



## **TENANT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY 2010-2013**

*Working in Partnership*

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## **1. Introduction**

Welcome to the third tenant participation strategy, produced by Clackmannanshire Council, Ochil View Housing Association and Paragon Housing Association developed in assistance with tenants, residents and staff. This will detail how we plan to deliver our objectives between 2010 and 2013

This strategy outlines how we will continue to increase participation by working with our registered tenant organisations, individual tenants, residents, staff and customers and details how we plan to deliver our aims between 2010 and 2013

As Landlords we want to build on the progress so far and continue to develop new and different ways to increase tenant involvement.

Our aim is to enable all tenants to become involved at whatever level suits them.

## **2. Background**

As a result of the Scottish Government's (formerly the Scottish Executive's) commitment to bring about effective tenant participation in Scotland, the National Strategy for Tenant Participation was launched in April 1999. This document set out key principles for good tenant participation and committed tenants, social landlords and central government to a programme to achieve this.

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 introduced the statutory requirement for the development of a Tenant Participation Strategy. The Act also requires all registered social landlords to consult with tenants on a range of major housing issues that affect them. These include:

- Housing management repairs and maintenance policies.
- Standards of service to be provided in relation to housing management repair and maintenance.

Our first joint Tenant Participation Strategy was developed in 2003 with the help of tenants, registered tenant organisations, the Clackmannanshire Tenants and Residents Federation and staff. It covered the period from March 2003 to March 2006.

In 2006, the full Strategy was reviewed and it detailed the tenant participation work to be undertaken from March 2006 to March 2009.

Once again in 2009 we have involved a review group made up of housing staff, tenants and residents and we would like to thank all members of the review group for their time and valuable input in developing this strategy which covers the period 2010-2013.

## **The Landlords**

**Clackmannanshire Council**

**Ochil View Housing Association Limited**

**Paragon Housing Association Limited**

### **3. Tenant Participation – Definition**

The definition of participation as follows:

“Tenant participation is about tenants taking part in decision making processes and influencing decisions about:

- Housing policies
- Housing conditions: and
- Housing (and related) services.

It is a two way process which involves the sharing of information, ideas and power. Its aim is to improve the standard of housing conditions and services.”

### **4. Landlord Commitment**

As landlords we have always been committed to working with and engaging with our tenants, seeking and supporting their involvement in housing issues.

We will:

- Continue to support tenants groups and encourage new ones, formal or informal.
- Continue to improve communication by providing better information and listening more to tenant’s ideas and views.
- Ensure that all printed information sent to our tenants will be clearly written in “plain English”, jargon free and in other formats, that meets the individual’s needs on request.
- Ensure that all tenants’ groups are kept informed and updated
- Ensure that opportunities are created to encourage individual tenants to participate.
- Ensure that tenants are given adequate time and information to consider any proposals for change.
- Maintain a Public Register of Tenant Organisations

- Provide training opportunities for staff and tenants to develop the skills necessary to assist partnership working.
- Hold a register of interested tenants who can be contacted to participate in working groups, surveys or other consultation exercises.
- Work with our tenants to develop the Scottish Tenants Charter.

We want to ensure that the service provided meets tenants needs and gives satisfaction. Our staff will work on an equal basis with tenants, in an open and participative manner.

## **5. Key Decisions - the timetable for participation**

Where possible, groups and individuals will be consulted over a 3 month period on a particular issue or topic. However, on occasion, this timescale may be shorter.

Where consultations are generated by an external agency, for example the Scottish Government, it might not always be possible for the Landlords to give the desired consultation period.

In addition, in accordance with each landlord's financial planning processes and Committee meeting schedule, the rent review consultation period will be at least one month.

## **6. Feedback from Consultation Exercises**

We recognise that it is extremely important to give tenants feedback on consultation exercises we carry out. We will provide feedback to tenants in a number of ways including:

- Newsletters
- Individual letters
- On our web site

We will make every effort to demonstrate how the tenants views obtained in consultation exercises have been taken into account and have contributed towards the final outcome(s).

## **7. Resources**

As landlords, we recognise the importance of resourcing tenant participation adequately. We are committed to providing resources and facilities for tenant participation.

The tenant participation resources cover:

- Producing a newsletter;
- Venues for meetings;
- Transport to and from venues;
- Costs to provide lunches, teas and coffees when tenants go to consultation and review meetings.
- Crèche facilities;
- Travel expenses for tenants to go to meetings;
- Staff time and travel expenses;
- Administration (taking minutes, mailings and photocopying);
- Training;
- Access to information;
- Our annual tenants conference;
- Supporting the registered organisations;
- Tenant consultations;
- Translation and interpretation services
- Supporting Focus/consultation groups

## **8. Equal Opportunities**

We will encourage equal opportunities and respond to individuals needs.

The Tenant Participation Strategy works alongside each landlord's Equal Opportunity Policy.

We will seek to remove barriers to participation arising from ethnicity, geographic location, special needs, language difficulties, age, sexual orientation or disability.

We will support and encourage all tenants who participate while maintaining their right to privacy and confidentiality.

We recognise that we must develop effective ways to identify groups which are under-represented and, through consultation with them, actively encourage them to become involved. This work will be part of the on-going development of the strategy.

## **9. Monitoring and Evaluation of the Strategy**

We will continue to review the progress of the Strategy and put in place structures and mechanisms that comply with all legal and regulatory frameworks. Tenants will be encouraged to become involved in establishing the monitoring methods.

We are committed to finding new ways to help tenants get involved. To do this we need to regularly look at and consider new ways of working with tenants.

We will:

- Review the full Tenant Participation Strategy every three years;
- Review the Action Plans every 6 months;
- Ask our tenants for their views on how they think we should or could involve more tenants, and how we could publicise the results of involvement so far.

## **10. Complaints**

Any complaints arising from the operation of this Strategy will be dealt with under each landlord's Complaints Policy and procedures.

## 11. Action Plans

<b>ACTION PLAN</b>		
<b>Objective 1: To encourage and support the development of effective tenants groups in Clackmannanshire and West Fife.</b>		
<b>Target/Output</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Who Involved</b>
Promote membership of RTOs	Advise new tenants at sign ups and new tenant visits of the existence and role of Registered Tenant's Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Housing Officers</li> <li>●Assistant Housing Officers</li> </ul>
	Advertise existence and role in 6 monthly newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Registered Tenant's Organisation's</li> </ul>
Registered Tenant's Organisation's Organisations to be involved in Estate Management Visits	Discuss and agree an appropriate role for Registered Tenant's Organisation's in Estate Management Visits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Housing Services Manager</li> <li>●Registered Tenant's Organisation's</li> </ul>
Registered Tenant's Organisation's to visit new tenants	New Tenants to be asked if they wanted visit from Registered Tenant's Organisation and consent to data release	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>●Assistant Housing Officers</li> <li>●RTOs</li> </ul>
Registered Tenant's Organisation contact details on Ochil View Housing Association website	List of Registered Tenant's Organisation chairs and Secretaries on Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Housing Services Manager</li> </ul>

**Objective 2** To enhance and improve information available to tenants and tenants groups on the housing service and housing Management and related services where it affects them.

Target/Output	Action	Who Involved
Annual Investment plan update	To produce annual information on Planned/Cyclical/Major repairs and provide this to tenants	•Development and Property Services Manager
Provide essential information to tenants	Continue with 6 monthly newsletters.	• Housing Services Manager
	Produce annual updates of tenants handbook	•Housing Services Manager •IRG
	Staff to attend RTO meetings where requested.	• Housing Officers •Other staff as appropriate
Improve presentation of information at IRG meetings	Presentations as well as written reports	•Housing Services Manager

**Objective 3: To develop and promote the role of tenants in the process of housing management policy formation and service reviews by a process of partnership and continuous consultation**

Target/Output	Action	Who Involved
Allow sufficient time for Registered Tenant's Organisation to comment on policy reviews	2 month consultation period	●Registered Tenant's Organisation
Feedback to tenants on results of consultation	Newsletter to contain Consultation report on previous 6 months	●Housing Services Manager
Individual participants to receive individual feedback	Reply to all individual participants in consultation exercises	●Housing Services Manager
Promote membership of IRG	Contact all non- attending member of IRG and establish reasons for non- attendance. Remove from list if necessary	●Housing Services Manager
	Advise all new tenants of IRG and try to secure their interest	●Assistant Housing Officers
	Contact all tenants expressing an interest in consultation events and encourage to join	●Housing Services Manager
Develop annual consultation programme in partnership with tenants	Consult Registered Tenant's Organisation and IRG on content of Consultation Programme	●Housing Services Manager Registered Tenant's Organisation ●IRG
Publish Annual Consultation Programme		●Housing Services Manager
Hold an annual tenants conference	Agree agenda with Registered Tenant's Organisation and IRG	● Housing Services Manager

**Objective 4: To ensure tenants and staff have access to adequate levels of training and support and to provide adequate resources to assist tenant and residents associations in initial set up costs and annual administration service costs.**

Target/Output	Action	Who Involved
Relevant training to be available to tenants before Policy Review	Liase with TPS partners to provide training	Housing Services Manager TPS partners
Provide start up and ongoing funding for Registered Tenant's Organisation's	Pay grants on submission of accounts and financial records	●Housing Services Manager ●Finance and Corporate Services Manager
Review training requirements	Identify training programme for staff and RTO's. linked to consultation programme	●Registered Tenant's Organisation ●IRG ●OV staff

<b>Objective 5:</b> To ensure that Tenant Participation reflects the principles of equal opportunities and that tenants have equal access to participation regardless of disability, marital status, ethnic origin, sexual orientation		
<b>Target/Output</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Who Involved</b>
Develop programme of participation aimed at 16-25's	Complete survey of 16-25's aspirations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clackmannanshire Council</li> <li>• Paragon HA</li> <li>• Ochil View Housing Association</li> <li>• Registered Tenant's Organisation's</li> <li>• Youth Council</li> </ul>
Provision of all information in accessible formats	Reminder and publicity that material is available.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing Services Manager</li> </ul>
Identify barriers to participation and establish ways to overcome them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide written information in alternative formats where required.</li> <li>• Maintain a register of tenants who require information in alternative formats.</li> </ul>	

<b>Objective 6:</b> To monitor and evaluate the Tenant Participation Strategy.		
<b>Target/Output</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Who Involved</b>
Review of Tenant Participation Strategy	Annual progress reviews as part of annual report	Housing Services Manager Involved Residents Group Registered Tenant's Organisation

Ochil View Housing Association Participation and Consultation Programme April 2010-March 2011			
First Quarter 2010-11			
Topic	When	Who	How
Staff attendance at RTO meetings	As invited	RTO's	Attendance
Agree and publish programme of Consultation	First Quarter	RTO's IRG	Surveys and Questionnaires Consultation on draft plans and strategies Meetings
Tenant Conference	First Quarter	All tenants	Conferences
Annual funding for RTOs	First Quarter	RTO's	Promotion and Support for Tenants Groups
IRG meeting	First Quarter	IRG	Consultation on plans and strategies Meetings
RTO Content in Summer newsletter	First Quarter	RTO members	Newsletter
Publish Annual performance report	First Quarter	All tenants	Newsletters and leaflets
Summer Newsletter	First Quarter	All tenants	Newsletter
Publish Annual Investment letter	First Quarter	All Tenants	Newsletters and leaflets
Tenant Consultation in ASB Policy review	First Quarter	All tenants	
Charrier Registered Tenant's Organisation Reregistration	First Quarter	Charrier Registered Tenant's Organisation	

Second Quarter 2010-11			
Topic	When	Who	How
IRG meeting	Second Quarter	IRG	Consultation on draft plans and strategies Meetings
Publication of Annual Report	Second Quarter	All tenants	Newsletters and leaflets
AGM	Second Quarter	RTO's Tenant members	Membership of the Association
Summer newsletter	Second Quarter	All tenants	
Annual Performance report to tenants	Second Quarter	All tenants	
Launch of new website with tenant consultation zone	Second Quarter	All tenants	
Publication of TAS final report	Second Quarter	All tenants	

Third Quarter 2010-11			
Topic	When	Who	How
IRG meeting	3rd Quarter	IRG	Consultation on draft plans and strategies Meetings
Produce annual updates of tenants handbook	3rd Quarter	IRG	Meetings
Annual rent and service charge review and rent and service charge policy Consultation	3rd Quarter	Tenants	Surveys and Questionnaires Consultation on draft plans and strategies Meetings
Text message software introduced	3 <sup>rd</sup> quarter	All tenants	
RTO Content in Winter newsletter	3rd Quarter	RTO members	Newsletter
Winter Newsletter	3rd Quarter	All tenants	Newsletter

Fourth Quarter 2010-11			
Topic	When	Who	How
IRG meeting	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	IRG	Consultation on draft plans and strategies Meetings
Planning for 2011 Tenant Conference	4 <sup>th</sup> Quarter	All tenants	Consultation on draft plans and strategies Meetings

## **List of Other Contacts/ Useful Sources of Assistance**

### Tenants Information Service

Suite 335, Baltic Chambers, Wellington Street, Glasgow. G2 6HJ

Telephone: 0141 248 1242

Fax: 0141 221 1911

Web: [www.tis.org.uk/](http://www.tis.org.uk/)

### Tenant Participation Advisory Service

74-78 Saltmarket, Glasgow.G1 5LD

Telephone: 0141 552 3633

Fax: 0141 552 0073

Web: [www.tpasscotland.org.uk](http://www.tpasscotland.org.uk)

### Scottish Federation of Housing Associations

Pegasus House, 375 West George Street, Glasgow. G2 4LW

Telephone: 0141 332 8113

Fax: 0141 332 9684

Web: [www.sfha.co.uk/sfha.asp](http://www.sfha.co.uk/sfha.asp)

### Registered Social Landlords

#### Ochil View Housing Association

Ochil House, Marshill, Alloa. FK 10 1AB

Telephone: 01259 722899

Fax: 01259 212728

Mobile 07854340469

Web: [www.ochilviewha.co.uk](http://www.ochilviewha.co.uk)

#### Paragon Housing Association Limited

Invergrange House, Station Road, Grangemouth. FK3 8DG

Telephone: 01324 664966

Fax: 01324 664930

E-mail: [enquires@paragonha.org.uk](mailto:enquires@paragonha.org.uk)

## **Glossary of Terms**

OVHA – Ochil View Housing Association  
RTO's – Registered Tenants Organisation  
BME – Black Minority Ethnic  
CRM – Community Regeneration Manager  
RSL's – Registered Social Landlords  
AGM – Annual General Meeting  
PHA – Paragon Housing Association  
TIS – Tenants Information Service