



AGENDA ITEM: 11

SUMMARY

Report for:	Housing and Communities Overview & Scrutiny
Date of meeting:	13 November 2013
PART:	1
If Part II, reason:	

Title of report:	Get Involved Strategy 2012-15 - Update
Contact:	Cllr Margaret Griffiths, Portfolio Holder for Housing Jules Goodridge, Lead Officer Tenant Involvement – Author Elliott Brooks, Assistant Director, Housing Service - Responsible Officer
Purpose of report:	To update the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Get Involved Strategy 2012-15.
Recommendations	The committee to note the report and the progress made.
Corporate objectives:	Effective and empowered tenant involvement supports the Council's corporate objectives and contributes to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our community capacity • Economic development and regeneration • Resources and value for money • Affordable Housing Enhancing our profile and reputation
Implications:	<u>Financial</u>
'Value For Money Implications'	The Get Involved Strategy 2012-15 supports tenants and leaseholders getting involved through the monitoring of budgets to ensure that tenant priorities are tackled effectively. <u>Value for Money</u> Value for Money is a regulatory requirement for all social housing providers. By ensuring that our tenants are empowered and involved in the services that they receive we will ultimately ensure that we are giving good value for money.

Risk Implications	Failure to deliver the Get Involved Strategy could risk the image and reputation of the Housing Service. Mechanisms have been put in place to ensure that tenants actively monitor the strategy on a regular basis to ensure that the objectives are met.
Equalities Implications	Tenant Involvement deals with the whole tenant and leaseholder community, including young people.
Health And Safety Implications	There are no health and safety implications.
Consultees:	Chair of the Tenant and Leaseholder Committee Chair of Housing Maintenance and Environment Committee Vice Chair of the Tenant and Leaseholder Committee Vice Chair of Housing Maintenance and Environment Committee Two co-optee members of the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members of the Tenant and Leaseholder Committee
Background papers:	Get Involved Strategy 2012-15 (appendix 1) Consultation Framework (appendix 2) Consultation Register (appendix 3)
Glossary of acronyms and any other abbreviations used in this report:	Tenant and Leaseholder Committee (TLC), Housing Maintenance and Environment Committee (HMEC), Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel (TLSP) and Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR).

1.0 Background

In June 2013, a report was presented to the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This report commented on the Get Involved Strategy 2012-15, and year 1 of the Strategy; it outlined the key objectives for year 2 of the Strategy. This report will enable an updated position to be given to the Housing and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, as well as highlighting any challenges that the team have encountered with delivering the Strategy to date. A copy of the Get Involved Strategy 2012-15 action plan is attached, appendix 1 and we are currently progressing year 2 of the action plan. The action plan includes

hyperlinks that act as an evidence base for the work that has been done as part of the Strategy, which will also support our work to achieve the National Tenant Organisation's Accreditation.

2.0 Year two of the Strategy

Year 2 of the strategy began in April 2013 and work has progressed well; we are continuing to support our top-level committees, the Tenant and Leaseholder Committee (TLC), Housing Maintenance and Environment Committee (HMEC), and Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel (TLSP). We have successfully recruited a part time resource to help with the administration support that is involved in facilitating these groups and it is hoped that this person be in post by the beginning of December. Recruitment is also on-going, and there are still areas where we need to develop tenant involvement, such as housing management.

2.1 Regulatory Standards compliance

We have recently completed the Annual Report to tenants and leaseholders for 2012/13, this shows how we are currently performing against the regulatory standards. In most areas, we are able to provide evidence of compliance. More work needs to be done around Value for Money and we also need to ensure that when we are setting objectives for the following year as part of the annual report that these are delivered on. The objectives should be a reflection of the improvements that tenants and leaseholders have highlighted as their priorities and we use Survey of Tenants and Residents (STAR) data to help us to set our priorities for the Annual Report. We will also be including tenant's priorities from STAR into our future housing service plans. The STAR data will also provide us with a review of our local promises (offers) that are made to tenants and leaseholders. We now have Local Promise Champions from the TLC recruited and named in our annual report to help support the work around local promises.

2.2 Work so far this year

The first six months of the year has also seen us be involved in many events and aspects of the service. We have also hosted events for Housemark and Housing Quality Network, as well as TP Herts. Our major event of the year is the Tenant and Leaseholder Day (TLD) and over 133 people attended the day.

2.2.1 Tenant Involvement led events

Tenant Involvement-led events for the first two quarters included:

- Coronation Big Lunch – Adeyfield
- You are the Key – campaign and “meet the team” events at the Old Town Hall
- Summer of Swapping – mutual exchange events
- Barge Trips – in partnership with Hightown Praetorian, Watford Community Housing Trust and Thrive Homes
- Gade Tower Fun Day
- Youth Action Entertainers – visits to sheltered schemes
- Right to Buy event on behalf of DCLG

2.2.2 Events supported/attended by Tenant Involvement Team

In addition to attending Neighbourhood Action Group meetings and Parish Council meetings, other events that we have been involved in from April to September 2013 include:

- Adeyfield Fun Day
- Your Place – Highfield
- Love your Neighbourhood – Woodhall Farm
- Tring Carnival
- Coronation Lunch – Berkhamsted
- Supported Housing Coffee mornings – informal and “clear landings”
- Adeyfield Senior Citizens’ Coffee morning
- Litter Pick Street Champion Event – Adeyfield
- Aids and Advice days – Adeyfield and Bennetts End
- Films are Adeyfield
- Kings Langley Form Fair
- Adeyfield School Careers Fair
- Adventure Playgrounds

2.2.3 Projects supported by Tenant Involvement

Tenant involvement is also involved or had involvement in the following projects between April and September 2013:

- Verge Hardening
- Parking Barriers
- Community Garden Project – Gade Tower
- Your Place – CIH pilot

- Rent Campaigns
- Film-making workshops with secondary schools
- Dacorum Youth Forum
- Supported Housing Forum
- Joint working with Youth Connexions
- Skate park project
- Cleaning project

2.2.4 Consultations led by the Tenant Involvement Team

We have also undertaken consultations in the following areas to look at tenants' priorities for the areas in which they live, and work will be progressing shortly in these areas:

- Riverside Gardens
- Summer Court
- Woodhall Farm
- Everest Way/Hillary and Tedder Road
- Longlands
- Chaulden House Gardens
- Elizabeth House
- London Road/Avia Close/Kents Avenue

2.2.5 Quarters 3 and 4 of the strategy

The remaining six months of the year will see us working on the following areas:

- Woodhall Farm improvements work
- Grovehill improvement works
- Runham Road and Seaton Road – energy efficiency improvements
- Customer Service portal development
- Developing our electronic methods of communication such as Facebook and twitter
- Introducing mystery shoppers
- Supporting the Tenant and Leaseholder Scrutiny Panel to undertake their first scrutiny inspection
- STAR – the next survey (service plan objective)
- Review local promises as part of the STAR survey (service plan objective)
- Longlands development

- Walkways project
- Review of the tenants' handbook

3.0 Consultation Framework

We have now published the Consultation Framework, appendix 2 that is available on the website, and has been circulated to all staff in housing. We will also make arrangements for this be made available in a small booklet format that can then be sent out to tenants and leaseholders who do not have access to the internet. The Consultation Framework was a TLC priority on the Get Involved Strategy 2012-15. We are also in the process of creating a Consultation Register, appendix 3 in draft format. The Register is being created to help publicise the consultations that officers across Housing are involved in or due to be involved in. This will be a live document and will need to be updated on a regular basis to ensure that it is fully up to date and this will be available on the website. The consultation procedure has been reviewed and this now ensures that all consultations involve tenants and leaseholders in the process where there is a change, improvement or withdrawal of a service and/or asset.

4.0 Taking it a step further

We are still working towards the National Tenant Organisations accreditation and the Get Involved Strategy 2012-15 supports this objective. Achieving the NTO approved accreditation will mean that we have in place a system of accountability, self-regulation and scrutiny that actively involves our tenants. This will mean that we have not only successfully implemented the Strategy but have developed tenant involvement so that tenants have an active voice that is heard and responded to.

In addition to the existing monitoring mechanisms in place at the end of year 2 we will again be undertaking a review of the strategy with the Tenant Involvement Review Group and will work with them to set the objectives for the final year of the strategy.

5.0 Conclusion

The Strategy is a three-year plan to increase the number of tenants and leaseholders that are involved in working with the Housing Service and to give those that want to be involved a flexible choice of ways to get involved. An update on the Strategy is taken to the Tenant Involvement Review Group on a regular basis and an update is

given to the Tenant and Leaseholder Committee on a quarterly basis. The Chair of the Tenants and Leaseholder Committee also receives a monthly update on the Strategy.

Our tenants and leaseholders continue to play an instrumental part in the delivery of the Get Involved Strategy 2012-15, and will work with us to review and shape the Strategy over the life of the project.