



TENANT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

2008 – 2010

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LET A MEMBER OF STAFF KNOW YOUR REQUIREMENTS**

Cathcart & District Housing Association

Tenant Participation Strategy 2008 - 2010

1.0 Introduction

Cathcart & District Housing Association is committed to providing good quality information and involving tenants in decision making. In order to demonstrate this commitment, the Association has developed this Tenant Participation Strategy in full consultation with tenants. The Strategy will explain to tenants, staff and committee members, how tenants can get involved and influence housing services. This Strategy will cover the period from 1st September 2008 to 31st March 2010.

As well as being good practice, a Tenant Participation Strategy is also a legal requirement, under Section 53 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. This Strategy takes account of a range of Performance Standards, specifically GS2.2.

2.0 Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the strategy are as listed below. These have been developed taking account of the views of tenants, staff and committee.

- To encourage greater participation in all aspects of the association's operations.
- To encourage participation from as diverse a range of tenants as possible i.e. various ages, ethnicities, people with disabilities etc.
- To provide good quality information to tenants of Cathcart .
- To continue to communicate well with tenants on appropriate matters.
- To use a greater variety of consultation methods where appropriate.

4.0 Information

The following list is just some of the information the association will make available to tenants;

- Newsletters
- Annual report
- Copies of relevant policies and procedures, accounts, Flyers and leaflets
- Tenants handbook
- Details of local events
- Money advice
- Applying for housing / internal transfer
- Right to buy
- Help, advice and support agencies
- Performance of the association
- Staff changes
- Committee changes
- Tenant satisfaction survey results

This list is not exhaustive.

5.0 Consultation

Cathcart has always been committed to consulting with tenants on changes to services that have a direct impact on them. The association wishes to develop a strategy that most reflects the wishes of our tenants.

Early in 2009 the Association will carry out a tenants satisfaction survey and the information gathered at that time will feed into the review of this strategy.

At first, the strategy may seem modest. However, this is based on the principle that it is much better that our formal strategy is realistic and achievable, as opposed to containing far too many different elements that, even at the outset, we know we are not going to achieve. It should also be noted that this is the approach recommended by The Scottish Housing Regulator in the publication from their national TP team.

6.0 Review of Strategy 2007-2008

The Association has carried out a review of our internal practices and procedures. We are constantly aiming to become more efficient. In our efforts to ensure that tenants receive up to date and meaningful information we will continue to

- Send out newsletters 3-4 times a year.
- Newsletters are used to provoke feedback from tenants on current matters e.g. rent increases, public meetings, newsletters, planned maintenance, community issues, policy reviews etc.
- Newsletters are also designed to generate tenants and prospective tenant involvement in policy reviews. This includes the review of this strategy as well as the allocation policy and the anti-social behaviour policy.
- We will be asking you the tenants in our survey what you think about our newsletters.
- Once the full tenant satisfaction survey has been carried out the final report will be published.
- AGM's have been reasonably well attended in the past. This year was the best attendance to date. We plan to use this venue as a platform to gain feedback from tenants in future years.
- Regular reminders are placed in the Association newsletters with a view to encouraging tenants to become involved in the management committee.

- The association will shortly introduce a website. We will publish details of our website in our newsletter. We will also seek your views on the website through our tenants satisfaction survey during 2009.
- A review of the Tenants Handbook is currently underway and will be issued to all tenants on completion.
- Having identified interested members, the Association successfully welcomed a new committee member in 2008 on to the management committee.

7.0 Registered Tenant Organisations (RTOs)

The Association will be happy to encourage and assess applications for groups of tenants to form RTOs. However, it is apparent from past experience that residents in the area who wish to participate tend to join the Management Committee. The Association will, of course, view the setting up of any RTOs positively and will give appropriate financial and administrative support.

Given that the level of resources (in terms of the time and staff levels we have available) is finite and we therefore have to prioritise all the important elements that form our tenant participation strategy, it is viewed as more productive to concentrate on other aspects of TP. However, we will endeavour to encourage RTO's wherever possible in the newsletter or with interested parties.

8.0 Monitoring and Review

This strategy will be monitored on an ongoing basis. Outcomes in relation to targets set will be reported to the management committee in April each year. The Strategy will be comprehensively reviewed every 3years.

October 2008

Appendix 1

1. In general, do you find our newsletters informative? Yes No D/K
2. In general, do you feel that we consult you about matters that affect you and your tenancy, for example, repairs, allocations, rents? Yes No D/K
3. Do you know that you can stand for election to the Management Committee? Yes No D/K
4. Would you consider joining the Committee? Yes No D/K
5. Which of the following appeal to you as a means of keeping you informed/consulted on matters that affect your tenancy? (select all that apply).
- Regular Newsletters Yes No D/K
- Door-to-door surveys Yes No D/K
- Drop-in Days (Open Days) Yes No D/K
- Telephone Surveys Yes No D/K
- Public Meetings Yes No D/K
- Area Committees Yes No D/K
- Focus Groups or Working Parties Yes No D/K
- Management Committee Yes No D/K
6. On which of the following general areas would you like to be consulted?
- Allocation of housing
- Rent Arrears
- Day-to-day Repairs
- Major Repairs
- Rent levels
- Estate management
7. Would you find any of the following helpful?
- Large print
- On tape
- In Braille
- Translated
- Please specify..... Any other at all
8. Do you or your partner work more than 16 hours per week? Yes No
- If yes, are you in receipt of Housing Benefit? Yes No

**Cathcart & District Housing Association Ltd.
Tenant Participation Strategy – Work Plan**

Finding	Task	Timescale	Lead Officer	Comments
Survey tenants to find out if they are happy with the format, content and length of the newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to send out quarterly newsletters 	4 st Quarter 2008/2009	Christine	
Survey tenants to find out if public meetings would be a popular choice to imparting information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include in survey form 	4 th Quarter 2008/09	Christine	
Past surveys said we were good at keeping tenants informed . Survey tenants to find out if still true	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to inform tenants using various methods including an annual report and web site etc. 	4 th Quarter 2008/09	Christine	
Survey tenants to find out if other forms of print are required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the questionnaire to identify these households and contact to find out specific requirements. Aim to have these addressed within 12 months. 	4 th Quarter 2008/09	Christine	
The Association has not yet received any definite enquiries from	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place regular reminders in newsletters with a view to encouraging local people to set up RTO's. Remind them of the 	Ongoing	Christine	

Finding	Task	Timescale	Lead Officer	Comments
tenants or groups of tenants in relation to establishing RTO's	support we will offer.			
Survey tenants to see if any one wishing to sit on policy consultation group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to involve tenants in policy review that affects them. Contact tenants wherever possible to be part of focus groups for policy review and other consultation exercises. 	Ongoing	Christine /May	
We want to encourage tenants to participate in a way which suits them. It was on this basis that members approved the TP Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to investigate and promote as many ways as possible of allowing and encouraging tenants to participate e.g. in person, comments and suggestion box, surveys, questionnaires, focus groups, AGM, public meetings, web site etc. 	Ongoing	Christine	
We want tenants to know what their rights are in respect of tenant consultation and information. We want tenants to know how they can participate, should they wish to do so.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Following on from the issue of the Scottish Executive leaflet, more information has been provided in the Tenants Handbook. Reminders about rights to information and consultation should continue to be publicised on the association website and in newsletters. 	Ongoing	Christine	Information permanently available on website.

Finding	Task	Timescale	Lead Officer	Comments
The Association is keen to attract younger members onto the management committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="527 264 1140 367">Identify and approach younger tenants when committee vacancies become available. 	As appropriate	Christine / Committee	