



Housing for Women

**Engagement
Strategy 2017-2020**

December 2017

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1.0 Introduction

The Engagement Strategy for Housing for Women supports the mission and values of the organisation:

Our Mission

To work to empower women through providing good homes and services and challenging inequalities faced by women.

Our Values

- a. Empowering – we aim to empower our customers to make choices and have greater control of their lives.
- b. Positive – our people have a ‘can do’ attitude. We are positive about change and see it as an opportunity to develop.
- c. Acting with Integrity – we are fair, open and honest and keep our promises.
- d. Committed to Excellence – we are always striving to do better and are enthusiastic about learning from our experiences.

Housing for Women recognises that meaningful and flexible engagement can help to drive business improvement and benefit staff, individual tenants and service users, as well as local and wider communities.

This engagement strategy links directly to Business Plan Objectives:

- Customer Satisfaction
- Empowering and Challenging Inequality

2.0 Who Does the Engagement Strategy Apply To?

Housing for Women’s approach is to provide opportunities for all tenants and service users to engage with us through a range of options which will apply across all tenures and services. Engagement can be at a time and level to create the widest possible range of choices for individuals, recognising that our tenants and service users have varying requirements and interests in the work of the organisation.

3.0 Definitions

Engagement: A commitment to ensuring tenants and service users are involved in influencing our services and shaping their local areas.

Tenant: any person occupying Housing for Women owned or managed property that has an assured or assured shorthold form of tenancy with the organisation. Other householders of

Housing for Women property may be involved at levels 1, 2 or 3 of the available options but only the named primary tenant may be involved at level 4. Those occupying properties managed by Housing for Women on behalf of other organisations may be involved at any level.

Service User: any recipient of housing and / or support from Housing for Women supported housing services.

Pyramid of Engagement: a graphical representation of the 4 levels of engagement offered by Housing for Women.

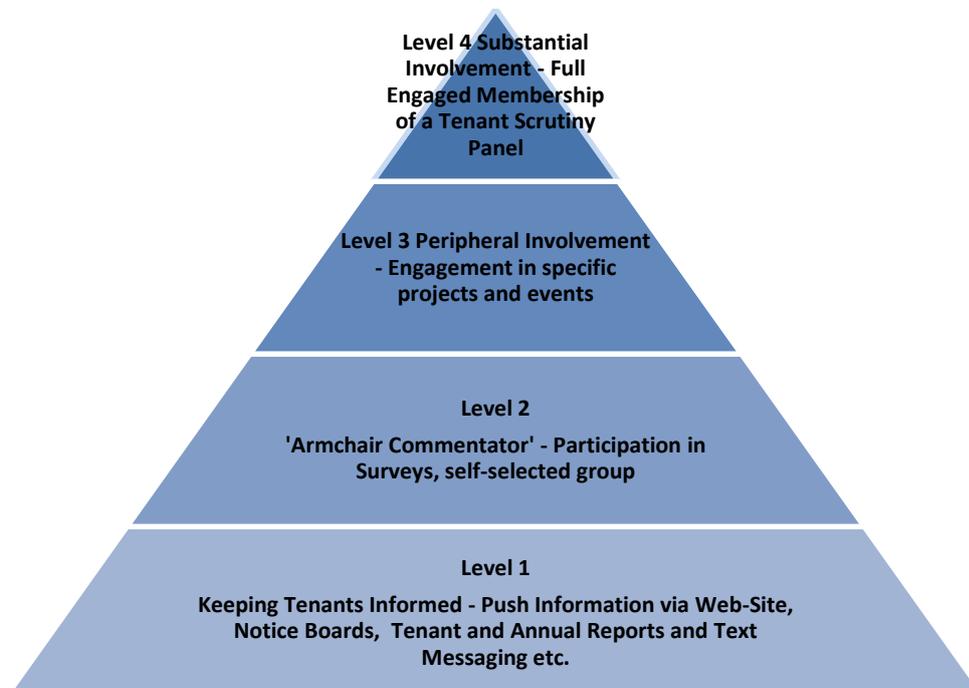
Customer: any tenant or service user in receipt of accommodation and / or services provided by Housing for Women.

4.0 Purpose – Why an Engagement Strategy

The primary purpose of engagement at Housing for Women is to:

- Feed into service improvement
- Improve how we communicate with our customers
- Obtain useful feedback on specific messages and / or services
- Understand whether we are doing things right or wrong
- Support best value as customers often have useful suggestions that can be cost-effective
- Increase the level of engagement across all diversity groups

5.0 Pyramid of Engagement



Housing for Women is adopting a 'Pyramid of Engagement' model offering 4 levels of involvement with the organisation.

Summaries of each level, membership criteria and the required resource to support each level are:

Level 4 – Substantial Involvement:

- 4 - 6 meetings per annum - preferably evenings
- Representatives across diversity groups actively sought
- 3 areas of service reviewed annually
- Consulted on all customer facing policies
- Lead officer - Director of Operations
- Supported by - Head of Property Services, Head of Housing and Income Services & a Housing Assistant
- Clear terms of reference and commitment to 80% attendance
- Required to attend basic awareness training - e.g. Data Protection, Diversity etc.

Membership and Attendance:

- No more than 12 tenant members with an application and selection process
- 1 Board member
- Regular attendance by Director of Operations and at least 2 of: CEO, Head of Housing, Head of Property & Housing Assistant for administration support.

Resource to Support:

- Officer staff time
- Administration Support
- Meeting costs including other venues
- Public transport costs reimbursed with arranged (e.g. taxi) transport for registered disabled or by prior agreement e.g. for late evening meetings
- Childcare Vouchers for children < 16 and / or attendance allowance reimbursement for registered carer
- Any additional support to enable inclusion of diverse groups

Level 3 – Peripheral Involvement:

- No meetings attendance required
- Feedback forum for specific projects and events
- Editorial input and contributor to newsletters and Web-site articles
- Editorial input into e.g. new standard letters

- Editorial input into e.g. regular customer surveys
- Clear standards for feedback in timely and meaningful way
- Estate Champions option - cleaning and grounds maintenance feedback, attendance at inspections

Membership and Attendance:

- No more than 20 members - tenants and service users

Resource to Support:

- Officer staff time
- Admin Support
- Fully operational tenants' portal

Level 2 – Armchair Commentator

- Expression of interest to be involved in surveys and feedback
- Feedback on letters, policies, newsletters etc. No editorial or contributor status
- Feedback to be timely

Membership and Attendance:

- As many as express an interest - tenants and service users

Resource to Support:

- Officer staff time
- Admin Support
- Fully operational tenants' portal

Level 1 – Keeping Tenants and Service Users Informed- Default Level:

- One Way Push Communications
- Push information through: website; noticeboards; key messages included with other communications; newsletter; straplines / messages in generic correspondence

Membership and Attendance:

- No active membership

Resource to Support:

- Business as usual

6.0 Engagement Standards

Housing for Women commits to:

- Actively encouraging all tenants and service users to take part at the level that suits them
- Maintain a database of tenants and service users who have opted to be involved / consulted at Levels 2, 3 and 4
- Provide support and training and opportunities for mentoring to the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel
- Optimise the channels through which tenants and service users can be involved and provide feedback
- Be accountable and transparent

7.0 Inclusion and Diversity

Housing for Women takes pride in being based in London. We value the benefits of a diverse society and are committed to the principles of equality, fairness and respect.

Housing for Women is committed to playing an active role in promoting equality and challenging discrimination in all its forms. We will work with partners, staff and residents to ensure that everyone is treated fairly and equally and to promote a culture of tolerance and respect in our workplaces and our local communities.

We recognise and celebrate difference and diversity and are mindful that understanding differing resident perceptions, experiences, views, preferences and backgrounds is important to encourage participation, improve services and increase satisfaction.

We are committed to ensuring tenants and service users at Level 4 receive inclusion and diversity awareness training within their first year of membership.

We will undertake equality impact assessments to ensure any activities or projects are inclusive and meet the diverse needs and aspirations of the widest possible membership of our tenants and service users.

We commit to supporting tenants and service users from diverse backgrounds to become involved at their preferred level of engagement.

8.0 Monitoring and Reporting

We will record all resident involvement in a database by:

- Number of engaged persons at each level
- Number of hours of involvement at each level
- Number of policies subject to consultation

Involvement will be reported quarterly to the Executive and annually to the Board and all tenants through the Annual Review and on the web site.

9.0 Action Plan

Action Plan:

No.	Actions	Who	When
1	Consult on Engagement Strategy with existing panel members	DoOps	COMPLETE
2	Launch Engagement Strategy in 'Brighter Futures' and a tenant event to be arranged in October 2017	DoOps	COMPLETE
3	Invite applications to become members of the Level 4 Tenant Scrutiny Panel	DoOps	31/12/17
4	Hold first meeting of Tenant Scrutiny Panel to elect a Chair and Deputy Chair	DoOps	31/01/18
5	Develop a database of tenants and service users who express an interest in being involved at Levels 2, 3 or 4.	HoH&I	31/03/18
6	Develop and deliver a training programme for Level 4 members	DoOps	31/03/18
7	Ensure that engagement remains well publicised through 'Brighter Futures', notice boards, web-site and regular mailings	DoOps	Ongoing
8	Develop a tenant engagement area of the tenants' portal through the web-site	Comms Officer / IT BP	TBC
9	To utilise other social media methods to reach out to as wide a range of tenants and service users as possible	Comms Officer	TBC
10	Develop a 'Be Engaged' leaflet with the tenants and services users	Comms Officer	TBC
11	Collate quarterly returns against the three measures of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of persons • Number of hours • Number of policies 	DoOps	From 01/04/18
12	Continue to collect, refine and update customer insight and profiling information to assist in prioritisation and allocation of resources	HoH&I	Ongoing

DoOps - Director of Operations
 HoH&I – Head of Housing and Income
 Comms Officer – Communications Officer
 ITBP - IT Business Partner

10.0 Appendix A:
What's In It for Me?

Description	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	Kept Informed	Armchair Commentator	Peripheral Involvement	Substantial Involvement
Having a say in targeted surveys to give feedback about services		✓		
Having a say in specific projects and events as well as targeted surveys to give feedback about services			✓	
Training to become a recognised Estate Champion			✓	
Recognition as part of the tenant and service user engagement structure of Housing for Women		✓	✓	✓
Opportunities to give feedback about selected publications and policies		✓	✓	✓
Support to form local networks to channel views and feedback on addressing local issues		✓	✓	✓
Consulted on all customer facing policies			✓	✓
Contribute articles and points of view to publications and tenant area of the web-site			✓	✓
Get involved in inspection and setting standards for cleaning and grounds maintenance			✓	✓
Get involved in setting standards for repairs and customer services			✓	✓
Involvement in scrutinising and improving services through service reviews				✓
Influence over business priorities				✓
Recognition as part of the formal governance structure of Housing for Women				✓
Training and development opportunities: i.e. chairing meetings, mentor support, e-learning modules				✓
Support for childcare and transport for qualifying members				✓
Eligibility for gift vouchers for giving the most meaningful feedback in your engagement level		✓	✓	✓
Invitation to an annual social event e.g. lunch or afternoon tea				✓
Recipient of information	✓	✓	✓	✓
Maximum Number of Members	N/A	100	20	12
Estimated Time Investment per Month	<1 hour	< 2 hours	< 2 ½ hours	Up to 4 hours