

Resident Involvement Strategy

Foreword

I want more residents to work with us in shaping the services they receive.

Southwark has had a long tradition of resident involvement using well established resident involvement structures. We have over 130 tenant and resident associations (TRAs) throughout the borough. As well as involvement we encourage empowerment of residents. We currently have 14 tenant management organisations (TMOs) in Southwark empowered to supply housing management services to over 3,500 homes. We work in partnership with the Southwark group of tenants' organisations (SGTO) to empower residents to form tenant and resident associations and support the resident movement.

I am proud of the achievements residents have had in shaping services but in the light of economic pressures and decreased regulation it is my desire to ensure that residents are more involved in deciding how services should be delivered. As well as continuing to support our existing structures to be effective, I recognise that there is more to do to ensure we involve a wider range of residents. Involving more people will make sure services are delivered fairly and appropriately.

As a council we are committed to making a fairer future for all by:

- protecting the most vulnerable
- looking after every penny as if it was our own
- working with local people, communities and businesses to innovate, improve and transform public services, and
- standing up for everyone's rights.

As part of the housing services key commitments towards a fairer future for all we have made eight key commitments including making it easy for residents to get involved in the delivery of housing services and involving them in the design and delivery of ongoing service improvement to housing repairs service. This strategy shows how we will involve residents in delivering our key commitments and reach out much wider to make sure we hear from more residents.

If you have any suggestions or comments on how we can improve the ways we involve residents please call 020 7525 3326 or email resident.involvement@southwark.gov.uk.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Councillor Ian Wingfield
Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Housing Management



What we want to achieve

We want all residents to be able to have a genuine say and, where appropriate, control over the services they receive.

With this in mind we have set out five key aims that we will deliver through this strategy.

1. **We will engage with residents in achieving our key departmental objectives**, so that they are effectively involved in the decision making process and scrutiny of our achievements in meeting those goals.
2. By making sure all areas of our service engage with a wide range of residents **we will increase the overall resident engagement**.
3. **We will introduce new ways for residents to engage with us**, including developing web based engagement so it is easier to get involved.
4. Through training, empowerment and support **we will deliver better quality engagement** so that residents are equipped and able to have a more informed and constructive involvement.
5. By spending our money wisely, working in partnership and attracting external funds **we will demonstrate the value of our engagement** and make sure it delivers effective outcomes for residents.

Delivering the aims

To deliver our aims we will carry out the following activities, which are a summary of some of the key actions within the strategy action plan.

We will engage with residents in achieving our key departmental objectives.

- **warm, dry and safe**
- **improvements to the housing repairs service.**
- **improvements to customer service and increasing on-line services.**
- **that charges for home owners are fair**
- **value for money and delivering savings**
- **use of housing stock and temporary accommodation**
- **involvement of tenants and homeowners in service delivery**
- **meet equality objectives.**
- **We will prioritise the creation of a tenant compact**

We will increase the overall resident engagement

- We will make sure that there is a culture change across the whole service through every member of staff having a resident involvement aspect to their job.
- We will promote resident participation in estate inspections, project teams and contract monitoring meetings.
- We will reach all sections of the communities we serve. We will gather information about who we have engaged with and look for any gaps between the makeup of this group and that of the general population of tenants and home owners.
- We will include a localised resident information pack with each sign-up for a new tenancy; and with each re-assignment of the lease when somebody exercises their right to buy.
- We will ensure that equalities monitoring is part of tenancy check procedures.

We will introduce new ways for residents to engage with us

- Many of our residents are not involved in our traditional structure, so as well as seeking engagement through our existing structures we will offer more methods for others to engage, reflecting their interests and the time they can give.
- We will identify and engage with residents who will be particularly affected by changes in local and government policy.
- We will work together with residents to engage in modern ways of social networking.

We will deliver better quality engagement

- We will facilitate training, networking, good information to residents, and provide access to advice and support.
- We will develop our website as a resource for TRAs on how to access grants, training, seminars, good practice and other important information.
- We will facilitate opportunities for involvement and representation tailored for home owners. An action plan will be developed and the Home Owners Council will be consulted on this action plan.
- We will facilitate opportunities for involvement and representation tailored for people living in street properties. An action plan will be developed and the Home Owners Council and Tenants Council will be consulted on this action plan.
- We aim to increase and strengthen partnership training opportunities

We will demonstrate the value of our engagement

- We will work with the tenants' and home owners' fund management committees to review how funds are spent so they can be used to the greatest benefit to residents.
- We will work with partners to make the best use of halls so that they are an asset to the whole community.

- We will work with Southwark group of tenants' organisations to promote the interest of TRAs in a range of ways including providing capacity building support to residents.
- We will work with partners to promote financial inclusion by improving residents' access to financial capability and literacy.