



EASTHALL
PARK

**EASTHALL PARK
HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE
TENANT PARTICIPATION
POLICY**

Easthall Park will provide this policy on request at no cost, in large print, in braille, on tape or in other non-written format, and in a variety of languages.

APRIL 2007

EASTHALL PARK HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE LTD

Tenant Participation Policy

1. The Co-operative's Aims

Easthall Park Housing Co-operative is a Fully Mutual Co-operative, which is run by the tenants. As such we are committed to improving the housing and services, which tenants receive. In achieving this we will ensure that all tenants and residents will get the information and support they require so that they can take an active part in the Co-operative. At the same time the organisation aims to contribute to the quality of life of the neighbourhood and the residents.

2. The Co-operative's Policy

To put into practice our aims the Co-operative has adopted a Tenant Participation Policy a Tenant Participation Strategy along with a Resident Involvement in Design policy. The purpose of this policy is to set out how we will work with tenants to ensure that the services we deliver will meet their needs through involving tenants in the decision making process.

In defining tenant participation the Co-operative will adopt the definition outlined in a national strategy for participation as follows: "Tenant participation is about tenants taking part in decision making processes and influencing decisions about housing policies, housing conditions and housing services. It is a two-way process, which involves the sharing of information, ideas and power. Its aim is to improve the standard of housing conditions and service."

The Co-operative will adhere to Performance Standards for social landlords and homelessness functions in relation to tenant participation as follows:

GS2.2 Tenant participation We have published and are implementing a sound strategy for encouraging and supporting tenants, residents and service users to participate actively in all areas of our work. We support tenants to take an active interest in managing their homes.

The Co-operative will adhere to the terms outlined in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 Part 2 – Tenants of social landlords chapter 3 – Tenant Participation.

3. Equality Issues

The Co-operative in undertaking this policy will ensure that equality of opportunities applies for all and will not discriminate on the grounds of race, colour, ethnic or national origin, sex, marital status, disability, sexual orientation, religion, age or other grounds.

4. The Co-operative's Strategy

As outlined within the Housing Scotland Act 2001 we will publish a tenant participation strategy in consultation with tenants and registered tenant organisations.

The Co-operative will therefore develop a participation strategy in consultation with stakeholders and the contents of this strategy will include the following:

- Introduction
- Background
- How the strategy was developed and who were involved
- Reasons for the strategy and the benefits of participation
- Links to other strategies and services
- How to keep tenants informed
- Consultation
- Giving tenants feedback
- Monitoring and review arrangements
- Performance Standards
- Working with Registered Tenant Organisations
- Resources
- Time to Communicate
- Training
- Equal Opportunities

5. Information

The information that tenants/residents and other stakeholders receive is the key to ensuring that they are able to participate in the work of the Co-operative. We will therefore work to make sure that:

- A) All information that tenants receive is in plain language.
- B) Information is presented clearly and drawings, photographs, models and exhibits will be used if appropriate.
- C) Tenants, residents and tenants groups will receive full information on housing services.
- D) If we cannot provide tenants, residents and other stakeholders with the information they need, we will provide an explanation as to why this is unavailable.
- E) All personal enquiries will be handled by the office if the member of staff is unavailable a suitable appointment will be made.
- F) If required all information will be translated or put into a form to meet the specific needs of the individual.

6. Improvements to Houses

A significant part of the Co-operative's work is improving the quality of the housing in the area. It is vitally important that tenants and owners participate in this area. In relation to this the Co-operative will:

- A) Provide information to tenants and owners on the work being carried out and that being planned.
- B) Seek tenants and owners views on the proposals at an early stage.
- C) Offer a range of choices to tenants and owners bearing in mind the responsibility for the Association to meet all its legal and financial obligations.
- D) Explore ways in which tenants can become proactive in the Development Process.

The Co-operative has prepared a Resident Involvement in Design policy, which outlines specifically how residents can be involved within the development process.

7. Housing and Repair Services

The Co-operative provides a range of services to the tenants and these include things like repairs, allocations, estate management and rent accounting. We want to make sure that all our tenants receive the best service that they pay for and to ensure that is the case we will:

- A) Provide information on all our Housing Services.
- B) Make the same information available to tenant's groups and representatives.
- C) Use a range of methods to get the information across and to receive tenant's views.
- D) Ensure staff receive the necessary training to support them in putting this policy into practice.

8. Participation methods

A number of methods will be used to give out and receive information. The Co-operative will use a combination of the following to receive and give out information.

- A) Regular Newsletters
- B) Public Meetings
- C) Close Meetings
- D) Scheme Meetings
- E) Information Leaflets, (e.g. decant guide, housing benefit guide)
- F) Tenants Handbook
- G) Tenants New Home Guide
- H) Tenants Census and Surveys

The above list is not exhaustive and ideas will continually be monitored to ensure that the Co-operative is achieving its objectives.

9. Management Committee

As detailed Easthall Park is a Fully Mutual Housing Co-operative and therefore the Management Committee is made up its members.

It therefore follows that if the Management Committee is made up of members/tenants that control of the organisation is in the hands of the recipients of the service provided by the Co-operative.

Recognising this, it is vital that the Co-operative endeavours to fill all 15 spaces on the Management Committee for tenants and that the Committee are properly trained to fulfil their respective roles.

The Co-operative has the facility to elect other interested residents to participate within the Management Committee and therefore owner-occupiers will be encouraged to join the Committee.

The Co-operative will undertake to provide or organise training for any board members or tenants in order to equip people with the necessary skills to participate effectively.

10. Review

The Co-operative will continually examine ways of increasing participation and this policy will be reviewed every three years.

However the effectiveness of the participation levels will be undertaken yearly as part of the review of the Co-operative's Internal Management Plan.

Regular reports will be undertaken and presented to the Management Committee on the outcome of the tenant participation strategy and this strategy will be reviewed on an annual basis.

The outcome of any monitoring will also be reported to the stakeholders to ensure that they have every opportunity to influence service delivery and to seek views on the annual review of the strategy.