



Tenant Engagement Strategy

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Next review due October 2022

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1. Introduction, Legislation, and Regulatory Standards

- 1.1 Yorkhill Housing Association believes that excellent customer service is key to its success and encourages tenants to get involved in the association's decision making process and to contribute to, and scrutinise, its work.
- 1.2 Additionally there is a legislative responsibility under The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 which requires each Registered Social Landlord (RSL) in Scotland to prepare a Tenant Engagement Strategy for *"promoting the participation of tenants under a Scottish secure tenancy or a short Scottish secure tenancy in the formulation by the landlord of proposals in relation to the management of housing accommodation and the provision of related services by it, so far as such proposals are likely to affect such tenants."*
- 1.3 As such the association has prepared this strategy to set out the ways it will encourage its tenants to participate and influence its decision making. This strategy is intended to be a living document and will be adapted to constantly meet tenants' needs.

1.4 Scottish Social Housing Charter

- 1.5 The Scottish Social Housing Charter sets standards that the Association should meet and the following are specifically relevant to tenant participation, however all aspects of the association's business is open to tenant involvement and scrutiny:
- 1.6 **Outcome 1 (Equalities):** *"every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services."*
- 1.7 **Outcome 2 (Communication):** *"tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides."*

- 1.8 **Outcome 3 (Participation):** *“tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord’s decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.”*
- 1.9 **Outcomes 14 & 15 (Rents and services charges):** *“tenants get clear information on how rent and other money is spent, including details of any individual items of expenditure above thresholds agreed between landlords and tenants.”*

1.10 Equalities

- 1.11 The Equality Act 2010 sets out protected characteristics and all tenants, regardless of any of these protected characteristics, will be treated fairly and have equal access to participating:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Gender reassignment
 - Marriage and civil partnership
 - Pregnancy and maternity
 - Race
 - Religion or belief
 - Sex
 - Sexual orientation.
- 1.12 In order to ensure equal access to participation reasonable adjustments can be made including (but not limited to) use of interpreters, Braille, alternative premises for meetings, appropriately timed meetings to maximise attendance or by providing support for people with additional support needs. The association will consider any requests for adjustments to help anyone who experiences a barrier to participating.

2. Aims

- 2.1 Yorkhill Housing Association is a Registered Social Landlord which was created in 1977 by a group of local residents who were anxious to improve the standard of local homes with the assistance of significant grant funding from central and local governments.

Today the Association owns 456 tenement flats and manages a further 506 units on behalf of owners. It is still managed by a voluntary committee of local residents and interested parties elected by the membership. We believe strongly that tenants being active in our decision making process leads to positive outcomes for tenants, and the association together.

- 2.2 Tenants have always been a key part of Yorkhill Housing Association and those tenants getting involved in the decision making process can help:

- Shape the way the organisation looks after its homes.
- Improve the services all tenants receive.
- Voice their opinion on things that matter to tenants directly to staff and board members.

- 2.3 The association will benefit by:

- Having clear evidence of its stakeholder's wishes and what they think their service should look like.
- Being able to accurately shape the organisation to best look after those needs.

- 2.4 Together the association and its residents will enjoy a better working relationship where communication is easier and quicker.

3. How we will engage with tenants

- 3.1 Yorkhill Housing Association will ensure that all tenants have the opportunity to be involved in our decision making process and will engage with tenants in a number of ways to allow anyone to have their say regardless of their circumstances. Some of the ways we engage with tenants are listed here:

3.2 Membership

- 3.3 All tenants (and other interested parties) can become a member of the association for a £1.00 lifetime fee. Members can stand for election to the Management Committee, vote on who joins the Management Committee, and can attend Annual General Meetings (AGMs).

3.4 Management Committee

- 3.5 Yorkhill Housing Association's Management Committee is an elected board of non-executive directors and are responsible for setting the overall strategy and direction of the association. All members of the Management Committee must hold a Membership of the association, except for appointed representatives, for example an elected member appointed by Glasgow City Council.
- 3.6 The Management Committee will attend approximately 10 meetings per year and these usually last around 2 hours each. Additionally each member may attend a sub-committee which allows more in-depth scrutiny of areas of the association's work:
- **Services Sub-Committee:** This group will monitor performance of the association's Housing Management and Property Services teams including rent arrears, void property management, tenant satisfaction, repairs and factoring. There are approximately 8 meetings per year of this sub-committee.
 - **Governance, Finance and Staffing Sub-Committee:** This group monitors the financial management of the organisation including budget setting and monitoring, staffing structure and attendance, and the

association's compliance with financial, regulatory, and legislative requirements. This group meets approximately 7 times per year.

3.7 Registered Tenant's Organisations (RTOs)

- 3.8 The association does not currently have any Registered Tenant's Organisations however support can be offered to any group of residents wishing to set one up. This may include arranging space to meet, administrative support and/or access to office equipment.

3.9 Newsletters

- 3.10 The association will prepare and distribute a regular newsletter detailing important decisions or changes, and will contain any useful news or information relevant to tenants.

3.11 Website & Social Media

- 3.12 The association will publish information which may be useful to tenants on its website. This will include minutes of recent Management Committee meetings, performance updates, and copies of useful forms, documents and policies. Tenants and customers are welcome to contact the association via its website or social media accounts.

3.13 Surveys

- 3.14 The association will contact every tenant over the course of every year asking them to complete a tenant's satisfaction survey. The survey asks for tenant's feedback on a number of areas of the association's performance. Responses to these surveys are always read and responded to, and the results are presented to the association's Management Committee and Services Sub-Committee for review and published on the association's website.

3.15 Focus Groups

- 3.16 From time to time the Association may form focus groups to encourage more in-depth scrutiny of an area of its work. All tenants will be invited to attend and these groups can often include other surrounding residents of the area, Management Committee members, and/or staff or representatives from other agencies such as Glasgow City Council or Police Scotland.

3.17 Individuals

- 3.18 All tenants can provide their thoughts on any area of the association's business at any time. Feedback can be made verbally in the office or by telephone, or in writing by either letter or email, and is welcomed. The Association also has a Complaints Handling Policy which can be accessed by any tenant where they are unhappy with the association's decisions or where they believe the association has not acted in accordance with its policies and procedures.

3.19 Publication of Performance

- 3.20 On an annual basis the association along with every other Registered Social Landlord (RSL) in Scotland is required to provide the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) with information on its performance. This is known as the Annual Return to the Charter (ARC). The SHR reviews the performance and publishes this information on its website – usually around June each year. Tenants are able to access this information to monitor and scrutinise the association's performance.

3.21 Rent Consultation

- 3.22 On an annual basis the association will review the rent charges for its properties in line with its Rent Setting Policy. All tenants will be consulted before any decision is made.

4. How to get involved

- 4.1 Any tenant wishing to get involved with Yorkhill Housing Association is welcome to contact the association directly, regardless of how much time they can contribute. There are a variety of methods where a tenant can participate in the association's decision making process and staff can help tenants decide how best they can get involved.
- 4.2 Tenants can be provided with training and support throughout the participation process to ensure they understand any technical processes or jargon.
- 4.3 If any tenant experiences any barrier, for whatever reason, to them participating they are encouraged to contact a member of staff who can discuss any appropriate adjustments.

5. Review

- 5.1 This strategy is intended on being a living document and will be adjusted and updated as needed. A review of the strategy will be carried out every three years.

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