



SIX TOWN
HOUSING



Tenant Participation Agreement Summary 2006

Great communities, excellent services, inspiring people.



Susan Jordan

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Chief Executive
(of Six Town Housing)

Introduction

We believe our customers should be at the centre of everything we do. This includes making sure they are involved in developing, planning and monitoring all of the services we provide. Our tenant participation agreement sets out the ways they can do this, and how we will work with tenants and the council to increase the opportunities to get involved, make better-quality decisions and improve services, people's homes and the conditions on council estates.

Our tenant participation agreement supports and builds on the council's tenant and resident participation strategy 2004 – 2009, and shows our future commitment to involving tenants, leaseholders and residents in developing and managing the service.

For the purpose of this summary, the word 'tenants' also refers to leaseholders and residents living on council estates.

What is the tenant participation agreement?

This document is a summary of our tenant participation agreement. For details of how to obtain a full copy of the tenant participation agreement please see page 7.

By law, all councils must make an agreement with their tenants to make sure that they are given the opportunity to influence decisions and have a real say on housing issues that affect their homes and neighbourhoods. The tenant participation agreement has been developed between the council, Six Town Housing, Springs TMO and tenant representatives, after taking account of the priorities and needs of our tenants.

It meets the core standards set by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (ODPM) National Framework for Tenants' Agreements (revised). We will be responsible for making sure that the tenant participation agreement is successfully delivered and the main standards are met.

This summary sets out the key objectives of the tenant participation agreement.

Our vision: 'Great communities, excellent services, inspiring people'



Getting tenants involved in our work

We will provide details on the service areas that we will consult tenants on and in which they can get involved. This includes giving tenants information and asking for their views on the services we provide and our future plans.

The tenant participation agreement outlines:

- the opportunities available to tenants to get involved and influence decisions affecting their homes and communities (this includes outlining how they can let us and the council know their views and how they can contribute to improving services, at a level and in a way that suits them);
- the standard of services tenants can expect to receive from us and the council in relation to getting involved;
- the resources that are available for tenant and resident participation, including training opportunities;
- how we will deal with disagreements and complaints; and
- how the agreement will be monitored and reviewed.

The tenant participation agreement is supported by an action plan which sets out the main actions that we plan to take to improve our arrangements for involving tenants. These actions include developing the ways in which tenants want to get involved and have been agreed with tenants through a number of consultation exercises. They are supported by the Tenant and Resident Participation Working Group.

We will consult tenants on the following issues.

- Involving tenants and residents
- Monitoring budgets and finance
- Customer care, including handling complaints and taking action to put things right
- Developing our programme of improvements to tenants' homes
- Developing and monitoring policies, including offering housing, antisocial behaviour, repairs and maintenance, collecting rent, empty properties, equality policies, including race equality and racial harassment
- Developing our housing strategy, including monitoring and reviewing
- Developing environmental improvement schemes
- Neighbourhood issues which affect tenants' homes or neighbourhoods
- Setting, monitoring and reviewing our services, performance standards and targets
- Sheltered housing services
- Amendments to the tenancy agreement and conditions; and
- The quality of our services

We will also consult leaseholders on:

- service charges, including recovering of costs for major work to the structure of the building;
- providing day-to-day services in shared areas in blocks and on estates; and
- developing policies and procedures, and any changes to services.

How we will consult tenants:

We believe it is important that tenants are given the opportunity to tell us their views so that we can use this information to make better decisions and make sure the services we provide meet their needs. We realise, however, that not everyone has the time to get involved in their community or Six Town Housing. Some people may just want to know about issues affecting their home or neighbourhood, while others may want to have a say in important decisions.

We value everyone's contribution, from tenants who fill in a simple customer satisfaction survey to those who want to be a member of our board. We have developed a tenant participation framework which encourages as many people as possible to take part, at a level and in a way that suits them.

A summary of our tenant participation framework is given in the diagram below.



Customer complaints, compliments, comments and suggestions

We have developed a customer-care charter and a series of service standards which show the standards tenants can expect to receive when they contact us. This includes a customer feedback procedure outlined in a leaflet called 'Making a difference' for customers. We value individual feedback about the services we provide. Tenants who want to make a complaint, compliment, comment or suggestion about a service can do so by:

- speaking to a member of staff in person at Point Blue;
- phoning **0161 686 8000**;
- writing to us at **Point Blue**;
- sending an e-mail to enquiries@sixtownhousing.org;
- filling in a 'Making a difference' feedback form (a member of staff can fill this in on your behalf); or
- filling in an on-line form on our website at www.sixtownhousing.org

The website also contains a section on community involvement where there is information on how to get involved. We will carefully consider any comments we receive and, where appropriate let people know what changes we plan to make as a result of receiving their views.

For more information on how to get involved, please contact us.

Agreed Policy & Procedures

The tenant participation agreement contains the following core standards:

- Standards for information and communication
- Standards for meetings
- Standards for tenant and resident associations
- Standards for equality
- Standards for resources for involving tenants and residents

Full details of these standards are contained within our tenant agreement.

Six Town Housing's commitment to involve tenants and residents

In accordance with the standards for resources and information, we have made the following commitments to involve tenants and residents:

- You have the legal right to be consulted and will be encouraged to get involved in our services
- You have a legal right to be consulted about any plans we have to improve your home or the area around it
- We will encourage, support and promote involvement by individuals and the community as a whole - at local and borough wide level
- We will give you accurate, honest and timely information so you can make genuine choices
- We will develop and use various consultation methods so that participation is genuine and effective

- We will develop agreements with tenant groups on their estates, to improve services in their area
- We will check arrangements regularly to make sure that they are still the most suitable
- We will use consultation to find out what concerns tenants - not just as a means to solve problems
- You have the right to start or join a local tenant and resident group
- We will encourage, support and help fund tenant groups so they can play an effective part in consultation
- We will offer training to tenant groups and tenant representatives and respond to requests for training to make them more effective. An annual training programme will be available
- We will advise, support and give information to tenants who are thinking of a different way to run their homes
- We will have a fair, efficient and widely-available complaints procedure
- Six Town Housing must work for equality of opportunity in tenant involvement. Our information and advice will reflect this policy.



Monitoring the agreement and measuring performance

We want the tenant participation agreement to contribute to a better housing service for Bury. It is important that the agreement is monitored to make sure that it delivers agreed expectations and meets tenants' priorities.

We will work to tackle any failure to meet targets or standards, but also to promote our achievements where the agreement is successful. The role of the participation working group will change from planning and putting into practice the tenant participation agreement, to ongoing development, monitoring and review.

The tenant and resident participation working group will:

- work to amend, update and widen the agreement;
- assess whether agreement standards are being met and if not, investigate and find solutions;
- assess the results of the agreement against the original aims;
- agree and set clear performance measures and targets for involving tenants; and
- review the annual action plan (contained within the strategy) and agree future targets.

As part of our assessment of the effectiveness of the agreement, we will follow the guidance of the ODPM as set out in appendix F of the National Framework for Tenant Participation Agreements (revised).



Local agreements

Tenants themselves will determine the level of involvement that they want in their local housing management service and may seek over time to become more involved in the direct management of their homes. The arrangements we have put in place will ensure that every opportunity for further tenant empowerment can be achieved, and in time, widened beyond housing services in community participation.

Our tenant agreement sets basic standards for tenant involvement in Bury. Tenants and residents may wish to negotiate local agreements in their own communities if they would like to make different arrangements to suit local circumstances.



Contact information:

If you want to be involved in any of the ways outlined in this document, or would like any more information, please contact the community involvement team at:

Freepost RLUY-BXZX-UZGT
Six Town Housing
Point Blue, Moor Street, Bury BL9 5AQ.
Phone: 0161 686 8000 Fax: 0161 764 5078
E-mail: enquiries@sixtownhousing.org

The tenant participation agreement summary has been sent to every council tenant and leaseholder living in the borough. We will also give a copy of the summary document to all new tenants of Six Town Housing when they sign their tenancy agreement.

You can get copies of the tenant participation agreement and the summary from our website at www.sixtownhousing.org, or by contacting us at the above address.

Please ask us if you would like a copy in large print, in Braille, on audio tape, or on disc.

Please contact us if you need this document in another format.

إذا أردت نسخة من هذه الكراسة بلغتك الخاصة، أو بالحروف الطباعة الكبيرة، أو على شريط كاسيت صوتي، أو على قرص الكمبيوتر، يرجى الاتصال بقسم الإسكان في "سيكس تاون" - Six Town Housing على الرقم: 0161 686 8000

若你希望得到本手册的中文譯文、大字印刷本、錄音帶或用電腦軟盤儲存的電子版本，敬請聯絡六鎮住房協會 (Six Town Housing)，電話號碼：0161 686 8000。

اگر میل دارید نسخه ای از این بروشور را به زبان خود، یا با چاپ درشت، یا بصورت نوار ضبط صوت یا دیسک کامپیوتر دریافت کنید، لطفاً با Six Town Housing به شماره زیر تماس بگیرید 0161 686 8000

Si vous désirez obtenir un exemplaire de cette brochure dans votre langue, en gros caractères, sur cassette audio ou disque compact d'ordinateur, veuillez contacter l'organisation Six Town Housing au 0161 686 8000.

W celu uzyskania kopii tej broszury w swoim języku, dużym drukiem, w postaci nagrania lub dysku komputerowego, prosimy kontaktować się z Six Town Housing pod nr tel. 0161 686 8000.

اس کتابچے کی کاپی اگر آپ کو اپنی زبان میں یا بڑے حرفوں کی چھپائی، شہدائی ٹیپ یا کمپیوٹر ڈسک پر درکار ہو تو براہ مہربانی "سیکس تاون ہاؤسنگ" سے فون نمبر 0161 686 8000 پر رابطہ کیجئے۔



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