



**EASTHALL
PARK**

***Easthall Park
Tenant Participation
Strategy***

Easthall Park Housing Co-operative Ltd

August 2006

TENANT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Easthall Park recognises the value of working in partnership with tenants towards a common goal of better housing and community services in Easthall.
- 1.2 Easthall Park aims to effectively involve tenants in the process of developing and monitoring the service it provides.
- 1.3 This Strategy sets out a framework to achieve this.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Easthall Park Housing Co-operative is a Fully Mutual Co-operative, which means that all tenants are members and from this membership tenants are elected to run the organisation.

3. DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGY

The development of the strategy has occurred over a period of years and builds upon the Co-operative's Tenant Participation policy, Resident Involvement in Design policy and previous Tenant Participation Strategies.

In developing this strategy comments have been sought from all of Easthall Park Tenants, Easthall Resident's Association, Easthall Park Management Committee (made up solely of tenants and or their partners in Easthall) and the staff of Easthall Park Housing Co-operative.

A series of questionnaires and surveys have been carried out seeking views on how tenants wish to participate in the affairs of the Co-operative.

4. EASTHALL PARK HOUSING CO-OPERATIVE'S STRATEGY FOR TENANT PARTICIPATION

- 4.1 One of the purposes of the Strategy is to help ensure that tenants take an active part in the development of high quality housing services and community issues across Easthall.

- 4.2 To reflect the multi agency nature of estate management Easthall Park's approach to tenant participation will have a broad remit. There will be a commitment to involve other agencies as appropriate (for example the Police, local schools, the cleansing department etc.).
- 4.3 It is recognised that for people to take ownership of what happens in their community they need to have the opportunity to influence what is happening and at the same time if they cannot influence matters an understanding is required as to the barriers and or reasons for such.

This Co-operative is committed to maximising tenant participation as this allows tenants to influence the way we work and gives clear direction as to what our members expect and at the same time ensures that we are always acting in the best interests of our tenants.

5. STRATEGIC LINKS & SERVICES

- 5.1 Glasgow has produced its local housing strategy for 2003-2008 which sets out to achieve six aims and objectives:

- To promote the regeneration of the city
- To raise the city's housing in all tenures to satisfactory standards, with affordable costs
- To meet people's changing housing needs
- To prevent and alleviate homelessness through the delivery of effective services
- To ensure equality of access to housing
- To promote effective delivery of housing services in the city

In preparing this strategy cognisance will be taken of the above aims and objectives and how members of the community can be involved and influence such strategies.

- 5.2 There are a number of other structures and strategies that will have a bearing on the direction of our strategy.

Within Easthall services are provided by other services and the Easthall Community Planning Group is set up to allow a structure to develop all other services in the area.

Therefore the Co-operative will actively be involved in this group in developing our strategy and will assist other groups within the area (or those that provide services to tenants in Easthall) to maximise opportunities for our tenants.

6. KEEPING TENANTS INFORMED

Written Information

6.1 Easthall Park is committed to providing written information in the following way: -

- all written information to tenants will use plain language
- it will be presented in manner that is easy to read
- it will be informative and community driven

6.2 Easthall Park is committed to providing its tenants with as much relevant information as possible. The Co-operative is committed to the following: -

- publishing a newsletter no less than 4 times per year
- publishing an Annual Review once per year
- a Tenants' Handbook (which will be reviewed every three years, or after a major policy review, whichever comes sooner)
- publishing Information Leaflets on various services provided by the Co-operative
- providing information electronically via an interactive web page (www.easthallpark.org.uk)

Alternative Formats

6.3 Easthall Park is committed to providing written information in other formats so as not to discriminate against tenants who have difficulty reading (whether through literacy difficulties or visual difficulties).

Other Languages

6.4 Where English is not the first language of the household, Easthall Park will provide on request written information in the first language.

Other Media

- 6.5 Easthall Park will investigate the use of alternative forms of media to consult and inform tenants.

7. CONSULTATION

- 7.1 Easthall Park will use a variety of methods to consult and inform tenants depending on the specifics of the issue(s) at hand.

The Co-operative will offer a range of issues that tenants may wish to be consulted or participate in such as:

- managing the area
- offering housing
- repairs and maintenance
- rent and service charges
- the environment
- service standards and performance
- investment programmes
- reviewing services

The above list is not exhaustive and tenants will be consulted on what issue(s) they wish to be consulted.

Focus Groups

- 7.2 Focus Groups will be established and used when considered to be the most appropriate and/or effective method of consultation.
- 7.3 Focus Groups will be established periodically to address specific topics and \ or policy review.

Meetings

- 7.4 Easthall Park will convene meetings appropriate to the scale and importance of the discussion topic. Such meetings will be arranged as and when required.
- 7.5 Tenant meetings: - Easthall Park will convene meetings for its residents for major policy matters or matters that affect all of the tenants who live in their area of operation.

- 7.6 Local meetings: - with tenants of one street or area will be used as a means of consultation if there are particular issues that affect that street or area.
- 7.7 Meeting with Individuals: - persons obtaining a service from Easthall Park will have easy access to Officers of the Co-operative or agents acting on behalf of the Co-operative.

Tenants Group

- 7.8 Easthall Park will positively work with the any Resident's Association within Easthall. The aims and objectives of these group(s) must be agreed by the members of the group and reflect their work with tenants in their constitution.

Surveys

- 7.9 Easthall Park will survey tenants on matters of housing management, maintenance and service delivery.
- 7.10 The Co-operative will conduct surveys using a random sample of tenants/service users to try to ensure a representative sample and a fair and representative outcome.

Development

- 7.11 Easthall Park will endeavour to maximise consultation opportunities in the development design process for tenants and future tenants.
- 7.12 The Committee shall, on a project-by-project basis, determine the level of tenant consultation to be undertaken.

Taking Account of Tenants Views

- 7.13 Easthall Park will take account of the views of tenants and where practicable deliver services that meet tenants' priorities. Liaison meetings with the Resident's Association will be held as required to discuss and feedback on matters of common interest.
- 7.14 Easthall Park will continue to consult and/or provide information to any tenant who wishes to discuss housing or community matters on an individual or group basis.

8. GIVING TENANTS FEEDBACK

- 8.1 For this strategy to be effective it needs to be clear that tenants are aware how their contribution has helped shape policy and service delivery.

Easthall Park will therefore ensure that adequate feedback to tenants is communicated.

A variety of methods will be used to provide this feedback including those outlined above under section 7 of this strategy.

Other methods will include:

- Individual letters
- Newsletters and information leaflets
- Open days
- Public Meetings
- Website
- Any other means as identified by tenants

9. MONITORING & REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS

Objectives

- 9.1 Easthall Park will evaluate the success of its consultation against its Objectives and Action Plan.

Surveys

- 9.2 Easthall Park will measure the success of consultation through tenant satisfaction surveys, comparators against previous performance and, where appropriate, against the services provided by other Housing Organisations.

Resources

- 9.3 Easthall Park will monitor the use of resources, money, equipment and staff time. The object of this exercise will be to ensure that participation is adequately funded, that accommodation and or equipment and staff time is being used most effectively.

Reporting

- 9.4 The Committee will receive the following:-
- regular reports on progress against the Action Plan
 - timeous reports on the outcome results of surveys and a report on variances with previous surveys
 - regular reports on the level of resources spent on Tenant Participation
- 9.5 This strategy will be reviewed annually.

10. PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- 10.1 Easthall Park will adhere to relevant performance standards on Tenant Participation.

The current applicable standard is 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 who take an active interest in managing their homes.

11. REGISTERED TENANT ORGANISATIONS

- 11.1 Easthall Park will work with new, developing and established tenant organisations.
- 11.2 Easthall Park will maintain a register of Tenant Organisations based on the following criteria. The criteria for recognition, and critically important for any support funding, is as follows.

Tenants groups must;

- Have a constitution based on the key principles of a model constitution
- Show that they try to represent everyone living in the area
- Ensure that membership is open to all adults over 16 years of age living in the area
- Have held an annual general meeting within the last 12 months and hold regular meetings as detailed in the constitution

- Demonstrate how annual general meetings and public meetings are advertised to people living in the area
- Elect office bearers and committee members at the annual general meeting and have as a minimum tenant representation on the committee proportionate to the overall tenant membership
- Keep a record of audited accounts and minutes of meetings
- Show how the tenants association encourages everyone living in the area who is 16 years of age or older to become involved in the work of the tenants group
- There should be a means of showing how they have met their objectives and have the skills to work effectively as a group

11.3 If groups cannot meet recognition requirements they will be given support for a period of time to come up to the standard, otherwise they are taken off the approved list.

11.4 Organisations unhappy with a decision not to be entered, or removed from, the register will be able to appeal to the Scottish Ministers who may confirm or reverse the decision.

11.5 Easthall Park reserves the right to work with any tenant group(s) that may not wish to seek registration as long as they adhere to the principles contained within 11.2 above.

12. RESOURCES

12.1 To encourage and facilitate effective participation Easthall Park will set up a tenant participation budget to complement consultation services.

Where appropriate the Co-operative will approach other agencies for support and /or financial assistance for tenant participation, if such agencies are formally involved.

12.2 If possible and appropriate, Easthall Park will make available accommodation for consultative meetings and meetings of any Tenants Group registered by the Co-operative.

12.3 Easthall Park will publish and consult on the resources available for tenant participation.

12.4 Easthall Park will ensure there are enough resources to remove obstacles that prevent participation. Examples of how this will be carried out are as follows:

- Video conferencing facilities made available to members of the community who cannot leave their homes so that they can participate in the Management Committee.
- Meetings held at times appropriate to the needs of tenants.
- Crèche and or expenses paid for those with children or dependent adults (depending on their specific requirements).

13. TIME TO COMMUNICATE

13.1 Adequate time will be allowed to tenants to allow them to be involved in the strategy and influencing the services provided by Easthall Park.

To allow adequate time an annual plan of policies/service to be reviewed will be issued along with timescales for comments on such.

14. TRAINING

14.1 Training will be made available for staff, committee members, registered tenant organisations and individual tenants to allow the necessary skills to be developed to ensure that this strategy is effective.

15. EQUALITY OF OPPORTUNITY

15.1 Easthall Park believes that all tenants should benefit from consultation, information and participation. A key aim of this strategy is to positively encourage involvement of tenants from all backgrounds regardless of their age, sex, sexuality, race, ethnicity, disability, nationality, political views, religious beliefs or non-religious beliefs. In implementing this strategy the Co-operative hopes that all tenants will be enabled to play a role in the betterment of the area.

15.2 Easthall Park will therefore make this strategy and any other documents available in any language or format requested.

Activity Plan 2006/07 – 2009/10

For the lifetime of the strategy Easthall Park will actively promote tenant involvement in the delivery of housing and housing related services. Where appropriate the Co-operative will encourage involvement in other community issues that have a link to the general well being of the community.

Consultation

Activity	Outcome	Indicator	Timescale	Officer
Undertake Quality surveys	Assist in performance management	Completed survey(s)	Continuous	Core Services Manager
Organise at least 1 public meeting/tenants conference per year and AGM	To provide information /consult as required/promote tenant consultation	Attendance at public meeting /tenants conference	At least Annually	Core Services Manager Housing /Officer
Interactive web site	To provide information /consult as required/promote tenant consultation	Number of times web site accessed and comments received	Continuous	Senior Officer

Information

Activity	Outcome	Indicator	Timescale	Officer
Produce 4 newsletters per year	Improve written information flow	Production of 4 newsletters	Every three months	Senior Officer & Core Services Manager
Produce Annual Report	Provide performance information	Production of Annual Report	One per year	Senior Officer
Update Tenants Handbook	Provide up to date information on tenancy matters	Review tenants handbook	April	Core Services Manager
Interactive web site	Provide up to date information on tenancy matters	Number of times web site accessed	Continuous	Senior Officer

Training & Monitoring

Activity	Outcome	Indicator	Timescale	Officer
Undertake Training for Board & Staff Members	Assist in performance	Training Events attended	Ongoing	Management Board & Director
Monitoring of Tenant Participation	Assist in performance	Reports to Committee	Annual	Director

Participation

Activity	Outcome	Indicator	Timescale	Officer
Establish Focus group(s) for reviews of policies	Greater tenant involvement and decision making	Focus group established and operating	On going	Director, Core Services Manager, Development Manager
Promote greater tenant participation, (at meetings, tenants conference etc)	Raise profile of tenant participation	Greater interest in tenant involvement	On going	Core Services Manager

Promotion

Activity	Outcome	Indicator	Timescale	Officer
Assist residents association where demand allows	Greater use of Community Project	Greater use of Community Project	On going	Community Development Officer
Develop good membership scheme	Greater interest in active membership	Increased numbers at Committee /Co-operative events, eg AGM	On going	Core Housing Manager