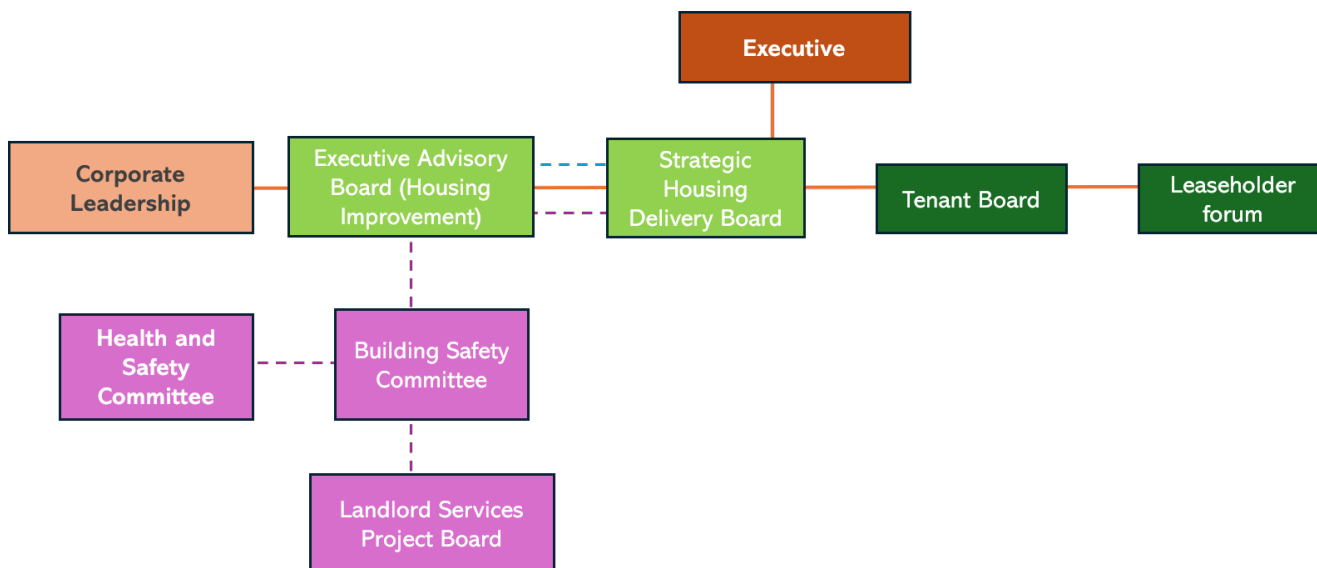
This tenant engagement plan will work towards these ambitions and areas of focus.

6. Who lives in our council housing

Tenancy type	No of tenants	% of tenants
Homes owned and managed by the council Excluding leasehold	7,496	-
Leasehold	1,567	-
Number of our homes that are flats	4,139	55
Number of our homes that are houses	3,357	45
Sheltered housing Sheltered housing is independent living with support on hand that promotes independent living and provides a safe and secure environment, which promotes inclusion for all.	975	-
The percentage of our tenants that are from an ethnic minority background	-	47
The percentage of our tenants that are from a white background	-	45
Prefer not to say, refused, or not recorded	-	8
Number of our tenants who are over 60	50%	

7. Governance and oversight of council housing

Image showing governance and oversight of council housing.



8. Our tenant engagement approach

We have a number of formal and informal ways in which we engage with our council tenants.

8.1 Formal tenant engagement structure

- Portfolio holder for housing (Councillor Alia Khan): acts as a bridge between the community and the local council, helping to shape local services.
- Housing executive advisory panel: provides executive officer and councillor oversight, informed by tenant input. Tenant and leaseholder representation at this board ensures that their voices are heard.
- Tenant partnership board: offers tenant insight on policy and strategic change to the housing executive advisory panel and executive councillor for housing.
- Tenant scrutiny panel: reviews service performance and makes recommendations to tenant partnership board. Process against recommendations is monitored regularly.
- Tenant and resident associations (TARAs): groups concentrated mainly on local issues and building community cohesion.

8.2 Informal tenant engagement activities

The types of informal tenant engagement activities we carry out are detailed below.

- Insight from complaints: monitored quarterly by formal tenant groups, including reports and judgement made by the housing ombudsman.
- Focus groups: includes looking into the priorities of younger tenants, tenants with disabilities and from diverse backgrounds.
- Key customers: this database of interested tenants are invited to comment and give their views through one off surveys and events. Events to discuss specific issues are held at least twice a year.
- Block champions: tenant volunteers report issues in their flat block and signpost residents to who they need to report things too or contact for more information.
- Estate inspections: tenant volunteers join these and get involved in reporting and monitoring issues in their local area.
- Events: tenants can join in with local events and meetings to discuss specific service areas.

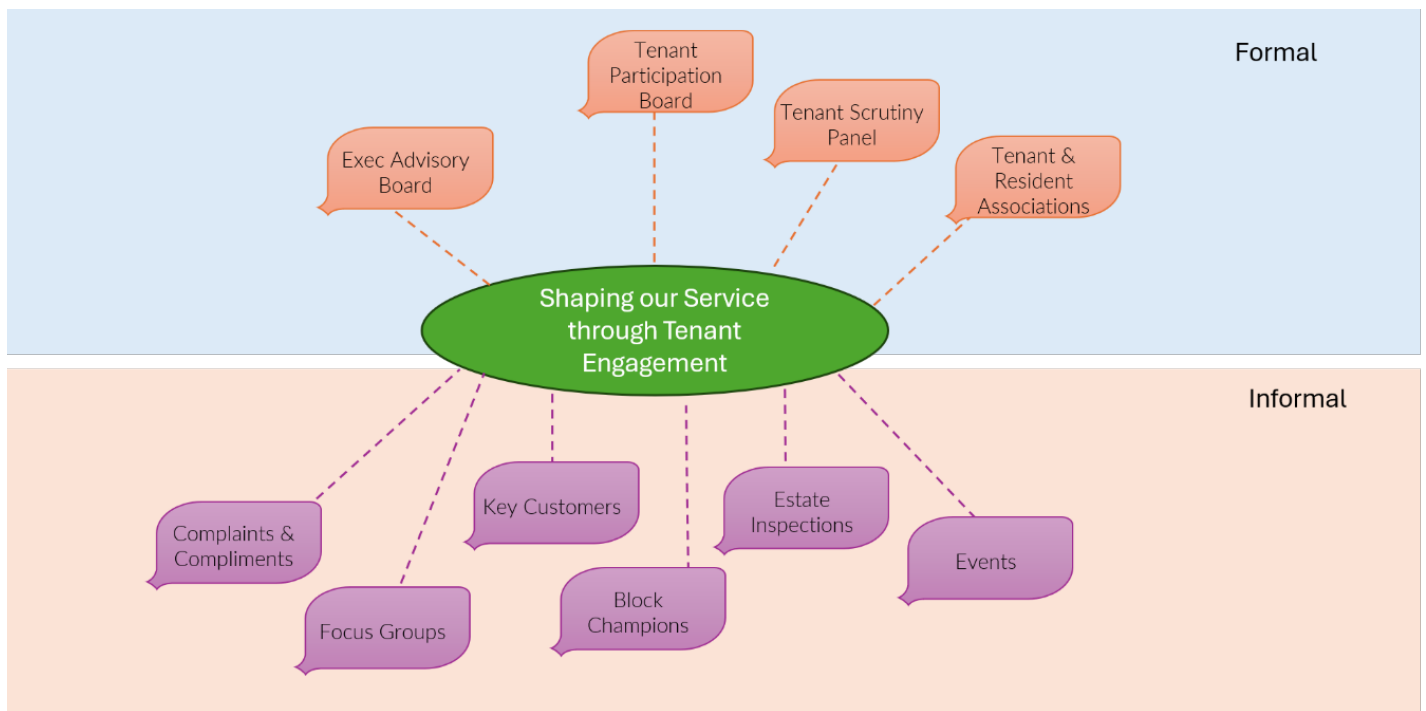


Image showing formal and informal tenant engagement activities, as listed above.

9. What's working well

9.1 Communication with our tenants

We have strengthened our approach to communicating with tenants by putting in place effective methods to enable tenants to have easy and convenient access to information and news, more broadly and within their local area/blocks.

We have successfully embedded stronger communication using the following methods.

Rebranding

The look and feel of our service, giving it a visible identity that helps to:

- build trust
- remove communication barriers
- help tenants quickly recognise legitimate safety updates, repair notices, or consultations without confusion

The new brand was co-produced with staff and tenants to provide a strong identity for housing services. This includes, for example, our letters, newsletters, annual report and information posters.

Feedback on this work has been excellent and has not only built on our already strong relationship with tenants but also firmed up legislative requirements under the regulatory standards for transparency and accountability.

Enhancing face-to-face events

We do this through various forums, notably key customer events, which have:

- shaped tenant engagement priorities for the future
- looked into satisfaction levels in key service areas in more depth

Increasing digital engagement

We increase digital engagement by developing regular text consultation with key customers. This also included links to online surveys.

9.2 Minority focus groups

We have successfully established these three minority focus groups:

- disabilities
- under 35's
- diversity and inclusion

These groups are focused on improving tenant satisfaction for people within these cohorts. The minority focus groups have helped us to:

- understand how these groups of tenants experience our services
- recognise the challenges and barriers they face
- shape future priorities and improvement actions accordingly

9.3 Tenant scrutiny panel

The panel is gaining positive momentum in its role for scrutinising and shaping critical area of our service. This year the panel have completed a comprehensive review of the antisocial behaviour service offered to tenants with clear recommendations that have informed future actions to improve tenant satisfaction in this area.

The panel is currently working on a review on BTS's approach to [Awaab's Law](#).

9.4 Local engagement

We recognise that being visible and approachable is critical to building our relationship with tenants. Tenants may often shy away from or feel intimidated by formal engagement and consultation events.

Therefore, we have consciously spent more time in the community in more casual ways, using any available opportunity through local meetings and community events to enable tenants to talk in a more relaxed way about things that matter to them.

We have also developed community gardens that are appreciated by tenant households.

9.5 Leaseholder meetings

We have refreshed the existing meeting structure to provide leaseholders with more transparency of information and allow opportunity for scrutiny and challenge on elements of services charges. Through this forum leaseholders feel heard by the service and can effect positive change in their areas and homes.

9.6 Question of the month

This multi-channelled approach has increased involvement and helped to improve accessibility for tenants. Tenants are asked for their views on key service areas, which then informs service plans for improvement in various areas.

An example of positive service change is improvement in tenant satisfaction with the complaints service where we have seen an increase in tenant satisfaction in how we handle and respond to complaints.

9.7 Key customer programme

There has been an increase in the uptake of tenants signing up as a 'key customer'. Key customers are personally invited to respond to one off surveys and comment on current workstreams, and/or improvement plans across the service.

In the past year we have held successful events on various topics of interest to discuss tenants' views and any actions needed for example, ASB and complaints.

9.8 Block champions

We have successfully established a network of tenant volunteers taking up the role of block champions identify concerns and report building safety issues promptly. This approach has set the foundations for a mutually shared responsibility between the council and tenants in managing communal areas and assuring the health and safety for all.

9.9 Tenant satisfaction measures (TSM's)

In 2025 to 2026 TSM, published results demonstrate that Luton has performed very well in all areas with marked improvement in some areas from 2024/25 score. Specifically:

- being kept informed: from 62% to 70%
- treated fairly and with respect: from 70% to 77%
- overall satisfaction of service: from 70% to 74%

In the main we are achieving above the LA benchmark all most areas except:

- approach to handling complaints: LA benchmark 33%, Luton 31%
- approach to handling ASB: LA benchmark 57%, Luton 55%

To continue this momentum, we have held regular briefing sessions for staff and partners such as BTS to finalise the TSM action plan with the aim of increasing tenant satisfaction further.

10. Lessons learned and what's matters to tenants

We asked tenants what they feel is important. Tenants told us they value:

- clear and timely responses to enquiries
- being kept informed, especially about complaints, anti-social behaviour and major works
- regular opportunities to give feedback in ways that suit them
- more face-to-face contact with housing staff
- engagement that includes younger people, disabled tenants and minority groups
- feedback on how tenant input has made a difference (you said, we did)
- an accessible, easy-to-use website
- local information such as estate visits and roadshows

11. Area of focus

Tenant partnership board

Development is ongoing with a focus on enhancing members skills. This helps ensure members are equipped to effectively fulfil their roles and can get involved, scrutinise and influence areas of service development with confidence.

Improving the information flow

We are improving information flow to and from tenant board to the wider tenant and leaseholder base. We will run an information campaign on:

- who the board are
- what they do
- how they influence how housing services are provided

Creating an engagement culture

We are creating a culture that recognises and values tenant engagement by ensuring that staff and partners such as BTS know that tenant engagement is ‘everyone’s business.

This will be achieved through our new ways of working programme in which tenant engagement and coproduction is run as a golden thread through everything that we do.

Improving governance and oversight

We are improving oversight of HRA functions by developing the link from tenant partnership board and general tenant engagement to the housing executive advisory board.

Improving overall TSM results

We improved TSM results in 2026 with a specific focus on areas where we are below the local authority benchmark. This includes:

- complaints
- antisocial behaviour
- communication with tenants

Improving service performance

We are ensuring that the work that we carry out supports and feeds into the objective key results (OKRs) identified and being able to evidence this.

Improving communication further

We recognise that, whilst communications has been significantly enhanced, we need to ensure all our communication channels are reflective of the diverse needs of our tenants in order to maximise opportunities for underrepresented and seldom heard groups, to actively engage with us and have a say in how we deliver services.

12. Service improvement priorities for 2026-2029

At a key customer event held in May 2026 we discussed what is important to them and agreed these service improvement priorities.

- ensure all tenants and leaseholders are well informed and able to get involved
- involve a wider and more representative range of tenants and leaseholders
- improve the quality and accessibility of communication
- offer more ways to get involved
- work with tenants, leaseholders and their families (including children) to improve neighbourhoods
- improve management of anti-social behaviour reports
- improve management of complaints and how we use your feedback to help develop improved service delivery
- demonstrate the improve impact of tenant engagement
- ensure that our workforce is fully embedded in tenant engagement

The order and detail of these priorities will be reviewed annually with tenants.

We agreed that our key objective is 'engagement before action' and identified the following actions to support this approach:

- inform tenants clearly and honestly
- listen to tenants' views
- involve tenants in shaping decisions
- work with tenants to design and improve services
- ensure that everyone can get involved.
- make sure tenant engagement is not an add-on, but part of how we deliver better housing services

We will ensure we are:

- clear: use plain language and avoiding jargon
- accessible: meet diverse needs, including disability, language, digital access and confidence
- honest: being open about performance and decisions
- representative: seeking views from tenants affected by decisions
- timely: giving enough time to engage and respond
- informed: using feedback to improve service

We pledge to inform, consult, involve and co-design housing services with tenants.

Inform

We will provide clear, accessible information so tenants understand services, performance and opportunities to get involved.

This includes information on:

- council housing web pages
- online and printed newsletters
- performance updates
- letters for important information
- local newsletters, posters and leaflets
- jargon free information
- face-to-face events and meetings

Consult

We will ask tenants for their views before decisions are made. This includes:

- postal, telephone and online surveys
- focus groups, including for tenants with specific needs or experiences
- meetings and events on specific issues
- estate walkabouts
- consultation during service and contract procurement and development

Involve

We will involve tenants in influencing and scrutinising housing services, including through:

- tenant partnership board
- tenant scrutiny panel
- specialists focus groups (for example, disability, young people, those for whom English is not their first language)
- tenant and resident groups
- estate inspections and local events
- joint events with other services for example, public health

Co-design / co-produce

Where appropriate, we will work with you to design services and develop policies and solutions together. This may include:

- working groups with tenants and officers
- co-designed service improvements
- tenant involvement in reviewing outcomes and learning
- be clear about where co-production is possible and where statutory or financial constraints apply

13. How we prepared this framework

Tenants and leaseholders were fully involved in the development of this framework as follows:

- gathered ideas through surveys, meetings and events on what's most important to tenants
- sought input from formal tenant bodies, including the tenant partnership board, local groups and the leaseholder forum
- utilised the tenant satisfaction measures (TSMs) (2025) results
- used learning from complaints, compliments and service feedback
- looked at best practice from other social housing providers
- looked at feedback from underrepresented groups in focus group work

14. Monitoring impact and reviewing focus

We will measure success by focusing on impact as well as activity. We will:

- develop and maintain a detailed annual engagement action plan
- link engagement outcomes to relevant tenant satisfaction measures
- carry out an annual tenant engagement impact assessment
- report back to tenants on 'you said – we did'
- review priorities and delivery annually with tenants

If progress is limited, we will adjust the strategy and consult tenants on significant changes.

The full strategy will be reviewed at least every three years.

15. What success will look like

By the end of this plan's implementation period, we aim to improve tenant satisfaction in the TSM Survey 2028, particularly in the areas of:

- listening to views and acting on them

- being kept informed
- complaints handling and identifying and using learning
- increase the number and diversity of tenants involved in engagement activities

16. Tenant engagement action plan 2026/29

This tenant engagement plan sets out how we will ensure tenants and leaseholders are informed, listened to, able to influence, scrutinise and challenge decisions that affect their homes and communities. The objective is to improve housing service outcomes.

The goal is improved service delivery: housing services that tenants understand and value.

The aim is engagement before action: inform, consult, involve, co-design/co-produce.

This action plan sets out how we will ensure accountability and monitor and measure progress. The tenant partnership board will monitor actions bi-annually and if necessary, evaluate reasons why priorities have not been met. We will publish updates in the tenant newsletter and on the council's website.

17. Appendix: tenant engagement strategy and action plan

Priority 1: create a culture that recognises and values tenant engagement

	Action	How	How we will measure improvement	Feedback to tenants
1.	Promote to staff the importance of tenant input in the development of services	Ensure early tenant engagement in all policy and procedure reviews. Utilise tenant feedback in housing service action plans to improve housing services.	Report back to all tenants in a variety of ways on the outcomes of all policy and service reviews, including 'you said, we did' and how we have utilised feedback.	Bi-annually
2.	Create a staff culture where the tenant voice is an embedded main priority for housing teams, promote 'engagement before action'.	Set up and run regular staff training and briefing sessions around their role in engaging and involving tenants.	Number of training/briefing sessions held and attendance. Annual review of staff views on tenant engagement.	Annually

Priority 2: offer a range of opportunities for meaningful tenant and leaseholder involvement, scrutiny and influence

	Action	How	How we will measure improvement	Feedback to tenants
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3.	Ensure engagement opportunities are open for all council tenants and leaseholders.	Utilise satisfaction survey results and tenancy data we hold to identify diverse groups. Develop knowledge of and contact minority groups at least annually. Target and work with diverse groups in a variety of ways.	Quarterly or bi-annual report on the diversity of tenant engagement volunteers. Reports to staff, tenant partnership board and wider tenant audience on projects to improve tenant representative diversity. Report on diverse tenant's feedback and any new ways of working that are agreed.	Bi-annually
4.	Increase key customer (tenant representative) group membership	Use every opportunity to increase key customer membership. Including at engagement events, local tenant groups, use of survey results, etc. Create a quarterly key customer online newsletter confirming how key customers have helped improve services. Review the key customer information provided on sign up.	Key customer membership increases of at least 5% per annum. Ensure outcomes from key customer events are reported widely internally and externally to tenants and leaseholders. Evidence how key customer activity has led to housing service improvement.	Bi-annually
5.	Review and refresh tenant partnership board and tenant scrutiny panel to ensure the groups are diverse, members have the relevant skills, abilities and knowledge to work and challenge housing services effectively.	Arrange a review session with tenant involvement experts, TPAS. Review the groups terms of reference, code of conduct and recruitment processes. Ensure members undertake an annual appraisal and that any learning needs are included in the annual training plan.	TPAS review to be held. Align TPB and SP knowledge of new ways of working in housing.	Bi-annually

6.	Ensure all formal tenant representatives have the skills, abilities and knowledge to participate and challenge the council effectively.	Carry out an annual appraisal of formal group members.	Set up and run an annual training/briefing programme.	Jan-March
7.	Ensure resources allocated to tenant engagement are sufficient to meet their needs.	Provide resources for meetings and events. Ensure tenant expenses are met.	Annual review and refresh of tenant engagement budgets.	Annually
8.	Increase number of engagement events held, both centrally and locally.	Use events to establish and tackle key issues. Discuss in more details key issues raised in the annual tenant satisfaction survey.	Set up and hold more events locally/and/or join other council events held. Set key customer events and focus group agendas that look deeper into lower scoring satisfaction survey areas. For example, in 2026, the focus has been on anti-social-behaviour, complaints and communication.	Annually

Priority 3: Improve communication with tenants

	Action	How	How we will measure improvement	Feedback to tenants
9.	Improve communication, ensuring tenants have a wide range of ways to access information and opportunities to get involved.	Develop social media for tenant engagement.	Use available platforms to advertise events and current housing news. (WhatsApp updates, notify system, etc)	Annually
10.	Strengthen focus group membership and ensure improvements/recommendations are put in place and monitored. Address and monitor the diversity of tenant representatives on each group. Target the engagement of hard-to-reach groups	Produce rolling posters to allow for anytime sign up to the focus groups and allow people to attend on an ad hoc basis.	Review evidence of outcomes and next steps taken from focus group work.	Annually
11.	Increase tenant engagement at the local level and team up with other departments at local events	Attend Let's Talk events. Hold housing service local events.	Review attendance at Let's Talk styled sessions where residents can meet housing staff in person and speak about problems or queries.	Ongoing
12.	Highlight the role of the new area tenancy and community teams and how they engage with tenants at a local area level.	Invite tenancy officers to local tenant group meetings and events.	Monitor attendance	Biannually
13.	Look into making newsletters more accessible for those people with low levels of literacy. Including looking at video versions and transcripts in community languages.	Review current arrangements and look into how accessibility could be improved.	Ongoing	Annually