

Resident Involvement Strategy

2013 - 2016

Reference: DD

Approved: February 2014



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1. Resident Involvement Strategy at a glance 2013 – 2016



2 Context

- 2.1 This Resident Involvement strategy sets out how Housing Solutions will work with residents over the next three years to ensure that we meet regulatory requirements and deliver responsive, value for money services by involving our residents.
- 2.2 Throughout the document the term 'resident' is used, rather than 'tenant.' A 'tenant' is the named person on a tenancy. A 'resident' is anyone authorised to live in the property. Housing Solutions Involvement framework is open to all residents, including leaseholders at local and service delivery levels. However, the governance and scrutiny levels are only open to named 'tenants' and leaseholders. The term 'Resident scrutiny panel' and 'Resident Board member' are used because the involvement is for the benefit of all residents and both tenants and leaseholders can be members.

2.3 Resident Involvement Structure

Housing Solutions resident involvement structure provides a range of opportunities for people to be involved in the way that they want, when they want.

Governance & Scrutiny

- Resident Board members
2 places are reserved on our Board for residents.
- Resident Scrutiny Panel
The Resident Scrutiny Panel are involved in scrutinising the services we provide and the decisions that are made about these services.

Service delivery

- Action groups
 - Your say
The group works with staff to improve communication with residents.
 - Your neighbourhood
The group works with staff to improve grounds maintenance and neighbourhood issues.
 - Your home
The group works with staff to improve our Asset Management service.

Local involvement

- Surveys
Surveys are carried out to gain residents views on performance and priorities.
- Neighbourhood inspections
Residents inspect the grounds maintenance and cleaning services, scoring performance and highlighting required improvements.
- Neighbourhood representatives
Neighbourhood Representatives can report issues directly to us that need our attention for example, litter, vandalism, graffiti.
- Community activities

Community events are held to bring communities together, clean up neighbourhoods etc

- Focus groups
Focus groups are used to find out resident views on a specific topic
- Mystery shopping
Resident mystery shoppers test the quality of our customer service against agreed standards.

See appendix 1 for more information.

2.4 Legislation and regulation:

The Homes & Communities Agency regulatory framework for social housing outlines a co-regulatory approach, where Board needs adequate assurance that the Association is meeting the consumer standards, which include tenant involvement and empowerment.

This Tenant Involvement and Empowerment standard covers:

- Residents determining policies and strategic priorities
- Designing service delivery and setting service standards
- Making decisions based on cost/benefit analysis
- Scrutinizing performance (based on performance info)
- Decision making re: Management of homes and services
- Agreeing local offers
- Providing support to tenant panels
- Capacity building
- Providing an annual report on outcomes to HCA
- Consulting once every 3 years about the involvement structure/approach

3 The Strategy

3.1 Our objectives:

- **INCLUSION – To ensure that the Resident Involvement structure is accessible and responsive to our residents diverse needs**
 - a. Resident involvement structure is representative of the diversity and geography of the stock
- **GOVERNANCE & SCRUTINY - To have an effective Governance and scrutiny structure, where residents are empowered and have the capacity to work effectively with Board to deliver co-regulation**
 - a. Staff understand and will work with residents to ensure co-regulation operates to the benefit of all
 - b. Board and residents work effectively together
 - c. Residents have the capacity to make strategic decisions
 - d. Residents challenge service performance effectively
- **SERVICE DELIVERY - To have services which are designed and monitored with residents and decisions on service changes are informed by agreement on costs and benefits**
 - a. Service delivery is designed and agreed with residents

- b. Decisions on service changes are informed by agreement on costs and benefits
- **LOCAL DELIVERY - For residents to be involved in decisions on standards, investment in and management of services locally**
 - a. Residents are involved in decisions about standards and management of services
 - b. Residents are involved in decisions about where to invest and how to achieve value for money
 - c. Residents deliver and manage services locally
- 3.2 We will deliver these objectives through the Action Plan set out in Appendix 2. Progress against the Action Plan will be monitored and reviewed by the Community Engagement Officer with a six monthly update being provided to the Senior Management and Executive Team.
- 3.3 Two champions for Resident Involvement sit on the Board and act as a link between the Resident Scrutiny Panel and the Board. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Resident Scrutiny Panel will attend Board quarterly to enable feedback from both parties regarding scrutiny areas and scrutiny progress.
- 3.4 Each Action group has a staff sponsor who ensures that the recommendations made by the group are used to influence services. These outcomes are to be annually reported to ET by the group lead.
- 3.5 Terms of reference and codes of conduct are in place for all involvement activities. All involved residents must abide by these and a breach may result in that member being asked to step down from their involvement.

4 Performance and standards

- 4.1.1 We are members of the Resident Involvement Network Group joining resident involvement officers from over 20 Housing Associations together once a quarter to share best practice and feedback on ideas and experiences.
- 4.1.2 The following information shows some of the analysis we have done using the information we hold on our 'involved' residents. 66 residents were formally involved with us at the time of writing. Membership of our resident involvement structure is not currently reflective of our resident community. The main focus is to increase involvement of younger residents and those living outside of Maidenhead.

Gender:

Of the 66 involved residents, 31 are male and 35 are female.

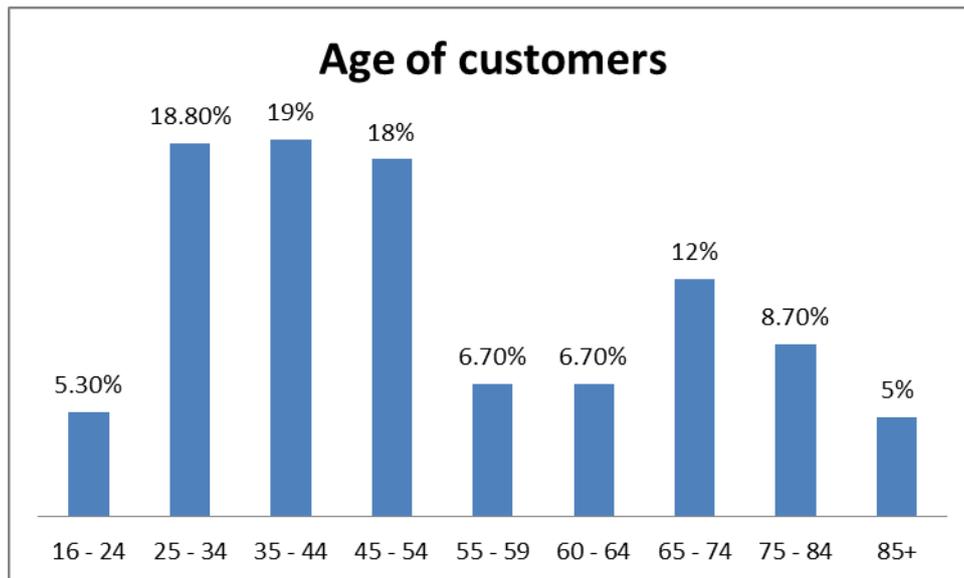
Disability:

During our resident profiling project 'Getting to Know You' we asked customers whether they had any disabilities that might affect their tenancy or the way they live in their home. 1182 (26%) of our tenants told us they had some sort of health issue that affects their quality of life.

32% of involved residents have advised that they consider themselves disabled or have a long term illness.

Age:

Breakdown of age of main tenants living in Housing Solutions properties:

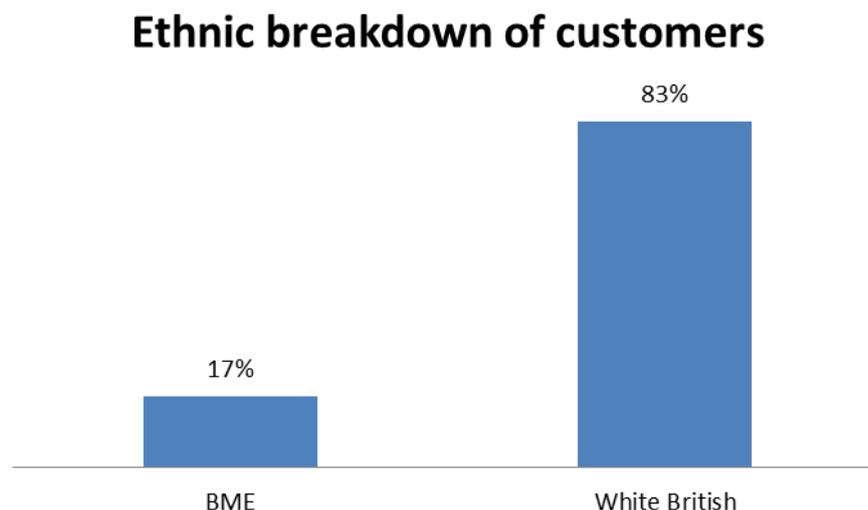


The majority of our residents are under 55. However, there is a growing ageing population.

The average age of our involved residents is 58, with the youngest resident being 27 and the oldest being 93 yrs. We therefore need to put in place actions to remove barriers to young people from being involved.

Ethnicity:

Ethnic breakdown of tenants' ethnic origin:



The majority of our residents are White British.

85% of our involved residents, for whom we hold data, are White British, so this is largely reflective of our resident population.

4.2 Empowerment

64 residents received some training provided or part-funded by Housing Solutions during 2012/13. This training was provided to residents in order for them to more effectively perform their role or enhance their housing knowledge.

5 Risks

Potential Risk (as at date of approval of Strategy)	Likelihood of Risk (1-5)	Consequence of risk (1-5)	Risk Score (max score 25)	Action
Younger residents (25 – 54) don't engage within the involvement structure. This is the least satisfied group, therefore it may impact on satisfaction	3	4	12	Develop an online forum for under-represented group as more likely to be working or have children
Resident Board members are given inadequate support to develop their capacity to make strategic decisions	4	4	16	Train resident Board members on Governance. Develop a resident Board member mentoring scheme
The Housing Association and residents don't work together effectively limiting Residents ability to challenge service performance	2	4	8	Framework in place to deliver effective scrutiny. Resident Scrutiny Panel have had training. Staff training of co-regulation. Joint resident/staff group to be setup to improve effectiveness.
Service delivery is not effectively designed and agreed with residents due to lack of buy-in from staff	4	4	16	Develop priority areas for Action Groups to be involved in, in partnership with staff and residents. Provide training for Action groups and run initiatives for staff to enable them to see the benefits of engaging residents.
Resident decisions on service changes are not informed by agreement on choice, costs and benefits	4	4	16	Develop Action Group reporting template, in partnership with residents, to ensure that proposed service changes include details of choice, costs and benefits. Community Engagement Team to support staff in developing the information provided.
Residents are not effectively involved in decisions about local standards and management of services due to a lack of buy-in from staff	4	3	12	Review neighbourhood representative involvement opportunity identifying recommendations for improvement.

Residents are not effectively involved in decisions about where to invest and how to achieve value for money due to lack of interest, or identification of opportunities, or time restrictions	4	4	16	Put in place a process to involve residents in procurement decisions relating to local service delivery and neighbourhood improvement budget setting. Community engagement team to work with departments to sell the benefits of involvement in investment decisions.
Residents lack interest in delivering and managing services locally, or staff perceive it to be too complex to manage	4	2	8	Develop a model for local management and monitoring of services by residents. Train residents and staff in the model.

6 Value for money



- 6.1 Our Resident Involvement costs are high when compared to peers. We had identified that our performance with satisfaction with 'Views taken into account' was poor. Therefore we invested in consulting with residents via informal groups and in our communication via newsletters, leaflets, social media etc. We also invested in training for involved residents. This investment has increased our 'non pay costs', but resulted in significantly increased satisfaction with 'Views taken into account'. Our Resident Scrutiny Panel has been shortlisted for the TPAS awards for excellence in Tenant led scrutiny.
- 6.2 We are continuing to review our approach to Value for Money to ensure that we make the best use of our resources. In partnership with residents, clear terms of reference and codes of conduct were developed for formal involvement activities during 2012/13. This has provided clear guidance on the purpose of the activities and a tool for managing effectiveness.

- 6.3 Previously the Community Liaison team primarily focused on Community Development activities. At the end of 2012/13 it was restructured resulting in a Community Engagement Officer post being created focused on improving the effectiveness of Resident Involvement.

7 Equal Opportunities

Housing Solutions is committed to its Inclusion Strategy. An equality impact assessment has been undertaken and this Strategy is considered to have no adverse impact.

8 Review

This Strategy will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis or in response to changes in legislation, regulatory guidance, good practice or changes in other relevant Housing Solutions Strategy.

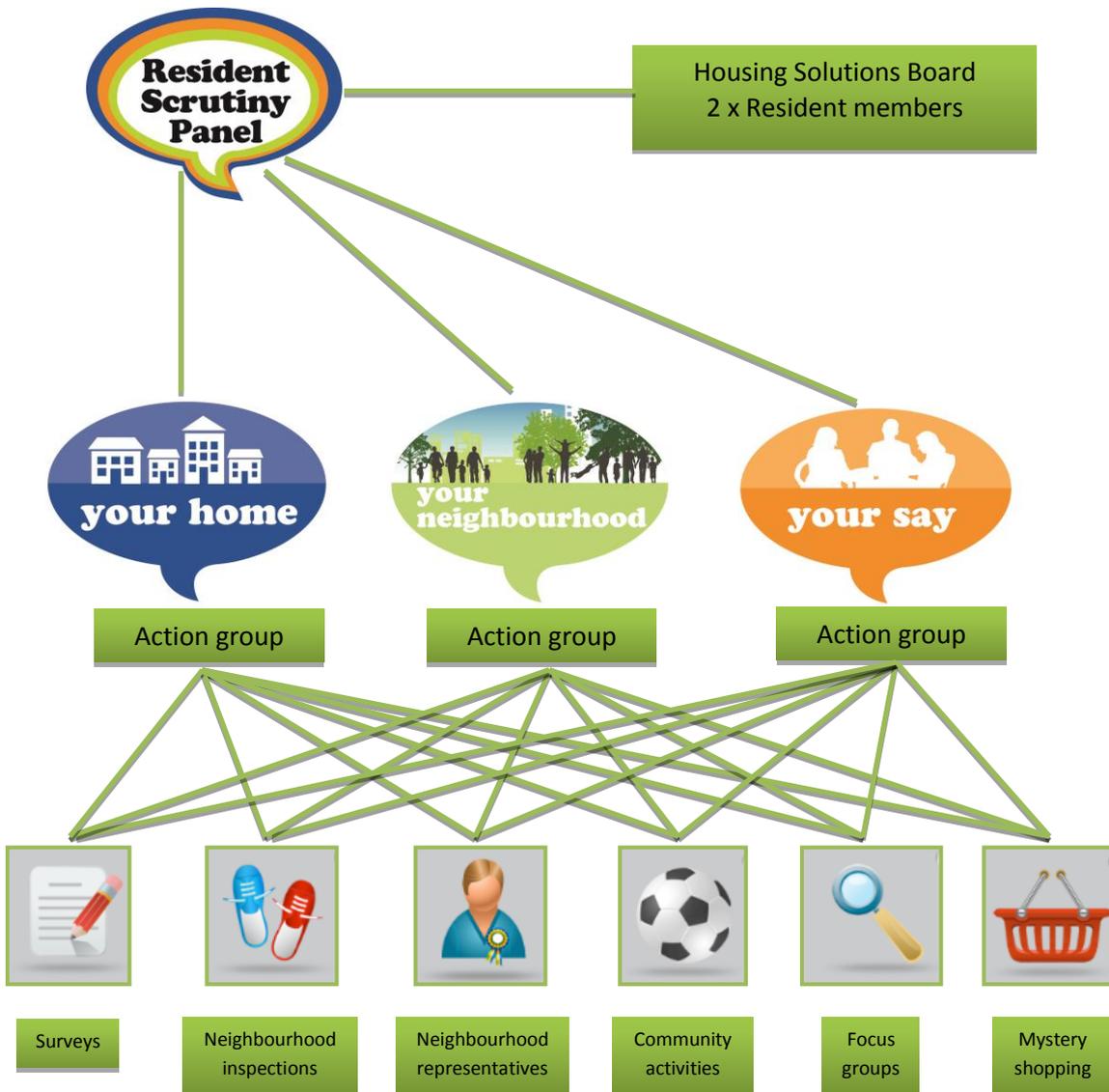


Resident involvement structure

Governance & scrutiny

Service delivery

Local involvement





Resident Involvement Action Plan - Appendix 2

Strategic Objective	Where do we want to be by 2016?	Key Tasks	By When
INCLUSION – To ensure that the Resident Involvement structure is accessible and responsive to our residents diverse needs	Resident involvement structure is representative of the diversity and geography of the stock	Analyse representation within resident involvement structure Develop an online forum for under-represented groups Review resident website	2013/14 2013/14 2013/14
	Resident involvement structure and approach is effective	Consult with residents about the effectiveness of the involvement structure/approach, making changes where necessary Review terms of reference and codes of conduct Establish a joint resident/staff working group to improve effectiveness	After 18 mths and then every 2 years Every 6 mths 2014/15
GOVERNANCE & SCRUTINY To have an effective Governance and scrutiny structure, where residents are empowered and have the capacity to work effectively with Board to	Staff understand and will work with residents to ensure co-regulation operates to the benefit of all	Roll out co-regulation training to staff via staff briefings	2013/14
	Board and residents work effectively together	Develop service level agreement between Board and Resident Scrutiny Panel Establish Board & Resident Scrutiny Panel meeting Involve residents in determining strategic and investment	2014/15 2013/14 Ongoing

deliver co-regulation		priorities through Board Strategy away day	
	Residents have the capacity to make strategic decisions	Train resident Board members on Governance Develop a resident Board member mentoring scheme	2014/15 2013/14
	Residents can challenge service performance effectively	Review performance information and reports in consultation with residents to ensure it is easily understandable Develop a structure and timetable with residents for performance reporting Develop a scrutiny framework which includes Board approval of annual scrutiny plan Develop an on-going training programme for the Resident Scrutiny Panel, to include service standards and performance analysis Establish links with best practice forums to enable the Resident Scrutiny Panel to learn from others Provide benchmarking information to residents to raise awareness of how services compare to others Agree format for scrutiny of cost and performance data	2013/14 2013/14 2013/14 2013/14 2015/16 2014/15 2014/15

SERVICE DELIVERY To have services which are designed and monitored with residents and decisions on service changes are informed by agreement on costs and benefits	Service delivery is designed and agreed with residents	Review service standards setting response targets in partnership with residents. Ensure standards are measurable and reported.	2013/14
		Ensure satisfaction data is robustly triangulated, by establishing a mystery shopping programme and customer journey mapping procedure.	2014/15
		Develop a training programme to build Action Group member knowledge about the services they are reviewing	2013/14
		Develop initiatives to improve staff understanding of the benefits of engaging residents in service design	2014/15
		Work with group sponsors to determine priority areas for Action Groups for the year ahead including agreed timetable for policy formation in partnership with residents	2014/15
		Assess service process, cost and performance using the Action Groups, making recommendations for improvement	2013/14
		Establish links with best practice forums to enable Action groups to learn from others	2015/16
		Review outcomes from Action groups, assessing the social, environmental and economic impact of activities	Annually
		Determine communications plan to promote outcomes to stakeholders	2014/15
	Decisions on service changes are informed by agreement on choice, costs and benefits	Develop Action Group reporting template with residents to ensure that proposed service changes include details of choice, costs and benefits	2014/15

LOCAL DELIVERY For residents to be involved in decisions on standards, investment in and management of services locally	Residents are involved in decisions about standards and management of services	Review local standards with neighbourhood inspectors and agree changes Review neighbourhood representative involvement opportunity identifying recommendations for improvement. Implement recommendations from the review. Recruit neighbourhood representatives in partnership with TNO's & CHO's Develop a training programme for neighbourhood representatives	2013/14 2014/15 2014/15 2014/15
	Residents are involved in decisions about where to invest and how to achieve value for money	Involve residents in procurement decisions relating to local service delivery Review resource allocation based on neighbourhood inspection results Involve residents in neighbourhood maintenance and neighbourhood improvement budget setting Develop a bidding scheme to determine where to invest	2014/15 2013/14 2015/16 2015/16
	Residents deliver and manage services locally	Develop a model for local management and monitoring of services by residents Train residents in delivering management services locally	2015/16 2015/16