

# **Broxtowe Borough Council**

## **Housing Engagement Strategy 2022 - 2024**

### **Your Voice, Your Views**

#### **Our Vision**

The Council's Corporate Plan 2020 – 2024 sets out our vision of:

‘A greener, safer, healthier borough, where everyone prospers’

The key priority for Housing set out in the Council's Corporate Plan is:

‘A good quality home for everyone’

Through listening and responding to views and feedback, the Housing Department can ensure that tenants are at the heart of shaping services for the benefit of all our tenants. For the purpose of this strategy a tenant is anyone who is over 18 and lives in a property where Broxtowe Borough Council is the landlord.

#### **Why have a Housing Engagement Strategy?**

The Housing Engagement Strategy covers the Housing Department's plans for engagement with tenants for 2022 – 2024. The strategy reflects national priorities including the Social Housing White Paper; ‘The Charter for Social Housing Residents’, along with changes being made to the Regulator of Social Housing and the introduction of Tenant Satisfaction Measures. Key priorities and objectives from the Council's Corporate Plan and Housing Business Plan are also reflected in the strategy.

The Housing Engagement Strategy will enable Housing to build upon and improve the way in which we engage with our tenants, by obtaining feedback from a wider range of views, which we will use to improve services.

Tenants experience of services is essential for highlighting what is working well and where improvements are needed. The priorities and actions set out in the strategy will ensure that our tenants have a greater voice and can influence positive change.

#### **How the Housing Engagement Strategy has been developed**

This strategy builds on the Housing Engagement Strategy 2019 – 2022, taking forward implementation of actions impacted on by Covid-19. The Resident Involvement Group were invited to put forward their ideas to help develop this strategy. The Housing

Community Facebook Group has been utilised to promote engagement opportunities and seek views on services. The TPAS National Tenant Engagement Standards have been incorporated into our plans. The strategy has also been developed taking into account the regulatory standard for Tenant Involvement and Empowerment, along with changes to regulation as set out in The Charter for Social Housing Residents and expectations of the Regulator of Social Housing.

## **How the Housing Engagement Strategy will be delivered**

A range of engagement methods are available for tenants to choose from. These methods will match tenants' areas of interest, the learning opportunities required and the time commitment available. They will help to encourage as many people to get involved as possible and ensure that a broader range of views will be heard:

'Go Digital' enables tenants to put forward their views at a time and place suitable to them, for example, from the comfort of their own home, or whilst travelling on a bus.

'On the Move' enables tenants to meet with and talk to Housing employees within their neighbourhoods through methods such as community and pop-up events.

'Take a Seat' methods see tenants joining employees to work together to look at services more in depth, to help bring about improvements for all tenants.

There will be a focus on the recruitment of Neighbourhood Champions and actively encouraging applications to the Housing Community Fund. These priorities are interlinked not only to strengthen links between our Neighbourhoods and Housing, but also to bring about improvements to areas through the funding of small scale projects and support to community activities.

A partnership approach with customers will be taken to reviewing and improving services. Tenants involved in the scrutiny of services will have access to appropriate information which will enable them to make informed decisions and recommendations. Tenants will be supported by the Housing Engagement Team and other employees from across the Department. We will provide training to support tenants who wish to participate. Our support includes reimbursement for reasonable out of pocket expenses.

The delivery of the priorities set out in the Engagement Strategy will be monitored by the Resident Involvement Group and Housing Management Team. Plans are being developed to ensure tenants' views form part of the Council's decision making process, to take into account changes to Governance arrangements made at the beginning of 2022.

## **Benefits for tenants who get involved**

We will ensure that getting involved is an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

Through engagement with Housing, tenants will be able to develop a range of skills, whether that's gaining more understanding of the service through 'Go Digital' methods, or 'On the Move'; or developing communication skills and team working skills through being active in their own area, or by joining us to 'Take a Seat' for a more in-depth look at services.

We will offer opportunities to support the employment aspirations of our tenants. Wherever possible we will support tenants by providing work opportunities, through developing provision of work experience, traineeships in the Housing Service and partnership working.

The increased focus on 'Go Digital' and 'On the Move' engagement methods and neighbourhood based activities will provide easier and quicker ways to be involved, acknowledging that traditional methods, such as meetings, are not for everyone.

In addition to benefits for the individual, by becoming involved tenants will also improve the service provided to all tenants by sharing their experiences and opinions on service improvements.

## **Our engagement priorities**

The Housing Engagement Strategy covers a two-year period and will be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure that the strategy continues to meet national and local priorities.

A key challenge for the strategy is to increase the numbers of tenants that 'Take a Seat' with the Housing Department, which have declined, mainly due to lockdown during the Covid-19 pandemic. The recent changes to the Governance arrangements of the Council has also seen a joint tenant and councillor working group disband and plans for how tenants' views can be incorporated into the decision making process will need to be developed.

We also recognise the need to increase our engagement with tenants at a more local level and will be encouraging tenants to join us 'On the Move' to take an active role within their communities, with a key focus on the recruitment of Neighbourhood Champions.

The strategy will be supported by an annual plan. Over the life of the strategy priorities will be delivered by:

<b>Develop methods to publicise involvement and promote awareness</b>	
<b>Strategy Action</b>	<b>To be achieved</b>
Increase membership of the Housing Community Facebook Group by 50%	Promotion through Housing communications, engagement activities and employee briefings
Implement Engagement Recruitment Plan to encourage more tenants to get involved	At least 10 community events/activities attended
Wider rollout of the Housing Community Fund	Neighbourhoods Team and Engagement Team to increase uptake through Priority Neighbourhoods events, pop-up and community events
Support the Council's work on Climate Change and Green Futures	Information provided to tenants through Housing communications and engagement activities
Utilise Capita to further develop the Your Voice, Your Views engagement database	Accurate information is held about tenant engagement preferences and utilising the customer portal to expand engagement opportunities once available
Employability referrals made to achieve Well for Work targets	Housing employees and other Council Departments engaging with residents to encourage take up of employability opportunities
Encourage engagement of new tenants	Email Me campaign sent to new tenants and follow-up contact made to discuss engagement opportunities
Review of Housing web pages	Housing web pages contain engaging content

<b>Monitor scrutiny of services by residents</b>	
<b>Strategy Action</b>	<b>To be achieved</b>
Increase number of tenants involved with face-to-face meetings	Consideration of feedback from tenants about the timing and location of meetings to help facilitate attendance
Increase presence within our neighbourhoods to gain greater understanding of tenants' views	At least 5 pop-up events held within our housing estates
Recruitment of at least 4 Neighbourhood Champions	Neighbourhoods Team and Engagement Team to promote role through pop-up and community events
Development of plans to ensure tenants' views form part of the Council's decision making process	Identification of method to incorporate tenants' views into Governance arrangements

Recruitment of at least 4 Service Inspectors	Housing employees engaging with tenants to encourage take up of the role
Provide feedback through Housing Communications for tenants where views of services have been obtained	You Said, We Did messages included to highlight outcomes of engagement activities
Increase number of tenants engaged with service improvements	Complainants contacted to encourage wider involvement

## Engagement methods

A range of engagement methods are available for tenants to choose from. These methods will match tenants' areas of interest and the time commitment available. We will ensure that getting involved is an enjoyable and rewarding experience.

<b>Go Digital</b>			
<b>Activity Type</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Overview</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Receiving Information	Social Media/ Website	Messages on key Housing services, including self-service forms	Weekly
	Housing News Bulletins	Sent out to subscribers of Council Housing through 'Email Me'	Monthly
Providing Feedback	Housing Community Facebook Group	Private group for tenants to respond to posts asking for opinions of services and access Housing related news and information	Weekly
	Surveys	Undertaken with tenants about services to gauge satisfaction	As required
	Consultations	Undertaken when changes to services are being considered that will directly impact on tenants	As required

<b>On the Move</b>			
<b>Activity Type</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Overview</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Active Engagement	Neighbourhood Champions	Tenants supported to act as a link between their community and Housing. Through providing feedback on how services can be improved, supporting tenants in their area to settle into their homes, or develop community activities in their areas. Helping to bring communities together and make improvements.	Flexible
	Housing Community Fund	Funding available for small scale projects that will benefit tenants and their neighbourhoods	As required

	Neighbourhood Walkabouts	Tenants and leaseholders are invited to join Housing employees on a walkabout of their area	Annually
	Community Events	Opportunity for residents to find out about Housing services and talk to employees	Flexible
	Service Inspectors	Tenant supported to inspect services and ensure standards are being achieved	Monthly
	Housing Surgeries	Face-to-face sessions to discuss concerns and ask questions relating to housing issues	Quarterly
	Community Groups	Groups with a majority of tenants, benefiting Housing neighbourhoods can receive support to become a Council recognised group	Flexible
	Social Activity Groups	Independent Living tenants who manage social funds and organise activities for the benefit of their schemes, with support available from Housing	Flexible

<b>Take a Seat</b>			
<b>Activity Type</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Overview</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
Active Engagement	Resident Involvement Group	Considers information around performance and complaints to recommend service improvements. Also supports delivery of Housing engagement activities	Monthly
	Task and Finish Groups	Undertake scrutiny reviews of a service area, or part of and make recommendations for service improvements	3 – 4 meetings over 6 months

Tenants and leaseholders who engage with Housing are supported throughout their involvement and are able to access training to assist them in their role, at no cost to themselves.

Complete our online form to let us know how you would like to get involved:

[www.broxtowe.gov.uk/getinvolved](http://www.broxtowe.gov.uk/getinvolved)

For further details about your preferred engagement methods contact the Housing Engagement Team:

Email: [housingengagement@broxtowe.gov.uk](mailto:housingengagement@broxtowe.gov.uk)

Phone: 0115 917 3935