



Queens  
Cross  
Housing  
Association

Tenant  
Participation  
Strategy

2018 - 2021

[qcha.org.uk](http://qcha.org.uk)

0808 143 2002

[contactus@qcha.org.uk](mailto:contactus@qcha.org.uk)



## Contents

Section	Contents	Page
1.	Foreword	2
2.	Introduction and background	4
3.	What we have done; what we will do and how we will do it	7
4.	Monitoring and Evaluation	15
Appendix 1	Action Plan	

## 1. Foreword

This Tenant Participation Strategy covers the period 2018-2021. It forms part of the Customer First Strategy which is designed to overarch the Association's approach to delivering excellent services across our organisation. Our Business Plan 2017-20 is underpinned by 10 strategies to help us deliver our promises and they set out how we will achieve our commitments. The Customer First Strategy / Tenant Participation Strategy demonstrates how we will put our customers at the heart of everything we do and how we want our services to be delivered to tenants and other customers in the communities we serve.

We recognise that informing our tenants and listening to their views is essential to help us deliver a housing service to meet our customers' needs and demands. With that in mind we have updated the Tenant Participation Strategy after listening to what our tenants and service users have told us. It builds on the success of the previous strategy *Our Voice 2014* and focuses on communicating with our customers and listening to their views, encouraging more people to become involved and influence the services they receive from us, work more closely with customers and groups and provide more opportunities for customers to get involved in a way that suits them.

The Board and staff teams are all fully committed to achieving these outcomes and the Tenant Participation Strategy provides a framework to make this happen.



Marilyn Clewes  
Chair  
QCHA Board of Management

## Our Vision, Values & Strategic Objectives

### Our Vision

Excellent housing in vibrant communities

### Our Values

#### Respect

We see the positive in everyone, especially our tenants. We treat everyone fairly, regardless of age, race, gender, sexuality or background. We ask for opinions even if we know we might not like what we hear. And we address people's concerns in any way we realistically can.

#### Integrity

What we say in public is the same as what we say behind the scenes. If we say we'll do something, we mean it. Our tenants can count on us to solve their problems and make sound decisions.

#### Aspiration

We want the best for all our current and future tenants. We're not afraid to strive for things that won't be easy – or try things that haven't been done before. We seek out opportunities and welcome change. If it doesn't turn out as planned, we learn and improve again. And then we try again.

### Our Strategic Objectives

- A. Build more desirable homes in popular neighbourhoods
- B. Deliver more excellent services to suit our tenants' lives
- C. Invest in our people to grow and develop their skills
- D. Find more ways to ensure value for money
- E. Continue to challenge poverty
- F. Put even more focus on community health and wellbeing
- G. Be ready for opportunities

## 2. Introduction and background

The Customer First Strategy overarches the Association's approach to delivering excellent services across our organisation. It incorporates our Tenant Participation Strategy and underpins the delivery of all our other strategies with strong overlaps with our Equality & Diversity strategy, Digital Business strategy and People strategy.

There are 8 ways that we will ensure customers are at the heart of everything we do and feel valued. We will

1. Ensure our staff **understand and demonstrate the right behaviours** to deliver excellent customer services and adopt a positive approach in dealing with people.
2. **Understand who our customers are** and what particular requirements individuals may have – so that we can tailor our services to their needs.
3. **Make sure our services are accessible**
4. **Actively seek the views of customers** so that we focus on 'doing best what matters most'
5. **Involve customers directly** in shaping and scrutinising our services.
6. **Establish** clear **standards for our services** so people know what they can expect.
7. **Publish what our customers tell us** and how we are responding
8. **By learning from others.**

With that in mind we have updated our Tenant Participation Strategy to focus on how we will:

- communicate with our customers and listen to their views in a way that suits them;
- provide more opportunities for customers to influence the service they receive in a way that suits them;
- work more closely with our customers and groups in a way that suits them so we can improve services together;
- encourage more tenants and services users to become involved with the association in a way that suits them;
- look at the resources required to make the strategy work

**Tenants at our 2017  
Annual General Meeting**



## Tenants' Rights to Consultation

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 gives tenants the following rights:

- To be consulted on any proposed increase in rent or other charges; to have regard given to their views and to provide 4 weeks notice of any increase
- Landlords must publish a Tenant Participation Strategy containing an assessment of resources
- Landlords must publish a list of registered tenants organisations (RTOs)
- Landlords must notify tenants and RTOs of any proposals that would significantly affect tenants, explaining the likely effect and give them reasonable timescales to respond. They must have regard to the views of tenants and other organisations responding to any consultation. This includes proposals relating to policy on housing management, repairs maintenance, standards of service, the Tenant Participation Strategy and any stock transfer resulting in a change of landlord.

We carried out a wide consultation in preparing this strategy with our tenants, Board members, Community Involvement Groups (CIGs), Residents Task Force (RTF) members and staff by holding focus groups, workshops and a Tenants Open Day. We used the feedback from these sessions to develop this strategy as well as listening to using feedback through our daily interaction with customers.

This strategy has been formulated by taking into account tenants' and stakeholders' views, it also has been influenced by the Association's local policies and strategies as well as national legislation and strategies:

- Housing Scotland Act 2001
- Guidance on Tenant Participation, Scottish Government 2002
- Scottish Social Housing Charter, Scottish Government 2012 (updated 2017)

### **Charter Outcome 2. - Communication**

*Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.*

### **Charter Outcome 3 - Participation**

*Social landlords manage their businesses so that: tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.*

## The benefits of participation.

We recognise and value the benefits of participation to both tenants and staff. We want to promote the benefits of participation and encourage all our tenants to get involved. The benefits are:

- Higher customer satisfaction because we design services to reflect customer priorities
- Fewer customer complaints because we listen and learn from feedback
- Higher staff satisfaction because we get better feedback from customers
- Higher quality services because our customers can hold us to account

**Our Resident's Task Force receive the TIS Scrutiny Approved Accreditation Award at Silver standard from the Tenants Information Service and Scotland's Housing Network.**



### 3. What we have done; what we will do and how we will do it

Our Tenant Participation Strategy is built around the key actions of our Customer First Strategy. Taking account of these and the feedback we received through our consultation exercises, we have updated our tenant participation key actions to focus on the following:-

<b>1. Communicate with our customers and listen to their views in a way that suits them</b>
---

We actively seek the views of our customers so that we focus on 'doing best what matters most'. We use this information to make service improvements. We aim to capture a range of views and make it easy for our customers to speak to us.

We encourage our staff to seek the views of customers and feedback what they hear in their day to day interactions; we use a range of communication methods including our social media and our Focus newsletter; we carry out consultations and focus groups; we use complaints and compliments and any feedback as learning opportunities.

#### What we have achieved:

- Carried out a comprehensive annual Tenant Satisfaction Survey, gathering views from a sample comprising 1/3 of our tenants each year
- Completed a programme of regular customer surveys across a range of services including repairs, new homes, anti-social behaviour and supported housing
- Carried out extensive customer profiling to understand our tenants and their needs, 'Getting to Know You' surveys
- Maintained a majority of Board membership for community Board members
- Established 4 local Community Involvement Groups (CIGs) to develop neighbourhood action plans
- Established a Residents Task Force to focus on scrutiny activities
- Embedded an accredited approach to complaints handling
- Set up Facebook and Twitter accounts
- Developed an app to improve access to services
- Reviewed and redesigned our Focus newsletter
- Redesigned the Older Persons Service with input from residents
- Held focus groups and events for our supported housing tenants, tenants and groups
- Held our first Open Day for tenants in our main office



- Developed a performance management framework
- 87% satisfaction with 'keeping you informed'

### **Board and Community Involvement Group members**



### **Where we want to go next:**

- Succession plan with our Board so we actively recruit new community Board members
- Increase the number of members on our Community Involvement Groups and review how these best engage local residents
- Continue to develop our approach to consultation and feedback so tenants can see how they can drive improvements by getting involved
- Continuously review how we promote the opportunities for tenants to get involved to keep up levels of interest and engagement
- Hold an annual Open Doors event for our customers
- Promote the use of our app and other online services
- Get to know our customers better and will develop services using the data from the surveys we have carried out
- Increase satisfaction above 87% with 'keeping you informed'

## **2. Provide more opportunities for customers to influence the service they receive, in a way that suits them**

It is important to us that our customers are directly involved in the shaping and scrutinising of our services. We offer a range of ways for people to get involved at different levels.

We have a community led Board of Management. There are 11 members, with the majority of places being held by community representatives and our Chair is a community Board member.

We have established 4 Community Involvement Groups representing Queens Cross, Woodside, Westercommon and Dundasvale areas. The CIGs meet monthly to discuss issues relating to their local community and carry out estate walkabouts with local staff.

The Residents Task Force has a focus on the scrutiny of services across the Association looking at policies, procedures and performance.

There are also opportunities for tenants to get involved in specific consultations and focus groups which give them the opportunity to scrutinise and influence decisions on specific issues rather than having to commit to regular meetings.

### **What we have achieved:**

- A community led Board of Management with a community based member as Chair
- Four local, neighbourhood focused Community Involvement Groups
- An active scrutiny group
- Carried out an annual rent consultation process and used the feedback to influence the rent and service charge increase level
- Consulted on a new rent restructure
- Involved supported housing tenants in recruitment
- Involved tenants in investment projects
- Carried out Focus Groups and events
- Consulted sheltered tenants on the a new model for our Older Persons service
- Carried out tenant led scrutiny inspections of repairs, estate services / handypersons, our contact centre



### Where we want to go next:

- Strengthen our Board membership and diversity
- Review the role of Community Involvement Groups to strengthen their local influence
- Involve the Residents Task Force in more scrutiny inspections eg anti social behaviour
- Expand the opportunities for supported housing tenants to be involved in management decisions and recruitment
- Involve tenants in the ongoing development of the Older Persons model
- Encourage more tenants to become involved in focus groups, specific issue topics, estate walkabouts, mystery shopping etc



### 3. Work more closely with our groups in a way that suits them so we can improve services together

The Board of Management, Community Involvement Groups (CIG) and Resident Task Force (RTF) play a pivotal role in the operation of the Association. We recognise and very much appreciate that tenants are volunteering their valuable time to be involved in the running of the Association and we wish to support them in any way we can.

During 2017, the Residents Task Force scrutinised a number of our services and have been accredited with a silver award from Tenant Information Service for their approach to scrutiny.



We will continue to work with the CIGs and RTF to review and clarify their individual roles. We will also use the feedback from an independently facilitated set of Focus Groups held in March 2018 to influence how tenants can be encouraged to be more involved.

We have one tenants group registered as a RTO (registered tenants organisation) – Burnbank Gardens Tenants & Residents Association. We would welcome more tenants to set up tenants groups in their local communities.

#### **What we have achieved:**

- A community led Board of Management
- Community Involvement Groups who focus on local issues
- Residents Task Force gained TIS silver award accreditation for scrutiny
- Support the Burnbank Gardens R&TA
- Carried out a training programme for the Board and RTF
- Provided staffing resources to support Board, CIG and RTF meetings
- 87% satisfaction with opportunities for participation

**Tenants voting on options and influencing decisions**



#### **Where we want to go next:**

- Recruit new Board, CIG and RTF members
- Review the structure and roles of CIGs and the RTF group
- Develop a training and development programme for all engaged tenants
- Support new tenants groups to set up
- Review and clarify the roles of CIGs/RTF

- Review resources and staffing commitment to the groups and tenant participation in general
- Agree service standards and monitor performance of these
- 90% satisfaction with 'opportunities for involvement' by 2021

**4. Encourage more tenants and service users to become involved with the association and build their capacity in a way that suits them – particularly under represented groups**

We have a long history of helping support and develop local communities, facilities and services. We have developed a range of more informal ways of getting involved as we recognise that there is a social dimension to encouraging tenants to get involved in more formal tenant participation activities. These activities help make our communities vibrant by bringing people together. We hold an annual community gala day and Christmas events. We also provide a range of activities and entertainment including music, dance acts, gardening clubs, lunch clubs, healthy eating talks etc. We work in partnership with local community groups to help plan and fundraise events. We encourage local residents to get involved by becoming volunteers. Induction training is provided for all volunteers.



One of our main priorities is to ensure that we involve young people in the association. We run regular youth groups and work closely with our young residents to provide activities which interest them. Within our youth homelessness service we develop a Service User Involvement & Participation Action Plan to ensure that all our young tenants and residents have a wide range of options to get involved and provide feedback as well as giving them opportunities to build capacity and develop their skills.

We also ensure that tenants in our other housing support services – Older Persons Service and Queens Cross East – are fully consulted on all service issues and have a range of opportunities to get involved.

We are proud of our multi-cultural communities and work hard to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to get involved. Our Sharing Lives, Sharing Spaces project in the Woodside area has helped to integrate and support the Chinese community.

### **What we have achieved:**

- Art Groups
- Gardening Clubs
- Lunch Clubs
- Music Group
- Bingo
- Christmas Pantomime
- Scottish/Chinese Celidh event
- Gala Day
- Our first Open Day
- Helped people develop skills through volunteering
- Involved supported housing tenants in recruitment
- Helped support housing tenants understand 'Self Directed Support'
- Supported Burnbank RTO activities

### **Involving our younger tenants**



### **Where we want to go next:**

- Further integrate the Sharing Lives, Sharing Spaces project into our mainstream housing services
- Continue to develop opportunities to make our communities vibrant
- Develop 360 degree critical friend audits within our housing support services
- Implement the Tenant Participation Strategy Action Plan
- Increase engagement with young people through YOYP 2018/19
- Implement the Involvement & Participation Action Plan for housing support tenants and residents
- Explore the development of a Volunteer Recognition & Reward Scheme

### **Sharing lives – sharing spaces**



## **5. Look at the resources required to make the strategy work**

We are committed to providing resources to ensure our groups are supported to carry out their work. We will provide staff to facilitate meetings, provide admin support and we will carry out training to enhance the skills of our group members and staff. We must make best use of the resources we have available and ensure that this is spread equitably across the services. We will use the feedback we received from the Focus Groups to review the resources committed to tenant participation.

### **What we have achieved:**

- Accessed extensive funding for community development facilities
- Funded CIG budgets
- Provided staff to support groups and tenant participation activities



- Staff/tenant attendance at tenant participation events and conferences
- Carried out training for RTF and Board members to build capacity
- Produce 4 tenant newsletters each year
- Produce information and leaflets on tenant participation activities
- Carried out independent Focus Groups
- Ring-fenced monies from car parking business for community development activities

#### **Where we want to go next:**

- Review the tenant participation budget
- Review and clarify staffing resources leading tenant participation services
- Develop a training programme for staff
- Develop a training programme for Board and Group members
- Review external funding opportunities and maximise financial support for tenant participation



**The Westercommon & Hamiltonhill CIG hold an annual Easter Bonnet Parade and fund this through their local budget.**

## **4. Monitoring and review**

We recognise the importance of maintaining excellence in the delivery of our tenant participation services.

Every member of staff has a responsibility for tenant participation regardless of their job role. Responsibility for monitoring the delivery of this strategy sits with the Depute Director of Housing & Housing Support Services. An annual report to monitor the progress of the action plan will be produced. This will be reported to the Resident Task Force, Community Involvement Groups and the Board. The Resident Task Force will scrutinise our performance.

The Tenant Participation Strategy will be reviewed every 3 years.



## Contact Us



Telephone: **0808 143 2002**

Email: **[contactus@qcha.org.uk](mailto:contactus@qcha.org.uk)**

You can also download this document from our website at [www.qcha.org.uk](http://www.qcha.org.uk)

## Need another version of this document?

We can provide this document in different formats. If you would like a copy of this document in another language, in large print, in Easy Read, on audio tape, on video in British Sign Language (BSL), on CD or in Braille, please ask us.

Queens Cross Housing Association, a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.  
Registered with the Scottish Housing Regulator Registration No HCB172. VAT Registration No. 774 5444 04. Recognised Scottish Charity Number SC 036434. Registered Office: 45 Firhill Road, Glasgow G20 7BE.

