

How you can get involved in the housing service

We have come up with lots of different ways tenants and leaseholders can work with us to improve the housing service. These will:

- give you the chance to work with us on the policies or rules we work to
- involve you in decisions about how housing services are delivered
- let you keep a close eye on how we are doing, and give us your ideas about how we could get better

We will help tenants and leaseholders learn new skills so they can get involved in a way that suits them. This includes:

- setting up different ways for you to raise issues and ask us questions - we promise to answer you as quickly as we can
- giving you up-to-date information on how we are doing, including in our annual report where we will tell you how we are spending the money you pay in rent and service charges

We want to make it easy for you to get involved in the way that best suits you, including the amount of time you might need to give up.

The sections below give details of the options we are considering.

Level 1: Giving you information and asking for your views. One off. Limited time commitment needed

Tenant networking event	
What is it?	An annual event to give tenants and leaseholders the opportunity to have a coffee and a chat with officers and managers from lots of services including tenancy advice and support, housing applications, repairs and lots more. We will also use this event to present our annual report.
How much of my time will it take?	Two hours, once a year

Newsletters	
What is it?	We will send you newsletters to keep you informed about what we're working on and how well we're doing.
How much of my time will it take?	A few minutes, four times a year

Local Conversations	
What is it?	These are one-off events to talk about local issues, to promote a particular service or to ask what you think on

	specific topics. This will be done in different ways, including surveys (post and phone), chat cafe sessions (information discussions), text messages and door knocking. These conversations can either be online or in person.
How much of my time will it take?	One to two hours, as and when needed

Formal consultation	
What is it?	<p>Every three years, we need to ask you what you think are the best ways of involving you in how we run the housing service, and how everyone makes sure we are doing a good job.</p> <p>We will also send a tenant survey every two years to understand what you think about the housing services we provide.</p>
How much of my time will it take?	A few minutes, once every two to three years

Armchair Advisors	
What is it?	This provides a way for tenants to give us their views online. We would use this to get feedback on policies, service standards or other key issues. Could also be used to undertake “pulse” surveys on specific service areas.
How much of my time will it take?	One hour, every three months

Garden competition	
What is it?	<p>The competition aims to get people involved in the housing service who wouldn't usually be involved.</p> <p>By promoting the competition and publishing photos of the entries in tenant newsletters, it is also hoped this will encourage tenants to take good care of their gardens, improving the overall look of our estates.</p>
How much of my time will it take?	One day, once a year

Level 2: Working together with other people to improve your area. Medium time commitment needed
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Community Champions	
What is it?	Community Champions are people who:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • take pride in their home/neighbourhood • care about their neighbourhood and want it to be safe, clean and friendly • want to make a positive difference • recruited from communities who want to work with us to spot the most important issues in their area <p>We will involve Community Champions in estate walks and neighbourhood days.</p> <p>The estate walk means tenants can meet council officers, ward councillors and other agencies to discuss any issues they may have.</p> <p>Neighbourhood days are community events to tackle key issues such as community clean ups.</p> <p>Having Community Champions will remove or reduce the need for formal residents' groups.</p>
How much of my time will it take?	One hour, as and when estate walks and neighbourhood days take place (frequency to be confirmed)

Independent Living Forum	
What is it?	<p>Independent Living Forum members work to promote the best interests of those living in sheltered housing by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • meeting to discuss issues with housing • working to improve conditions for tenants in the council's sheltered housing schemes • working with the council to ensure the money allocated for sheltered housing is spent in the best way possible • encouraging joint working between sheltered schemes to provide events and activities for residents • meetings are chaired by a resident who is appointed annually <p>Each sheltered housing scheme (including sheltered plus schemes) nominates two representatives to attend.</p>
How much of my time will it take?	Two hours, every three months

Leaseholder Forum	
What is it?	A forum to discuss issues specific to leaseholders.
How much of my time will it take?	Two hours, every three months

Level 3: Working with the council to have a say on the policies and rules we work to, and getting involved in decisions about the housing service. Longer time commitment needed

Customer Experience Panel	
What is it?	<p>This panel will give tenants and leaseholders the chance to look closely at key areas of our housing service.</p> <p>The panel will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• keep a close eye on how we are doing• help all tenants have their voices heard by the council• work with the council to help decide the key things it needs to work on• carry out at least two service reviews per year (with support from council staff)• organise and deliver the annual garden competition (with support from council staff) <p>Panel members will be chosen through an application process, to make sure tenants from different backgrounds and towns/villages are represented on the panel.</p>
How much of my time will it take?	Two hours, every three months