



# **TENANT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY**

**2017 - 2020**

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FORMAT, FOR EXAMPLE, IF YOU REQUIRE IT IN BRAILLE OR IN AUDIO PLEASE  
LET A MEMBER OF STAFF KNOW YOUR REQUIREMENTS**

**March 2017**

# **Spire View Housing Association**

## **Tenant Participation Strategy 2017 - 2020**

### **1.0 Introduction**

Spire View Housing Association is committed to providing good quality information and involving tenants in decision making. In order to demonstrate this commitment, the Association has developed this Tenant Participation Strategy in full consultation with tenants. The Strategy will explain to tenants, staff and committee members, how tenants can get involved and influence housing services. This Strategy will cover the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020.

As well as being good practice, a Tenant Participation Strategy is also a legal requirement, under Section 53 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001. The Strategy also takes account of the new regulatory framework.

### **2.0 Background Information**

The Associations previous strategy covered the period from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 – 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017.

The Association recently carried out a 'Tenant Participation Questionnaire' (Appendix 1). This exercise was conducted by staff members and targeted tenants calling to the office or receiving visits to their homes. A total of 29 questionnaires were completed, representing a response rate of 5.2%. The results of this questionnaire have also been considered in the development of this strategy and further details are contained within section 5.0 of this document.

In July 2015, the Association received the final version of the report in relation to its most recent Tenant Satisfaction Survey. The relevant findings within the survey have been fully incorporated into this strategy.

In December 2016, an article was placed in the Association's newsletter to try and generate interest from tenants to become involved in the review of the strategy. The Association also contacted a number of tenants directly. Whilst this failed to generate much of a response we are confident that this is because the majority of tenants feel they have ample opportunity to participate as and when they feel appropriate.

Once the next Tenant Satisfaction Survey has been conducted, the results relevant to this strategy will be incorporated at the next review.

### **3.0 Aims and Objectives**

The aims and objectives of the strategy are as listed below. These have been developed taking account of the views of tenants, staff and committee.

- To encourage greater participation in all aspects of the association's operations.
- To encourage participation from as diverse a range of tenants as possible i.e. various ages, ethnicities, people with disabilities etc.
- To involve tenants in scrutiny of the Association's performance.
- To provide good quality information to tenants / residents of Spire View.
- To continue to communicate well with tenants / residents on appropriate matters.
- To use a greater variety of consultation methods where appropriate.

### **4.0 Information**

The following list is just some of the information the Association will make available to tenants;

- Newsletters
- Annual report
- Copies of all policies, procedures, accounts, Internal Management Plan, Risk Management Strategy, Minutes of committee meetings.
- Flyers and leaflets
- Tenants handbook
- Details of local events
- Money advice
- Tenancy Sustainment
- Applying for housing / internal transfer
- Help, advice and support agencies
- Performance of the Association
- Staff changes
- Committee changes
- Tenant satisfaction survey results
- Complaints and Appeals processes
- Website

This list is not exhaustive. We will use a variety of means to communicate this information including social media where appropriate.

### **5.0 Participation Opportunities**

Traditionally, tenant participation has focused on consulting with formal Tenants and Residents Associations. However, Spire View recognises that not everyone wants to get involved in this way. We want to encourage as many tenants as possible to have their say on how the Association is managed and delivered.

The list below details some of the opportunities for tenants to get involved in:

- Royston's Got Talent – We will encourage tenants to take part in our annual community event.
- Tenants Sign Up Packs - Every tenant is provided with a comprehensive information pack at the start of their tenancy.
- Tenants Newsletters - We produce 4 newsletters each year which is posted to all tenants and published on our website.
- Our website - Spire View.org.uk/can be accessed to obtain information on housing and related issues and service provision.
- Satisfaction Surveys / Questionnaires - we carry out a full tenant satisfaction survey every 3 years and a mini tenant participation questionnaire on our services so as to better understand tenant satisfaction levels.
- Public Meetings - we will hold public meetings when we intend to make significant changes to the way we deliver a service, we will organise public meetings to seek tenants views on our proposals.
- Registered Tenant Organisations (RTO) - RTO gives groups a recognised role in the decision-making process. Landlords and RTOs should work together to identify policies and practices which they think need to be revised.
- Working Groups - Tenants, residents and customers are invited to join staff in working groups to participate in policy and service reviews.

## **6.0 Consultation**

Spire View has always been committed to consulting with tenants on changes to services that have a direct impact on them. The association has developed a strategy that most reflects the wishes of our tenants.

The outcomes of the tenant satisfaction survey and the tenant consultation questionnaire exercise have been used to inform the work plan for the period until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020, as detailed at Appendix 2. This gave the association a feel for tenant expectations on tenant participation. The outcomes in relation to the work plan will be monitored and reported on a regular basis.

- 29 questionnaires were completed and these have now been analysed and incorporated into the attached work plan (Appendix 2). This is a reasonable amount of surveys (5% of tenants) which, combined with the tenant satisfaction survey, gives the Association some very reliable and up-to-date information on what the tenants living in the area really want by way of tenant participation.
- ***The main views of the tenants surveyed were:***
  - 97% of tenants found the Association's newsletters informative
  - 86% felt that the Association consulted them on matters relating to their tenancy, for example, repairs, allocations and rents

- 4% of tenants would consider standing for the Committee
- The most popular method of consultation is by far the newsletter. 90% of tenants find this a useful means of consultation whereby they are advised of the Association's plans in a particular area and will consider comments where applicable. 83% of tenants think that Open days / community events and Social Media 72% are effective and the least favourable means of communication was Telephone Survey 34%.
- Tenants expressed a wish to be consulted on the following: (66%) on Environmental Works, (62%) on Allocation of Housing, (59%) on Anti Social Behaviour (55%) on major repairs and (52%) on rent levels. Tenants were also interested in being consulted in relation to Day to Day Repairs (45%) Estate Management (41%), Rent Arrears (28%) and finally (38%) of tenants wanted to be consulted on complaints. These results demonstrated a significant interest in most issues.
- 17% of tenants expressed a wish to have publications made available in large print and 7% of tenants would like to see publications translated.

Tenants were also asked what would encourage them to become more involved in tenant participation, some of the suggestions received included offering more incentives ie raffles, refreshments, committee surgeries, information sessions and social events.

Tenants were also asked if there was anything that put them off becoming involved, comments included timing of meetings, work and family commitments and health reasons.

The Scottish Social Housing Charter and the Scottish Housing Regulator's Regulatory Framework requires Spire View Housing Association to involve tenants in the scrutiny of our performance. This allows tenants an opportunity to be involved in measuring our performance in relation to areas such as tenant accountability, value for money, etc. We are also required to report performance to our tenants in a way that suits them best and a format that they wish to see

- 66% of tenants expressed an interest in getting involved in measuring Spire View's performance.

These respondents were also asked about their preferred method of measuring Spire View's performance, and 41% of respondents said their most favourable method would be completing surveys and questionnaires and 24% of respondents said their least preferred method for measuring Spire View's performance would be scrutiny panels.

The most favourable method for reporting Spire View's Performance would be newsletters with 72% of respondents selecting this option. The least preferred method of performance reporting is Discussion Panels with 17% of respondents expressing an interest.

All of the above, together with other preferences emerging from the survey, have been incorporated into the TP Strategy.

At first, the strategy may seem modest. However, this is based on the principle that it is much better that our formal strategy is realistic and achievable, as opposed to containing far too many different elements that, even at the outset, we know we are not going to achieve.

Spire View Housing Association is required to report our performance in achieving or progressing towards the Charter outcomes and standards to our tenants and service users who use our services. This will be in the form of a report card, which we will publish each year.

## **6.0 Review of Strategy 2014 - 2017**

The Association was fully committed to carrying out all the tasks identified in the 2014 – 2017 work plan and excellent progress was made in this report. In particular the following was achieved:

- Newsletters were sent out in Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter of each year.
- Newsletters were used to provoke feedback from tenants on current matters e.g. rent increases, public meetings, newsletters, planned maintenance, community issues, policy reviews etc.
- Newsletters and letters were also successfully used to generate tenants and prospective tenant involvement in policy reviews. This included the review of this strategy as well as the maintenance policies, allocations policy and complaints handling procedure.
- A full tenant satisfaction survey was carried out 2015. The final report was published in July 2015. This demonstrated that tenants continue to remain satisfied with the Association. 94% of tenants are satisfied or fairly satisfied with Spire View as their landlord and 99% feel that the services provided by the Association are good or very good.
- AGM's were held in September 2014, 2015 and 2016. These meetings were utilised for the required formal business as well as an opportunity to seek tenant views / feedback on other areas. The performance of the Association was also fed back to members.
- Regular reminders were placed in the Association newsletters with a view to encouraging the establishment of Registered Tenant Organisations (RTO's).
- A review of the Tenants Handbook was carried out and issued to all current and new tenants of the Association in October 2015.

- The Association produced and issued an annual report for 2013/2014, 2014/2015, 2015/2016. The reports were issued to every tenant / resident of the Association as well as those people on our mailing list e.g. professionals, consultants, police, social work etc,
- The Association organised and participated in local clean up events and community talent shows in 2014,2015 & 2016 and is becoming involved in numerous wider role / environmental projects.
- The Association has been successful, during the life of the 2014 / 2017 plan, in recruiting 6 new committee members.
- The Association has started to develop the 'Consultation Register'. This is a list of tenants who are happy to be contacted with a view to becoming involved in policy reviews etc.

## **7.0 Registered Tenant Organisations (RTOs)**

The Association has in place a framework for encouraging and assessing applications for groups of tenants to form RTOs. However, it is apparent from past experience that residents in the area who wish to participate tend to join the Management Committee. The Association will, of course, view the setting up of any RTOs positively and will give appropriate financial and administrative support.

Whilst therefore there may be tenants interested in forming an RTO, this has not been evident in either (i) the responses to the tenant questionnaires or (ii) past experience when the Association has tried to identify tenants who may be interested in joining working groups or the Management Committee and there has been a typically poor response.

Given that the level of resources (in terms of the time and staff levels we have available) is finite and we therefore have to prioritise all the important elements that form our tenant participation strategy, it is viewed as more productive to concentrate on other aspects of TP. However, we will endeavour to encourage RTO's wherever possible in the newsletter or with interested parties.

## **8.0 Monitoring and Review**

This strategy will be monitored on an ongoing basis. Outcomes in relation to targets set will be reported to the management committee in April each year. The Strategy will be comprehensively reviewed every 3 years.

**March 2017**



# FANTASTIC PRIZE DRAW!

## SPIRE VIEW HOUSING ASSOCIATION – TENANT QUESTIONNAIRE

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### Appendix 1

1. In general, do you find our newsletters informative?  Yes  No  D/K
2. In general, do you feel that we consult you about matters that affect you and your tenancy, for example, repairs, allocations, rents?  Yes  No  D/K
3. Do you know that you can stand for election to the Management Committee?  Yes  No  D/K
4. Would you consider joining the Committee?  Yes  No  D/K
5. Which of the following appeal to you as a means of keeping you informed / consulted on matters that affect your tenancy? (Select all that apply).
- |                                 |                               |                             |                              |
|---------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| Regular Newsletters             | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> D/K |
| Door-to-door surveys            | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> D/K |
| Community Events (Open Days)    | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> D/K |
| Telephone Surveys               | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> D/K |
| Public Meetings                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> D/K |
| Focus Groups or Working Parties | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> D/K |
| Management Committee            | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> D/K |
| Website                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes  | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> D/K |
| Facebook / Twitter              | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes' | <input type="checkbox"/> No | <input type="checkbox"/> D/K |
6. On which of the following general areas would you like to be consulted?
- |                            |                          |                         |                          |                    |                          |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| Allocation of Housing      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Rent Arrears            | <input type="checkbox"/> | Day-to-day Repairs | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Major Repairs              | <input type="checkbox"/> | Rent levels             | <input type="checkbox"/> | Estate management  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Environmental Improvements | <input type="checkbox"/> | Anti - Social Behaviour | <input type="checkbox"/> | Complaints         | <input type="checkbox"/> |
7. Would you find any of the following helpful?
- |             |                          |            |                          |                  |                          |
|-------------|--------------------------|------------|--------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|
| Large print | <input type="checkbox"/> | On tape    | <input type="checkbox"/> | Any other at all | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| In Braille  | <input type="checkbox"/> | Translated | <input type="checkbox"/> |                  |                          |

Please specify.....

8. What do you think would encourage tenants to get more involved in tenant participation issues? (Please comment)

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9. Is there anything that puts people off getting involved? (Please comment)

.....  
.....  
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**The Scottish Social Housing Charter and the Scottish Housing Regulator requires Spire View Housing Association to involve our tenants in the scrutiny of our performance. This allows you an opportunity to be involved in measuring our performance in relation to areas such as tenant accountability, value for money, etc. We are also required to report performance to our tenants in a way that suits them best and a format that they wish to see. We would therefore ask you to answer the following questions:**

10. Are you interested in getting involved in measuring Spire View's performance?

Yes  No

11. What would be your preferred method of being involved in measuring Spire View's performance?

Completing / Designing Surveys & Questions

Scrutiny Panels

Tenant-led Inspections

Mystery Shopping

12. How would you like to see Spire View's performance reported to tenants?

Newsletters  Discussion Panels  Tenants meeting

Website  Annual Report

Other  (Please comment)

.....  
.....

Name.....

Address.....

Phone number.....

Age 16 – 25  26 – 39  40 – 54  55 – 64  65+

**Appendix 2**  
**Spire View Housing Association Ltd.**  
**Tenant Participation Strategy – Work Plan**

Finding	Task	Timescale	Lead Officer	Comments
<p><b>97 %</b> of tenants found the newsletters informative</p> <p>Tenants are happy with the format, content and length of the newsletter</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to send out quarterly <b>newsletters</b></li> </ul>	<p>Spring  Summer  Autumn  Winter  Each year  17-20</p>	<p>Gillian</p>	
<p><b>83%</b> of tenants wish to have Open days / community events. Issues in relation to allocations / arrears / estate management / anti-social behaviour / repairs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up one/two <b>Public Meeting(s) / drop in day / community event</b> during each year and use opportunity to provide information on allocations, arrears, estate management, maintenance etc.</li> </ul>	<p>Sep 17, 18 &amp; 19   Feb 17, 18 &amp; 19</p>	<p>Gillian</p>	
<p><b>100%</b> of tenants believe we are good at keeping them informed about our activities and services.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to inform tenants using various methods including an <b>annual report and web site etc.</b></li> </ul>	<p>July 17   July 18   July 19</p>	<p>Fiona</p>	
<p><b>17%</b> of tenants would find it beneficial to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use the questionnaire to identify these households and contact to find out</li> </ul>	<p>July 17, 18 &amp; 19</p>	<p>Gillian</p>	

Finding	Task	Timescale	Lead Officer	Comments
have documents available in large print	specific requirements. Aim to have these addressed within 12 months.			
The Association has not yet received any definite enquiries from tenants or groups of tenants in relation to establishing RTO's	Place <b>regular reminders</b> in newsletters with a view to encouraging local people to set up <b>RTO's</b> . Remind them of the support we will offer.	Oct 17, 18 & 19	Gillian	
The Association has a 'Consultation Register' with named tenants who are interested in policy review.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to involve tenants in policy review that affects them. Contact tenants on Consultation Register wherever possible to be part of <b>focus groups</b> for policy review and other consultation exercises.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Fiona/ Mags/ Donna	
We want to encourage tenants to participate in a way which suits them. It was on this basis that members approved the TP Strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to <b>investigate and promote</b> as many ways as possible of allowing and encouraging tenants to participate e.g. in person, comments and suggestion box, surveys, questionnaires, focus groups, AGM, public meetings, web site etc.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Gillian	
We want tenants to know what their rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Following on from the issue of the Scottish Executive leaflet, more</li> </ul>	Oct 17, 18 & 19	Gillian	Information permanently

Finding	Task	Timescale	Lead Officer	Comments
are in respect of tenant consultation and information. We want tenants to know how they can participate, should they wish to do so.	information has been provided in the Tenants Handbook. Reminders about <b>rights to information and consultation</b> should continue to be publicised on the association website and in newsletters.			available on website.
The Association is keen to attract younger members onto the management committee.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify and approach younger tenants when committee vacancies become available.</li> <li>• Encourage youth committee to establish and evolve.</li> </ul>	Ongoing	Gillian	
We want to gauge our tenant's views on the service we provide.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Carry out a full tenant satisfaction survey.</li> </ul>	July 2018	Fiona	
We want to involve the community in a 'fun days and events with other local agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organise and arrange a community day / event.</li> <li>• Participate in other local agencies celebrations.</li> </ul>	Sept 2017, 2018 & 2019	Gillian	