

Resident Engagement Agreement

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Tower Hamlets Homes Resident Engagement Agreement

Tower Hamlets Homes will involve residents in all aspects of the management and development of the services we deliver

Through our engagement service standards we will:

- **Make sure that you have opportunities to get involved**
- **Provide you with a choice of ways of getting involved**
- **Consult with you about issues affecting your home and neighbourhood**
- **Let you know how your feedback has changed what we do**

“This formal agreement forms the cornerstone of the relationship between residents, staff and the Board of Tower Hamlets Homes. It sets out what we want to achieve and how we will ensure our commitments are put into practice”

Signed:

**Chris Creegan
Chair of Board**

**Mike Nulty
Chair of Residents Panel**

**Gavin Cansfield
Chief Executive**

Introduction

This document is an agreement between Tower Hamlets Homes and its residents and guarantees that residents can have a real say in the decisions that affect their neighbourhood.

The Agreement sets out a range of options to get involved in shaping, influencing and monitoring the decisions and services that affect them and the resources and structure that support them to achieve this.

The Agreement and the resident engagement it describes will support better decision making and greater accountability by THH staff.

1 Involving Everyone

Make sure you have opportunities to get involved

We will achieve this through:







<p>Promoting Involvement</p>	<p>Engagement activities will be publicised via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • www.towerhamletshomes.org.uk • Sending letters and flyers to residents as appropriate • Telephoning and emailing resident representatives where appropriate • Posters in receptions and communal noticeboards • Prize draws and prepaid envelopes to maximise returns
<p>Reaching Everyone</p>	<p>We will reach out to residents and communities who have been under-represented in the past:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making contact through service partners and local community groups • Using a network of support staff, carers and interpreters • Organising specific local discussion groups • Profiling groups and activities to ensure engagement activities reflect the diversity of all residents
<p>Raising Awareness</p>	<p>We will ensure that we maximise awareness with residents by using a wide range of communications tools:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Newsletters, letters and leaflets • Information packs, posters, noticeboards • Information targeted to specific communities and groups • Effective use of email, the web, and texting
<p>Accessible Information</p>	<p>To ensure information meets the needs of all residents, we will provide information and feedback in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain language and no jargon • Large print versions • Braille, audio tape and translation • Email and website including Browsaloud
<p>Accessibility</p>	<p>We will ensure that as many residents as possible have opportunities to take part:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement activities will be held at different times of the day • Venues will be accessible and residents made aware • Crèche facilities will be provided free of charge where appropriate and an allowance for childcare paid where appropriate • Transport will be provided or payments made to cover the cost as necessary • Signers, interpreters and induction loops will be provided as necessary


Effective Organisation	<p>Meetings, groups and activities will be planned and delivered to maximise their effectiveness:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A calendar of key engagement activities will be maintained on the website (Board, Residents Panel)• Notification of a meeting will be made at least 10 working days in advance• Residents will be given at least three weeks to reply to any consultation• Any individual request for information will be responded to within 10 working days
Training and Resources:	<p>We will run a number of free courses to help residents build capacity in participating in engagement activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Setting up and running a group• Mystery shopping• Specific training relevant to each formal engagement group• Photocopying and printing facilities at the Wyn Garrett Resource Centre
Feedback:	<p>Feedback will be provided promptly and in an appropriate manner:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Minutes of meeting and action points will be distributed to all participants of a meeting or group, within 10 working days of the activity• Feedback will be provided to other groups as appropriate• Local feedback within Neighbourhood Newsletters• In You Said – We Did• Summary information in Open Door and on the website

2 Menu of Engagement Opportunities






Provide you with a choice of ways for you to get involved

We will achieve this through a range of formal involvement activities:

Formal Engagement Opportunities		
The Board	Weekly activities	 8 hours a month <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Board provides direction and oversight of THH • There are five resident Board members • Requests for new members are publicised in Open Door
Residents Panel	Bi-monthly meetings	 4 hours a month <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Panel is the main resident forum for involvement in the management and delivery of THH services • Fifteen residents sit on the Panel (tenants and leaseholders)
Service Improvement Groups	Monthly meetings	 4 hours a month <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are currently service improvement groups covering: Repairs and Investment, Estate Services, Anti-social Behaviour, and customer services. • Help establish priorities and review performance • New groups will be set-up to address specific issues and will be publicised in Open Door and the web • Next meetings and details are on www.towerhamletshomes.org.uk
Leasehold Forum	Monthly meetings	 2 hours a month <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus for leasehold issues
Youth Forum	Monthly meetings	 2 hours a month <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with 18–24 year olds to establish priority issues and work toward solutions
Tenant and Residents Associations	Monthly meetings	 2 hours a month <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We currently support 27 TRAs • TRAs represent local resident views and we work with them to improve the neighbourhood

Tenant Management Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will support residents in neighbourhoods without TRAs to establish new ones 		4 hours a month
	<p>Monthly meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TMOs enable residents to directly manage their homes There are five TMOs (Dennis, Birchfield, Stephen and Matilda, Withy House and Bancroft.) 		

We also offer more informal opportunities for engagement:

Informal Engagement Opportunities			
Getting Involved Register	Occasional activities		2 hours each
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 400 residents have signed-up to the GIR Members are invited to take part in a number of activities including surveys, mystery shopping and in depth interviews Members receive regular information by email or newsletter 		
Diversity Working Group	Monthly meeting		4 hours a month
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is vital that all communities have an opportunity to engage Support and advise THH to make sure everyone can have an impact on quality of life in their neighbourhood 		
Focus Groups	Occasional activities		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We organise occasional meetings of interested residents to discuss specific issues Recent groups have looked at customer services, financial advice and health inequalities 		
Estate Inspections	Monthly meeting		2 hours a month
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every neighbourhood is inspected once a month by staff and residents Contact your housing officer to take part Help prioritise actions for Neighbourhood Action plans 		
Resident Inspector	Occasional activities		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check if services are being delivered to the correct standard 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inspect homes made ready for new tenants; review complaints or post inspect major works Training will be provided 	
Mystery Shopper	Occasional activities	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Be trained to carry out mystery shopping Investigate service quality and work with staff to improve services 	
Readers Panel	Occasional	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with officers to ensure information is accessible Review newsletters, leaflets, forms Award the Resident Approved status 	
Neighbourhood Action Days	One for every neighbourhood	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 24 Neighbourhood Action Days are planned for 2010-11 All THH services will be represented to listen to your individual or neighbourhood issues Family friendly activities bring local people together Meet THH staff and tell them about your neighbourhood 	
Resident Conference	Annual activity	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get involved in setting the agenda and helping to prepare for a conference or resident event A resident conference is planned for October 2010 A leaseholders conference is planned for October 2010 	
Newsletters Surveys Questionnaires	Occasional activities	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Surveys and requests for feedback within Open Door, the Leaseholder and the Neighbourhood newsletters Telephone surveys (including the rolling monthly survey) Exit survey at receptions 	
You Make a Difference Today	Variable	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An annual fund of £25k A specific theme every year, determined by the Residents Panel (Allotments in 2011/12) Community organisations commissioned to deliver community projects 	

3 Listening to you and acting upon it

Consult with you about issues affecting your home and neighbourhood

We will achieve this by engaging with residents on a wide range of strategic and operational issues:

2011-12 Business Plan	Residents will work with staff to produce our strategic plans and help prioritise our budgets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviewing the achievements of 2010-11 • Setting business priorities for 2011-12 • Agreeing financial priorities and scope of local budgets
Improving Customer Care	Residents will be involved in setting and monitoring our service standards <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor and improve services through the Customer Service Improvement Group • Feedback on the new receptions and the service provided on regeneration estates • Readers Panel (editorial on Open Door) • Mystery shopping • Resident Inspectors
Ensuring our services are accessible to all	Residents who are seldom heard will help us to engage successfully with all the communities living our homes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An annual Equalities Impact Assessment • Understanding the needs of existing and new communities • Reach out to local communities and organisations
Neighbourhood Action Plans	Residents and staff will use these Plans to monitor and manage the neighbourhood together <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The local commitments reflecting locally identified priorities which are agreed with residents • A plan to monitor progress against agreed actions • A tool for allocating local budgets
Tackling ASB	Residents and staff must work together to decrease anti social behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicated ASB staff • Working in partnership with the council and police
Estate Management	Residents will monitor standards and work with staff to improve service quality and value for money <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents participating in Estate inspections • Agree standards for cleaning though resident consultation • Taking part in Neighbourhood Action Days
New Homes	Residents will provide an independent quality check of the quality of homes we let <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruiting resident inspectors to sample and check the

	quality of the homes we are offering to new residents against our lettable standard
Repairs Procurement	<p>Involving residents in the detailed design and successful launch of the new Repairs and maintenance contract:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreeing the contract and tendering process • Guiding the selection of the contractor • Monitoring and managing contract delivery
Decent Homes Procurement	<p>Residents will be able to shape the delivery of the full Decent Homes programme from 2011-12</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feedback and lessons learned on the four pilots currently underway • Participate in developing the overall approach to planning Decent Homes delivery
Service Charge Review	<p>Leaseholders will participate in the external review</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and leaseholders will work together to improve the service charge process
Performance Monitoring	<p>Residents and staff will use the service improvement groups to monitor performance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that our targets for all services are met • Drive continuous improvement and value for money
Service Standards	<p>Tower Hamlets Homes has agreed a set of service standards with residents and reports how it is performing against them on a monthly basis</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreeing the detailed commitments underneath these standards • Monitoring delivery against these standards • Reviewing the standards
Annual Report	<p>Each year we will work with residents to develop our Annual Report for residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking residents what they want to know • Agreeing how to present this information
How we work with residents	<p>We will work together to improve THH services using</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our engagement structure • Resident participation in surveys, focus groups, inspections and mystery shopping
Audit Commission Inspection	<p>Resident input will be central to the Audit Commission inspection in November 2010</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information will be provided through Open Door • Focus groups will be organised by the Audit Commission for involved and non-involved residents to put forward their views on Tower Hamlets Homes

4 Keeping You Informed

Let you know how your feedback has changed what we do

We will achieve this through a comprehensive performance framework

<p>Target Setting</p>	<p>We will enable residents to help prioritise and set resident engagement targets by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consulting residents as part of annual target setting • Publicising targets in Open Door and on the website • Undertaking an annual Board-led progress review against targets and standards
<p>Performance Monitoring</p>	<p>We involve residents in monitoring and evaluating feedback, and will provide feedback on performance from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service feedback surveys and questionnaires • Resident inspection workshops that review performance • The quarterly review of performance by the Residents Panel
<p>Outcomes Reporting</p>	<p>The outcomes of changes will be reviewed and assessed in partnership with residents by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consulting residents and staff on the impact of changes • Involving residents in producing 'You Said – We Did' and an annual Value for Money statement for the impact of involvement
<p>Resident Satisfaction</p>	<p>Measurement of resident satisfaction will be via:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An independent rolling monthly satisfaction survey • 'Status' type survey and specifically targeted surveys • Exit surveys at events, meetings and focus groups
<p>Compliance</p>	<p>Compliance with the standards for consultation will be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitored and reviewed by the residents Panel quarterly • Reported to the Board twice a year • Reported to residents through Open Door and the website
<p>Remedial Action</p>	<p>We will ensure that, when necessary, effective remedial action is taken by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishing a procedure for remedial action as part of the Resident Engagement Agreement • Agreeing appropriate remedial actions with residents' representatives
<p>Annual Review</p>	<p>To ensure this agreement remains fit for purpose and meets the needs of residents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Residents Panel and the Board will review the Agreement annually • Outcomes will be reported in Open Door and the website