

Plymouth Community Homes



Resident Involvement Policy

Approved *date*

Plymouth Community Homes Resident Involvement Policy

Purpose

The aim of this policy is to establish our framework for proactively engaging tenants and leaseholders in the management and delivery of housing services through the provision of a range of opportunities for them to be informed, consulted and to participate, at a level they choose. Plymouth Community Homes aims to embed resident involvement throughout the organisation and ensure that residents are at the heart of our decision making. PCH will actively encourage the involvement of tenants and leaseholders in decision making, by providing a range of methods and opportunities to engage in the management and delivery of services including;

- Ready availability of information
- Consultation opportunities
- Participation opportunities

Definition(s)

Resident Involvement can be defined as:

- All of the activities and processes that we undertake that help us to identify and understand what residents want
- The activities and resources that enable residents and communities to be involved and have more influence over decisions

- **Policy**

1. Information
2. Consultation
3. Participation
4. Governance
5. Mainstreaming Involvement
6. Regeneration
7. Community Development and Engagement
8. Resident Groups
9. Resident Management Organisations
10. Training and Skills

11. Advice and Support
12. Equality and Diversity
13. Review and monitoring

1. Information

Tenants and leaseholders will be provided with information about matters affecting their homes and tenancies, including information about housing management policies and practice and proposals for change.

2. Consultation

Tenants and leaseholders will be consulted through on-going service satisfaction surveys covering all service areas. They will also be consulted about major improvement or repairs programmes that affect them, and any new programme or change in policy or practice that is likely to substantially affect them. Residents will be given opportunities to comment on Plymouth Community Homes' performance, and help us to develop targets and priorities.

3. Participation

Opportunities will be provided for tenants and leaseholders who choose to be engaged in full participation to play a substantial part in exploring how services are managed and provided. PCH will put in place structures and procedures that encourage tenants and leaseholders to participate in decision making. PCH will work to remove or reduce the practical and material barriers that prevent tenants and leaseholders from getting involved in Participation activities. This can mean providing assistance with travel and subsistence.

4. Governance

The Board of PCH is comprised of four independent members, four Council nominees and four tenants. The 'tenant' membership can include a maximum of one Leaseholder.

The governance structure of PCH also includes a series of Continuous Improvement Groups reporting to a Customer Focus Committee. The terms of reference include requirements to co-opt tenants and residents (and staff) onto the committee and panels.

5. Mainstreaming Resident Involvement

PCH aims to embed involvement in the organisation and to extend its involvement remit to reach wider neighbourhood, regeneration and community development issues.

6. Regeneration

Support will be provided for staff and residents to engage with wider regeneration and local improvement projects. Structures will be in place to enable involvement in, for example, PACT, Plymouth City Council Area Committee, and Local Partnership processes.

7. Community Development and Engagement

To assist the Association in fulfilling its ambition of building communities and creating neighbourhoods in which people would choose to live, opportunities will be provided for staff and residents to engage in targeted community development projects that aim to enhance the experience and delivery of capital improvement programmes and to contribute to sustainable communities.

Opportunities will be provided to engage in wider community issues that affect PCH staff and residents, such as local environmental issues and projects, sustainability, cohesion and worklessness projects.

8. Resident Groups

Plymouth Community Homes will continue to support and work with Tenants and Residents Associations across Plymouth.

9. Resident Management Organisations

Our policy is to respond positively to requests and to provide appropriate support and encouragement to tenants who wish to take on the management of their own homes, estates or neighbourhoods, using the same guidance as currently applies to Local Authorities. The Association will also support and allow any Resident Management Organisation (RMO) proposal that had already secured the support of the Council prior to transfer.

PCH will continue to support the existing Estate Management Board (EMB) at Pembroke Street, Devonport.

10. Training and skills

Tenants and leaseholders will have the opportunity to take part in training and networking that enables them to make significant contributions to the decision making process. PCH will ensure that they are involved in activities that reflect their particular talents and/ or level of aptitude. We will actively encourage residents to constantly improve their knowledge and skills base through training and support.

11. Advice and Support

Plymouth Community Homes will ensure that tenants and leaseholders have access to independent advice and support, including through funding for membership of relevant independent organisations.

12. Equality and Diversity

Resident Involvement will be operated within the framework of PCH's Equality and Diversity Policy. Tenants and leaseholders, and PCH will jointly ensure that there is no discrimination in resident involvement on the grounds of race, colour, gender, sexual orientation, religion, nationality, disability, parenthood, marital status, age or class. PCH will ensure full support and training is available to everyone involved in resident involvement to maintain this equal opportunities framework.

Discrimination and harassment by residents towards other residents or staff will not be tolerated. Racist, sexist or other types of discriminatory language or behaviour being used by residents will be robustly challenged. Residents will be excluded from further involvement if they continue to behave in an offensive or discriminatory way. A code of conduct for participant behaviour in resident participation activities will be written in consultation with residents.

To enable all residents to have clear information and equal access to our available properties, PCH publishes information in a range of appropriate languages and formats and through a range of media. Feedback is also accepted through a variety of different routes to reflect individual customers' preferences or needs.

This policy has been designed to be fully inclusive regardless of the ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religious belief, or disability of service users or residents. The policy has been developed giving full consideration to the PCH Equality and Diversity policy.

13. Monitoring and review:

This policy will be reviewed regularly in accordance with PCH's review timetable by the Customer Focus Committee.

Procedures relating to this policy will also be periodically reviewed, taking into account any operational issues that arise.

Review will take into account any changes in law and best practice.

The reviews will include equality impact assessments to ensure that all of our policies encourage and support our determination to promote equality and eliminate unlawful discrimination.

Plymouth Community Homes will ensure that opportunities are provided for tenants and leaseholders to engage in the process of reviewing and monitoring this policy.

Systems will be in place to monitor progress against agreed targets, and reported via the Customer Focus Committee to the Board on an annual basis.

Monitoring will include the following elements

- assessments of tenant satisfaction with what is being done, making sure that methods of doing so take into account the access needs of all;
 - regular reports to the board who have overall responsibility for ensuring that the policy delivers continuous improvement and value for money
 - systems that identify performance issues and monitor the progress of actions to address them.
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- **Relevant legislation**

Links to other policies

PCH Equality and Diversity Policy
PCH Resident Involvement Statement
PCH Resident Involvement Strategy
PCH Resident Involvement Impact Assessment
PCH Social Inclusion and Anti Poverty Policy
Statutory and legal frameworks for resident involvement
Performance standards set by government, the Tenant Services Authority and by Plymouth Community Homes