



Fyne Homes

Tenant Participation Strategy

2019-2022



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Introduction

Welcome to Fyne Homes Tenant Participation Strategy

What is a Tenant Participation Strategy?

It's a plan on how Fyne Homes will communicate with its tenants and customers and ensure their views are used to improve its overall service, including being satisfied with being kept informed of decisions and having opportunities to participate in decision making.

Tenant Participation is aimed at getting tenants involved with their landlord to help develop the best possible housing services. This strategy sets out how Fyne Homes plan to support our tenants to make a difference.

NB We use the term tenant to mean our customers which includes sharing owners, factored owners and any other service users. We welcome participation by all those who use our services.

Fyne Homes recognise that our tenants are all different and with a population spread across Argyll & Bute we acknowledge the need to be flexible to meet our tenants' needs and expectations. To achieve this, Fyne Homes, will provide a range of activities to suit a variety of preferences, and offer flexible ways to be involved.

Fyne Homes area of operation



Fyne Homes believe it is important that tenants from throughout our area can work together and we will facilitate this.

We offer opportunities to participate:

- ⚙️ as individuals;
- ⚙️ as part of a group;
- ⚙️ around local issues;
- ⚙️ on issues that affect all tenants;
- ⚙️ in scrutinising our performance / improving our services; and
- ⚙️ for those from traditionally 'harder to reach' groups (e.g. younger people, ethnic minorities etc.).

The methods Fyne Homes use will reflect the needs of the people we are seeking to inform and gather views from. Fyne Homes will use our experience, best practice and our tenants' responses to tailor our methods. The Strategy and related Action Plan will be reviewed annually with members of the Participation Register and report to our Board and tenants on progress towards meeting our aims.

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Legal background

As set out in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Fyne Homes has a duty to:

-  have a Tenant Participation Strategy
-  maintain a register of tenant groups that have become Registered Tenant Organisations (RTOs)
-  consult tenants and RTOs on rent setting, and significant changes to housing services

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 established the Scottish Social Housing Charter and created the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) with a new regime of inspecting and regulating all Scotland's social landlords, which requires greater tenant scrutiny of social landlords' performance.

This Strategy sets out how we will meet our duties.

Scottish Social Housing Charter

The Scottish Parliament has established the Scottish Social Housing Charter including 16 outcomes which the SHR will use to assess our performance.

Together with our tenants we will:

-  agree service standards;
-  include tenants in assessing our performance;
-  provide an honest assessment of our performance; and
-  use tenants' feedback to improve our performance.

Aim

The aim of this Strategy is to put our tenants at the heart of Fyne Homes' decision making.

To help achieve this, we will:

-  listen, act and feedback on what tenants tell us;
-  offer a range of participation options;
-  involve our staff in Tenant Participation(Inc. Department TP "Champions");
-  provide sufficient resources for Tenant Participation;
-  produce information that enable tenants to scrutinise services; and

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-  review practices, policies and procedures based on tenants views

Actions

The rest of this document sets out the actions we need to take.

We will offer participation options, so all tenants who want to get involved in Tenant Participation can. To do this, we will:

-  advertise opportunities in all our communities;
-  make sure our written information is attractive and available in relevant formats (e.g. Audio, Braille etc.) as required;
-  link to existing community groups to improve communication with our tenants;
-  co-ordinate and share consultation activities with other landlords when appropriate;
-  ensure our activities are accessible to those wanting to attend;
-  help tenants to establish and run representative groups and register as a Registered Tenant Organisation (RTO), if their members wish, including financially; and
-  offer training so that tenants (as individuals and as group representatives) can take an active part in:
 - o scrutinising our performance / improving our services;
 - o verifying Fyne Homes' Annual Report on the Charter to the SHR;
 - o improving our services; and
 - o undertaking the tasks set by their members.

Information

Fyne Homes will keep its tenants informed throughout the year in a number of ways including Newsletters, Annual Report, Direct Mail, Leaflets, Local Press, Website, Social Media, Text, and Email.

We will review how and what we communicate with tenants, †including how we report our performance.

Opportunities to be involved

-  **Registered Tenants Organisation (RTO)**
Be part of an RTO liaising with the Regional Networks and the Scottish Government influencing housing policy and represent the RTO on Tenants Panels

-  **Consultation Register**
Be consulted with and contacted for your view on matters that may be of interest to you

-  **Management Committee Member**
Be part of the team responsible for the conduct and control of the Association

-  **Resident or Focus Groups**
Meet with other residents and discuss issues and put forward ideas on improving your neighbourhood for example

Scottish Housing Regulator

SHR has introduced a self-assessment regulatory regime so we can provide annual reports on how we are progressing towards achieving the Charter's outcomes. Fyne Homes will:

-  work with tenants to assess our performance against the Charter's outcomes;
- and
-  annually report on our performance against the Charter's outcomes to tenants

Scrutiny/Service Improvement Groups

Be part of one of our tenant scrutiny groups and help us to assess our performance against our key performance indicators, including the Scottish Social Housing Charter's outcomes

Annual contacts

As part of our housing management duties, we will aim to speak with or meet with all tenants a minimum of once a year. Along with gathering tenants' views on a whole range of service issues, these annual contacts will include:

-  helping to resolve repairs or tenancy issues;
-  estate management inspection visits;
-  consulting on work we are carrying out in properties or common areas;
-  gathering tenants' views of our services, performance and participation activities;
-  promoting participation activities; and
-  provide feedback on how tenants' views impact on our services.

The Tenant Participation Officer is responsible for monitoring our annual contacts and ensuring we keep in touch.

Surveys

Tenants using services will be offered the opportunity to comment on their experience through surveys immediately after a service is provided.

We will undertake a periodic, independent Tenant Satisfaction Survey.

We may use text, post, phone, web based or face to face survey methods.

Survey responses will be fed into our Annual Report on the Charter and reported publically.

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Participation register and communication

We will hold a register of tenants wishing to participate with us. We will record their specific interests and preferred ways to be consulted to help us target activities.

Through text, email, social media, website advertising, and / or post all tenants will be kept informed of:

-  opportunities to participate;
-  our calendar of activities before they take place;
-  learning and development opportunities;
-  key performance information and
-  feedback from activities and how it is used to improve service.

Those joining the Participation Register may also join one of our Scrutiny Groups.

Local activities

Fyne Homes will:

-  attend community events such as galas and fun days, to support community activity and inform and gather views on Fyne Homes' services;
-  work with community organisations and agencies / landlords and other partners to maximise interest and share activities and costs; and
-  hold local activities to consult on local issues and projects.

Local groups

We will:

-  encourage tenants to form local representative groups to work with us and address local priorities and support the group to communicate with and respond to their members' issues.
-  work with and support community groups that include our tenants, especially those from traditional hard to reach groups.

Inspections

Participation Register members will also have the opportunity to undertake inspections of services of their choice. To facilitate this Fyne Homes will make available suitable initial and ongoing training to those volunteering to undertake inspections and support them to carry out the inspections and report their findings and recommendation to the Board.

Registered Tenant Organisation

If group members wish, we will assist the group to be a Registered Tenant Organisation (RTO) by:

-  encouraging and assisting RTOs to work with us to address local issues and priorities;
-  supporting RTOs to communicate with their members and respond to their issues;
-  providing a named contact officer;
-  consulting RTOs on annual rent setting and significant changes to our services;
-  advertising their existence, contacts, activities and achievements;
-  providing an annual operating grant; and
-  supporting taking part in the Scottish Government's Tenant Networks.

Fyne Homes will provide guidance on how to register and run group.

Scrutiny / Service Improvement Groups

Members of the Participation Register, may join Scrutiny Groups which will be supported by a named officer with the aim of meeting at least twice a year to:

-  learn about how performance is assessed;
-  scrutinise policies, procedures and practices that have an impact on performance
-  assess service performance and make recommendations;
-  scrutinise Fyne Homes' Annual Return of the Charter (ARC) and the SHR response to our ARC report.
-  consider participation budgets and activity; and

-  make recommendations to Fyne Homes Senior Team and Management Committee

Building good working relationships

We will develop with tenants a Code of Conduct to set out how we will work with tenants.

Groups RTOs and Scrutiny Groups.

Calendar of activities

To ensure our Tenant Participation activities are well co-ordinated, we will develop and publicise a calendar of activities. This will help us to:

-  prevent staff and tenants from being overburdened;
-  allow tenants to select and plan their participation;
-  allow for proper advertising of activities; and
-  combine activities, when suitable.

Resources

Fyne Homes will support Tenant Participation and developing this Strategy with:

Staff

All staff has a role in delivering our Strategy. For the majority of the staff this involves being aware of the opportunities to be involved, informing tenants about services, listening to and passing on tenants' views and helping to provide feedback on how tenants' views are used.

Fyne Homes will also employ a Tenant Participation Officer to oversee the implementation of the strategy and to promote and develop tenant engagement.

Tenants seeking to establish a group will be supported by the Tenant Participation Officer.

The Tenant Participation Officer will also:

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- ⚙️ oversee and plan participation throughout Fyne Homes;
- ⚙️ support individuals, groups and staff to engage; and
- ⚙️ monitor progress towards achieving our: Strategy's aims; and Action Plan.

Money

Our Tenant Participation budget will be reviewed in consultation with the Scrutiny Group/s and agreed by the Senior Team and Management Committee each financial year to ensure effective delivery of the Strategy's actions including:

- ⚙️ the work of the Scrutiny Groups;
- ⚙️ reporting our Annual Review of the Charter to tenants;
- ⚙️ Fyne News, our newsletter and any local newsletters;
- ⚙️ costs of activities, including:
 - transport, care costs and out of pocket expenses;
 - venue hire and catering costs; and
 - advertising / promotional costs.
- ⚙️ translation and interpreter;
- ⚙️ external conference places for tenants;
- ⚙️ training for tenants and staff;
- ⚙️ contributions to other community activities Fyne Homes takes part in;
- ⚙️ independent surveys and consultancy; and
- ⚙️ setting up and support (grants, printing, photocopying, etc.) to local groups.

Equality

We are committed to:

- ⚙️ treating people respectfully, fairly and equally;
- ⚙️ tackling discrimination and all forms of harassment;
- ⚙️ ensuring services are accessible to everyone irrespective of their race, religion or belief, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, age or sex.

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We will ensure all groups and individuals have equal access and opportunity to engage in our Tenant Participation activities.

An equality impact assessment has been completed for this Strategy to ensure it does not discriminate or disadvantage people.

How this strategy was developed

We worked with the Tenant Information Service (TIS) on The Scottish Government “Next Steps” programme to audit our tenant participation practices and gather tenants’ views with a tenant working group.

The audit’s findings and recommendations were developed into a draft Strategy and both tenants and staff were consulted.

Thereafter our Strategy will be reviewed every 3 years in consultation with tenants and staff and will adhere to the aims set out in Appendix 1.

How to contact us

If you are interested in getting involved you can contact Fyne Homes by calling 0345 6077117 and asking for Craig Baxter, Tenant Participation Officer or email cbaxter@fynehomes.co.uk

Alternatively pop in and see one of the team at one of our local offices:

81 Victoria Street	78B John Street	42 Ralston Road	Smiddy House
Rothesay	Dunoon	Campbeltown	Lochgilphead
Isle of Bute	Argyll	Argyll	Argyll
PA20 0AP	PA23 7NS	PA28 6LE	PA31 8TA

Appendix 1

Next Steps: Tenant Participation / Community Engagement Action Plan - 2019

First Steps

Establish Staffing and Training Requirements to deliver Next Steps Action Plan		
What we will do:	What will it achieve:	Priority:
Identify staff members(s) responsible for implementing TP Strategy & Next Steps Action Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dedicated focus on the delivery of Next Steps Actions and Implementation of TP Strategy 	High
Develop a TP training programme for staff and Board members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness and buy-in from staff and board members around their responsibilities in relation to TP 	High
Develop 2020 – 2023 Tenant Participation Strategy		
What we will do:	What will it achieve:	Priority:
Establish joint tenant / staff sub group to review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of Next Steps reports and current TP Strategy 	High
Develop draft new TP Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New draft Strategy developed for consultation 	Medium
Consult stakeholders on new draft Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback collated and included in new TP Strategy New Strategy developed and launched 	Medium

ACTION PLAN

Aim 1: Improve communication across Fyne Homes and ensure all departments share the commitment to improving TP and delivering the Action Plan		
What we will do:	What will it achieve:	Priority:
Encourage Heads/Mangers to deliver Briefing sessions or “team talks” to share what’s happening in the wider organisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organisation knowledge is shared more widely Staff are aware of how they can best respond to tenants and identify ways to improve direct engagement 	Medium
Identify TP “Champions” within each department	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TP is high on the agenda within each department Advice and support is available to staff when considering how to involve tenants in their work. 	Medium

Aim 2: Raise awareness of customer engagement opportunities through communication to Fyne Homes tenants, organised groups, and others

What we will do:	What will it achieve:	Priority:
Promote Tenant Participation & Scrutiny Opportunities via new “getting Involved” publication – available in print & on-line	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All TP opportunities advertised in one place Awareness of TP advantages, successes and results promoted Increased participation in TP and scrutiny activities 	Medium
Include “getting involved” in all tenant newsletters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Updated FH and other information provided to tenants TP opportunities and benefits promoted 	Medium
Ensure written communication/ invitations are ‘user friendly’ – are written in a welcoming tone and avoids jargon or technical terminology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interested tenants continue to receive personal invites Interested tenants feel encouraged to attend Interested tenants have adequate time to plan their attendance 	Medium
Ensure ‘front desk’ staff know how to sign-post tenants looking to find out more about getting involved and opportunities are advertised within these spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TP opportunities are promoted Increased number of tenants getting involved 	Medium
Identify Engagement “Ambassadors” to demonstrate impact of getting involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Awareness of TP advantages, successes and results promoted 	Low
Promote Tenant Participation Opportunities at FH events and events organised by external organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> FH networking with other organisations TP promoted to a wider audience New people recruited Increased responses to FH surveys and consultations 	Low
Hold an annual tenant and resident event	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenants provided with detailed and comprehensive information on housing and related services Tenants and residents have the opportunity to meet others, share views & experience and advise FH of issues and suggestions 	Medium
Relaunch FH membership to include a suite of ‘rewards’ and clear opportunities to influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenants and factored owners aware of membership opportunities and benefits Increased / maintained membership figures 	Low

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Promote the role of the Board and ensure potential members know how to get involved	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved transparency around governance • More tenant board members 	Low
Develop use of digital communication (particularly social media) to promote opportunities and impact of TP at FH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New communication methods developed <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Email shots ○ Video links ○ Discussion forums • Wider audience reached • Increased involvement / feedback from tenants, service users and others • New publicity method available to staff, tenants and others 	Medium
Provide regular TP updates highlighting successes and achievements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants feel that their contribution is valued • Tenants are aware that participation makes a difference 	Medium
Install noticeboards in communal areas of flatted developments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents know what is happening • Updates on reported issues can be provided by FH 	Low

Aim 3: Support the development of new and existing tenants and residents organisations, and support their members to participate and influence FH policy and service delivery

What we will do:	What will it achieve:	Priority:
Encourage tenants and factored owners to join local Tenant and Resident Associations (TARAs) when they sign up for their property	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of groups • Increased tenant involvement 	Medium
Support communities to set up new TARAs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of groups • Increased tenant involvement 	Medium
Provide a range of meeting options for groups to include 'virtual' meetings and evening/weekend meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased use of technology to allow people to 'dial in' to meetings • Increased opportunities to attend meetings for those with work/caring commitments • Extended reach of meeting opportunities 	Medium
Promote TARA participation in Estate Walkabouts with FH officers and others as required	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of local issues and concerns • Joint working with tenants and owners to improve housing and community • Groups supported to apply for external funding to improve community and facilities 	Medium

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Maintain Registered Tenant Organisation (RTO) Register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RTO Register updated • RTO's invited to participate in local and national consultations and events 	Low
Support TARAs to apply for RTO Grant funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All TARA's in receipt of RTO Grant 	Low
Attend RTO meetings as requested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of FH services, policies, procedures • Increased staff & board awareness of local issues, concerns, projects 	Low
Improve partnerships with other agencies/service providers and encourage them to attend RTO meetings as requested	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased awareness of service/policies and procedures provided by other agencies • Increased opportunities for RTOs to raise concerns/issues with other services/agencies 	Medium

Aim 4: Provide opportunities for individual tenants and customers to participate and influence Fyne Homes policy and service delivery

What we will do:	What will it achieve:	Priority:
Develop and maintain a customer consultation register to include the 'preferred contact methods' of interested tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased number of tenants involved in FH consultations • Increased customer influence in FH policy development, implementation and practice • Personalised approach to participation 	Low
Follow-up with tenants who contact FH for single issues to identify if they would be interested in getting 'involved'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved knowledge about the issues that tenants are interested in • Personalised approach to participation 	High
Introduce a range of incentives to encourage participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased tenant and customer feedback and participation 	Medium
Develop use of digital consultation techniques (particularly social media) to gather views and ideas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased range of ways customers can receive information and respond to consultation • Increased number of customers responding to consultation • Increased interaction with groups unable or unwilling to attend traditional consultation events 	Medium
Develop text messaging to inform and increase customer involvement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional communication to and from tenants and customers developed • Increased tenant and customer feedback and participation • Increased tenant satisfaction information gathered and reported 	Low
Support and develop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny group in place that is supported to identify and 	

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tenants to lead scrutiny of FH services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> review service areas Scrutiny group members identify recommendations for service improvements Service reflect tenant priorities and aspirations 	High
Pilot participatory budgeting projects to involve customers in funding decisions in their local community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased tenant & customer influence in decision making Expenditure agreed as per tenant & customer priorities 	Low
Organise a range of pop-up consultation events and roadshows to consult on service/policy developments throughout the year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased number of tenants and factored owners involved in consultations Annual rent consultation carried out as required 	Low
Develop Tenant Champions in local communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased tenant involvement and communication to and from FH within local neighbourhoods 	Low
Identify local community events where FH could interact with traditionally 'hard to reach' customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased opportunities to interact with FH customers without organising bespoke events Extended reach in rural areas and for hard to reach groups 	Low
Work with schools and youth organisations to raise awareness of housing and involvement opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young people aware of housing options and role of FH Increased involvement of young people in housing and community activity 	Low

High To commence within 3 months

Medium To commence within 12 months

Low To commence within 18 months

All Aims will be continually monitored which will drive the direction and formulate the TP Strategy at time of its 3 yearly review.

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