

# Birnbeck Housing Tenant Engagement Policy

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## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 Tenant engagement is of great importance. We believe that our tenants are the experts on living in their homes and as such we want our tenants to help us shape the services that we provide and how they are delivered.
- 1.2 We want to work in partnership with our tenants to help us continually improve, ensuring that our tenants feel empowered to hold us to account and actively contribute to improving our housing service.
- 1.3 Tpas, the tenant engagement experts define tenant engagement as *“working with tenants to co-produce effective services that meet a variety of needs.....It’s about empowering tenants, residents and communities to work with your organisation to achieve shared aims”*.

## 2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 The purpose of this policy is to define our commitment and approach to tenant engagement.
- 2.2 This policy places our tenants at the heart of our landlord services, enforcing our values and recognising that collaboration is essential to scrutinise and improve the services that we offer.
- 2.3 To do this, we need to hear from and learn from our tenants in a positive and proactive way.

## 3. Scope of Policy

- 3.1 This policy applies to all housing tenants.

## 4. Aims and Objectives

- 4.1 The aims and objectives of this policy are:
  - To set out our commitment to tenant engagement.
  - To make sure that our tenants are at the heart of our housing service.

- To set out the ways in which we will engage with our tenants.
- To build respectful and trusting relationships between tenants and staff.
- To improve tenant understanding and satisfaction with the delivery of our housing services.
- To comply with statutory and regulatory requirements and legislation with regards to tenant engagement.

## 5. **Legislation and Regulatory Requirements**

5.1 The following legislation and regulations underpin our approach to Tenant Engagement:

- Social Housing Regulation Act 2023
- Housing Act 1985
- Data Protection Act 2018
- Charter for Social Housing Tenants 2020
- Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standards
- Regulator of Social Housing Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- TPAS National Tenant Engagement Standards 2024
- The Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code

## 6. **Supporting a tenant engagement culture**

6.1 We recognise that tenant engagement will only be effective if we as the landlord are committed to involving tenants in their decision-making processes.

6.2 Tenant engagement is an expectation of all staff involved in the delivery of housing services.

6.3 Tenant engagement should be easy and accessible for tenants to choose to be as involved as they want.

6.4 We will ensure that tenants are given sufficient time to consider issues properly.

6.5 We will offer solutions to help overcome any barriers to engagement, providing both digital and in person engagement to help suit the preferences of tenants.

6.6 We will provide training and support for any tenants who would like to engage with us.

6.7 We will provide expenses for things such as travel and transport for tenants who would like to engage with us.

6.8 We will ensure that information is provided in a range of formats.

## 7. **Options for Tenant Engagement**

- 7.1 We will ensure that a range of opportunities are made available for our tenants to engage with us, recognising that some tenants will be keener to engage, whilst others may only want minimal engagement.
- 7.2 For some tenants the level of engagement that they may be interested in may simply be being kept informed and providing feedback regarding housing issues, through to some tenants who would like to take the lead on making decisions for the organisation.
- 7.3 We will work with our tenants to develop a structure that provides a range of opportunities to be as involved as much or as little as they want including both formal and informal engagement options.
- 7.4 Throughout the year, we will facilitate a range of engagement events, mainly focused on promoting social engagement between tenants.
- 7.5 We recognise the value of the tenants' voice in overseeing the Association's operations and direction and ensuring value for money. Tenant Committee membership opportunities will be advertised for all tenants to apply for.
- 7.6 In line with the Regulator of Social Housing's Tenant Satisfaction Measures, we will conduct annual surveys. These surveys will cover issues such as:
- Overall satisfaction
  - Satisfaction with repairs
  - Satisfaction with time taken to complete most recent repair
  - Satisfaction that the home is well maintained
  - Satisfaction that the home is safe
  - Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenant views and acts upon them
  - Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them
  - Does the landlord treat tenants fairly and with respect
  - Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling complaints
  - Satisfaction that the landlord keeps communal areas clean and well maintained
  - Satisfaction that the landlord makes a positive contribution to neighbourhoods
  - Satisfaction with the landlord's approach to handling anti-social behaviour
- 7.7 The annual surveys will help us to understand our tenant's perception of us as a landlord. The results from the surveys will be fed into strategy development and improvement plans.

## **8. Data Protection**

- 8.1 All personal information, however received, is handled in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation.

8.2 Westlon employees will ensure that they only involve other agencies and share information where there is a relevant legal basis for processing the information.

## **9. Complaints**

9.1 We aim to meet all of our obligations when carrying out repairs. If we do not and you are not happy with the service we have provided, you can contact us and inform us of this. Any dissatisfaction will be addressed in line with our Complaints policy.

## **10. Equality and Diversity**

10.1 Birnbeck is committed to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and strive to fairly treat our residents of all races, ages, religion, gender, sexual orientation and disability.

10.2 This policy aligns with our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy.

10.3 All residents can have access to this policy.

10.4 This policy and any accompanying information can be translated or provided in an alternative format upon request.

## **11. Monitoring and Review**

11.1 Birnbeck will review the Tenant Engagement Policy every five years unless legislation, regulatory or sector changes require changes to be made sooner to ensure that we meet all of our obligations as a social housing landlord.