



## **STRATEGY FOR RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT**

### **1. Introduction**

The purpose of this strategy is to set out how we will listen to and work with our customers to provide them with excellent services.

The strategy provides a framework for all of our resident involvement and aims to provide a range of different ways for customers to have a say about what we do, and as importantly, ensures that their views and comments are heard and acted upon appropriately.

The strategy builds upon our long established mechanisms for customer involvement, but recognises that change and improvement are central to continually driving up service standards and meeting customers' changing needs.

There is a clear action plan which will be regularly monitored and reviewed by customers, board members and staff and the strategy will change and develop over time as we learn more from our customers about how they can be most effectively involved.

### **2. Developing the Strategy**

Our Executive Committee has clearly set out its commitment to resident involvement by setting one of their core aims as being

**CA 1 To place residents at the heart of everything we do to provide an appropriate high quality and continually improving service.**

Our Resident Involvement Focus Group has reviewed our current methods of involving residents and has developed an Action Plan to change and/or improve them.

The Action Plan was considered by our Residents Forum who were also asked to comment on the overall strategy.

### **3. The Aims of our Resident Involvement Strategy**

We recognise that involving our customers effectively has benefits for our business and our residents.

The main aims of this strategy are:-

**(i) To provide a framework for resident involvement which can help us to achieve continuous improvement in all the services we provide.**

We will achieve this by:-

- Drawing up an Action Plan with clear expected outcomes which will be regularly monitored and evaluated to ensure that they are effective.

**(ii) Provide a range of ways residents can choose to comment and influence our services.**

We will achieve this by:-

- Building upon our existing methods of involvement to provide a broad range of opportunities to be involved which take into account our client group and the scattered nature of our stock.

**(iii) Ensure residents know how they can be involved.**

We will achieve this by:-

- Producing a leaflet informing customers of the ways in which they can be involved and giving them the opportunity to tell us how they want to be involved.
- Information on our website
- Information in our Handbook
- Regular articles in our Newsletter

**(iv) Ensure everyone who wants to be involved can be involved.**

We will achieve this by:-

- Using appropriate venues for meetings
- Paying for and/or arranging transport where necessary
- Home visits to vulnerable residents to ensure that they are aware of how they can be involved, and to offer appropriate support, if needed, to facilitate their involvement.
- Publicising the fact that we will provide support.
- Offer appropriate training to customers to enable them to develop their skills and knowledge where they wish to be more involved.

**(v) *Involve residents in our service improvement process.***

We will achieve this by:-

- Resident Focus Groups
- Capturing customer views using customer surveys
- Capturing customers views from their comments and complaints.

**(vi) *Facilitate Networking between residents to share good practice, ideas and experience.***

We will achieve this by:-

- Organising quarterly Resident Forums
- Organising Area meetings for smaller groups of Resident Representatives.

**4. How to be Involved**

This section lists the ways in which residents can be involved and have their say in the services we provide.

The list takes into account our client group and the scattered nature of our stock.

It is designed to let residents choose the level they want to be involved in. Some residents may only wish to comment when there is a local issue particular to them, others may wish to be more involved in how the organisation is managed.

**Information** – we aim to provide good quality information on all matters, which affect our customers.

This can be done through:-

- Information leaflets
- Resident Handbook
- Quarterly Newsletter
- Quarterly Resident Forum
- Individual Letters
- Individual Home Visits
- Public Meetings
- Website
- Annual Performance Information

**Consultation** – providing information to customers and asking for their comments. This can be done through:-

- Focus Groups
- Surveys
- Public Meetings
- Individual Home Visits

- ❑ Annual Site Visits
- ❑ Residents Forum
- ❑ Comments Box in Newsletter
- ❑ Comments Box in Office, Sheltered & Residential Homes

**Participation** – involving customers in setting priorities and improving services:-

- ❑ Focus Groups
- ❑ Sub Committee Membership
- ❑ Residents Forum
- ❑ Area Meetings

In addition to the above opportunities for participation, our Action Plan identifies the need to consider Executive Committee Membership for Residents, which due to recent changes in Charity Law is a new opportunity for involvement open to residents of DAMHA.

## **5. Monitoring & Reviewing Resident Involvement**

### Resident Involvement Focus Group

The Resident Involvement Focus Group which was established to draw up this Strategy and Action Plan will continue to monitor and review the commitments made. They will meet at least every six months to monitor progress.

### Housing & Development Sub Committee & Executive Committee

The results of the Resident Involvement Focus Group meetings will be reported to our Housing & Development Sub Committee and then our Executive Committee. Through this system customers' views can directly inform our corporate planning reviews.

### Housing Corporation & Audit Commission

The Housing Corporation sets out the regulatory requirements for all Registered Social Landlords (Housing Associations). It sets out requirements for the services we provide, one of which is Customer Involvement.

The Audit Commission inspects how well we deliver our services and customers will be asked their views as part of any such inspection

## **6. Action Plan**

This sets out the changes/improvements to be made to help us to achieve the commitments set out in this strategy.

The action plan was drawn up by the Resident Involvement Focus Group and was adopted after wider consultation with residents. The Action Plan has clear expected outcomes, which will be monitored regularly.

The Action Plan will be continually reviewed and amended.