



Community Development Policy

(Draft)

Last reviewed August 2017

1.0 Community development policy overview

This policy was adopted by XXX on XXX and is managed and adhered to by XXX. This policy will be reviewed on a XXX basis.

Contents

1.0 Policy overview

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Aim(s) of the policy
- 1.3 Links to the Council's corporate aims
- 1.4 Equality and diversity
- 1.5 Policy statement

2.0 Community development detail

- 2.1 Economic wellbeing and prosperity
- 2.2 Community cohesion and enjoyment
- 2.3 Local safety
- 2.4 Sustaining tenancies
- 2.5 Working with the voluntary sector

3.0 Links to other corporate strategies and policies

4.0 Legislation

5.0 Supporting procedures

1.1 Introduction

As a housing service within a local authority, we hold a robust understanding of the wide range of issues which can affect the residents of Dacorum through all aspects of their lives. We also understand that housing plays a key role in people's social, emotional and economic wellbeing and as social housing continues to focus on catering to those with complex needs, landlords need to do more to support this.

This policy establishes our stance on achieving social return from investment, and details the activities we engage in which allow us to invest into our local communities as well as our residents.

1.2 Aim(s) of the policy:

The aims of this policy are to;

- Clarify our approach to community development for both staff and residents
- Identify activities undertaken by the housing service, above and beyond those usually expected of a landlord, which positively impact the lives of Dacorum residents

1.3 Links to Council's corporate aims:

This policy supports all five of the council's corporate priorities which are set out in ['Delivering for Dacorum – Corporate Plan 2015-2020'](#).

1.4 Equality and diversity

The council is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in housing services and has procedures in place to ensure that all Applicants and Tenants are treated fairly and without unlawful discrimination.

1.5 Policy Statement(s)

We will take action and offer opportunities to improve the economic wellbeing and prosperity of our residents (see 2.1).

We will invest in activities and projects which aim to enhance community cohesion and enjoyment in local neighbourhoods (see 2.2).

We will develop processes and partnerships which aim to enhance the safety of our local area (see 2.3).

We will create opportunities for our tenants to access support to help them sustain successful tenancies (see 2.4).

We will work with and support the voluntary sector where possible and appropriate (see 2.5).

2.0 Community development policy detail



2.1 Economic wellbeing and prosperity

Under the Social Value Act 2012, we are required to consider the wider social, economic and environmental benefits a procured contractor can bring to the local area.

As Dacorum Borough Council's housing service, our biggest contractor is Osborne, who carry out all of our repairs and planned maintenance work. As part of their tender bid and now their contract with us, Osborne provide investment in the local community via the following:

- Providing apprenticeships, work experience and employment opportunities to local residents;
- Making use of a local supply chain and local sub-contractors where possible;
- Forming partnerships with local charities and schools and supporting them with projects beneficial for the local community;
- Working with existing and supporting new social enterprises within Dacorum.

As a housing service, we understand that investing in our tenants is important for improving their economic and social wellbeing. In light of this, we run a Tenant Academy which aims to upskill our tenants in a number of areas. These areas include but are not limited to:

- Budgeting and money management;
- Employment skills;
- Tenancy sustainment;
- Equality and diversity;

- Health relationships;
- Community safety and anti-social behaviour;
- Digital skills and E-learning.

The areas that our Tenant Academy covers is reviewed regularly and changes dependent on identified priorities within our resident population.

2.2 Community cohesion and enjoyment

As a housing service we understand the importance of integrated and tolerant communities. To support this, we run Equality and Diversity workshops across the borough which consist of group discussions and exercises aiming to encourage residents to be accepting of everyone in their community.

In partnership with [Public Health England](#) and [Sunnyside Rural Trust](#) we have built and developed a community orchard in our Leverstock Green ward with the aim of promoting healthy eating and bringing the local community together. The orchard is beneficial for the environment as it attracts local wildlife and also offers educational opportunities for local schools to utilise the area. Regular events are held here to educate the local community of the fruit which grows and how they can use it in their own recipes.

2.0 Community development policy detail



2.3 Local safety

We work in partnership and meet regularly with the police and probationary services, fire and rescue services, health services and Hertfordshire County Council to improve the safety of the Dacorum area. Areas focused on by the partnership include but are not limited to:

- Drug and alcohol related crime;
- Violent crime and criminal damage;
- Road traffic collisions;
- Deliberate fires;
- Managing offenders / re-offending;

A strategic assessment of local issues is collated each year which identifies areas for priority and focus.

2.4 Sustaining tenancies

Whilst applicants are on our housing waiting list, we encourage them to take part in our pre-tenancy training. This training covers:

- Setting up and maintaining a home
- Budgeting and financial wellbeing
- Homelessness prevention

This training is beneficial for tenants who will be moving into a new home as it provides them with knowledge and skills which can support them in maintaining a successful tenancy.

As a housing service, we also commission the [Citizens Advice Bureau](#) to offer advice and support to our tenants regarding money troubles and other issues which may negatively impact on their ability to maintain successful tenancies with us.

2.5 Working with the voluntary sector

We work closely with [Dacorum Communities for Learning \(DCFL\)](#) to provide sessions for our elderly tenants in our supported housing schemes where they can learn to use computers and tablets and be supported when accessing a number of online services. The overall aim is to ensure digital inclusion.

As a service, when appropriate, we will also run fundraising events for approved charities and support staff that are carrying out charitable projects which are considered to positively impact our residents.

3.0 Links to other corporate documents

This policy links to and should be read in conjunction with the following policies and strategies:

-

4.0 Legislation

The legislation listed below will be taken into consideration when implementing this policy:

- Social Value Act 2012
-

5.0 Supporting procedures