



## **Our Resident Involvement Strategy 2019 to 2022**

**Make your voice count –**

**no decision about you, without you**

**DRAFT VERSION 5**

## A few words from Cllr Lisa Homan

There's a great deal to celebrate about how Hammersmith and Fulham Council works in partnership with residents.

One of our core aims is to do things with residents and not to them. This is the responsibility of all officers – not just those working directly with residents. We want the voices of our residents to be heard even more clearly, to work with us to shape the services they use and protect the homes they live in. We're ambitious for our housing service. We've been working closely with residents to bring the repairs service back under Council management and control, to make sure the work of our contractors is monitored more closely to meet your expectations.

Involving residents who live in Council housing properties is part of the Council's wider commitment to supporting connected communities across the borough. We want to create a compassionate Council that delivers shared prosperity and opportunities for all. By hearing from more tenants and leaseholders we can work together to make these aims a reality.

One of the main findings from the Hackitt Report, the Independent Review of Building Regulations and Fire Safety, is the importance of landlords listening to their residents' voice and acting on what they are saying. This Resident Involvement Strategy promotes this fundamental principle of co-production.

I would like to thank the Housing Representatives Forum and Reading Group and all our residents who have helped shape the strategy. I look forward to continuing to work with you in the future.

**Cllr Lisa Homan - Cabinet Member for Housing - Hammersmith & Fulham Council**

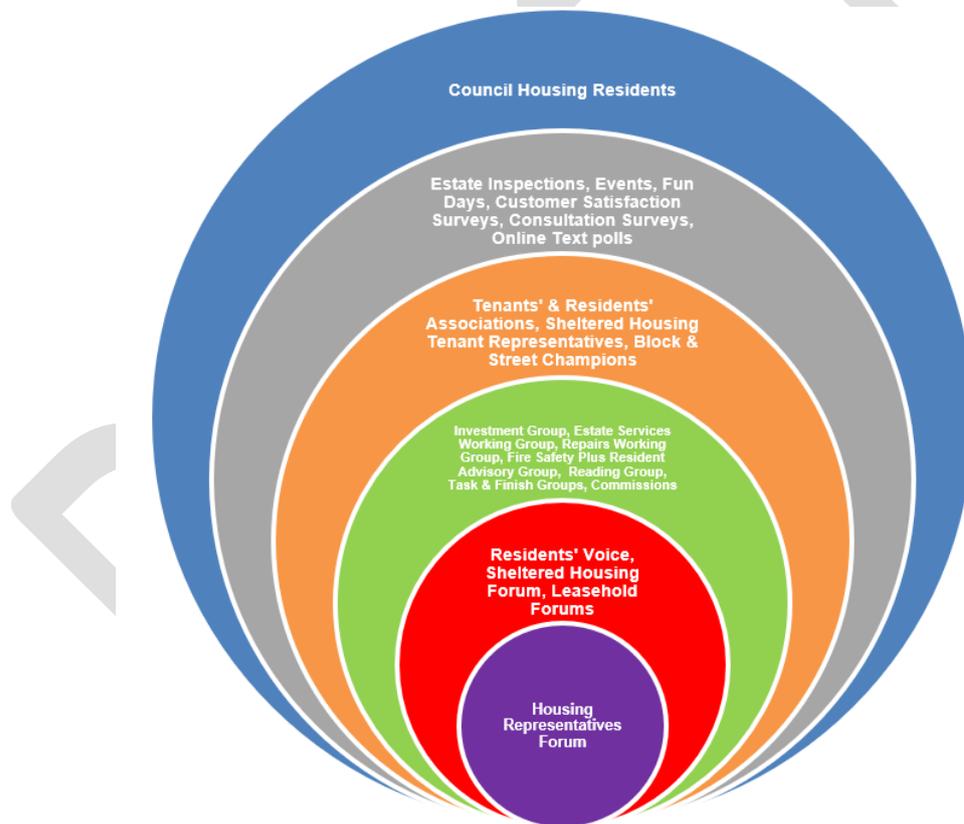
## Introduction

This strategy is for everyone in Hammersmith and Fulham who lives in a Council housing property. This includes:

- Council tenants
- Sheltered housing tenants
- Resident leaseholders
- Private tenants of leaseholders

## Resident involvement structure

We want to use this strategy to continue working in partnership with you to deliver your priorities in the following ways.



Key	
	Having a voice and making it count
	Participation
	Representation and community networks
	Service improvement and project delivery
	Recommendation setting
	Decision making and representation

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This strategy builds on the achievements of the previous resident involvement strategy which ran from 2016 to 2018<sup>1</sup>. It's been developed at a time of significant change for Hammersmith and Fulham Council. We're transforming how we run services and promoting new ways of working to deliver better results in a more financially efficient way.

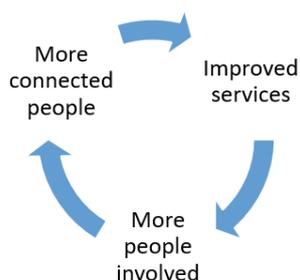
We recently launched our new repairs service, called H&F Maintenance, which puts control back with the Council and its residents. We also have a new Council-run customer service centre which is the single point of contact for residents wanting help with repairs issues. The Council has set up resident-led initiatives to look at issues that are important to residents. This includes the Defend Council Homes Unit, which has taken the lead in creating a new policy aiming to safeguard Council housing in the event of redevelopment proposals. The Council has also been working with residents through the Fire Safety Plus Residents Advisory Group (FRAG) which was set up after the Grenfell tragedy. This group works with officers to make sure all our homes are safe and to promote fire safety awareness.

We've worked with an organisation called Shared Intelligence to develop this strategy. They had detailed discussions with existing resident involvement groups and forums, Tenants' and Residents' Associations (TRA), Councillors, and Council officers. They also spoke to community groups who support Council housing residents on other issues such as family support or help for people with disabilities.

Shared Intelligence listened to:

- what is working well in resident involvement,
- what could be improved
- ideas about new ways the Council could increase resident involvement.

## Where we want to be



We want to hear more resident voices by **doubling** the number of residents involved. We also want to help people get involved who better represent the **full diversity** of the borough. In doing this, we're looking to **connect** residents, enable better communication, share of best practice, and offer learning and support, so they can have a greater influence over housing. More residents, more diversity, and stronger networks will lead to a stronger resident voice in the improvements to and the delivery of housing services that **meet the needs** of all residents.

<sup>1</sup>Resident Involvement Strategy 2016-2018

[https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/sites/default/files/section\\_attachments/resident-involvement-strategy-2016-18-print.pdf](https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/sites/default/files/section_attachments/resident-involvement-strategy-2016-18-print.pdf)

There are two types of action to achieve our goals.

### Promoting a strong resident voice in housing service decision-making through resident involvement

We'll make sure every Council housing resident is aware of ways in which they can get involved, and every resident is supported to get involved in ways that suit their availability, their skills, and the level of commitment they are comfortable with.

### Developing stronger more connected communities

We'll support residents and local groups who want to get involved or take action. Strengthening networks between individuals and groups using events, activities and community facilities.

### Representation and participation

We know some residents want to help their communities by representing their neighbours; coming to meetings, holding the Council to account, and looking at details behind decisions. We know others want to help by rolling up their sleeves through practical participation like litter picking and community gardens. Our role is to enable residents to make a difference whichever type of involvement they choose.

### People get involved because an issue is important and motivates them

We know that people often get involved in community or volunteering activities on issues which motivate them and where they can see an outcome. We also know that when the initial issue is dealt with some will go on to get involved in other things. Our role is to help people on their journey of involvement, supporting them with further training or networking with other experienced residents.

### Tangible results give people a sense of achievement

For many people, co-production is most meaningful when they can see tangible results linked to their own involvement. Some people are willing to work with us long term, working on specific service areas. Our role is to keep residents updated and informed of the impact of their involvement.

### Flexible ways to get involved

Research shows that involving and engaging with residents can take many forms. The ladder of involvement below summarises this.



We're not looking to provide a one size fits all way of working with residents. Whether we term this as co-production, partnership working, collaboration or consultation - the most important thing is we are listening to, speaking to and working with our residents.

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## Six important principles for involvement

You told us at the first Residents' Voice, the most important things to you are:

- Focusing on outcomes
- Working together
- Delivering more consistently
- Improving communication
- Ensuring continuity
- For us to keep listening

### We need to:

- Talk about issues people feel are important to their lives and reflect the unique landlord and tenant relationship
- Use opportunities where residents are already engaged locally in their neighbourhoods to work with them on other areas
- Provide different ways to get involved, including developing better use of digital resources, such as skyping into meetings, social media, and platforms to connect conversations
- Create opportunities for people to see very practical results over short periods of time
- Sustain working with residents on more strategic goals over a longer period (like major changes in policy)
- Find out more about our residents' barriers to involvement, working more closely with the diverse communities across the borough

### Key Priorities

1. **Focus on outcomes:** Encouraging the development of involvement that has a clear focus, is evidence driven, and where success and meeting objectives can be clearly defined.
2. **Work together:** Encouraging the sharing of knowledge and key successes within the borough, creating new opportunities for residents and community groups to work together for the greater good of all.
3. **Consistency:** Supporting residents to build their existing skills by looking at providing new ways to deliver traditional training. Also, supporting Tenants' & Residents' Associations to promote thriving communities, and encourage staff to offer a helping hand through volunteering.
4. **Communication:** Making sure residents have the timely information they need and improving digital involvement to give more residents the opportunity to work with us.
5. **Continuity:** Using the Investment Group model where ideas are proposed by residents and decided by residents to demonstrate trust between officers and residents to make informed decisions.
6. **Keep listening:** Working to the recommendations of the Hackitt Report to make sure we are listening to what residents are telling us and acting on feedback. We'll create new links to work with young people and new ways of representing your community.

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## An action plan for delivering these priorities

Priority	Action
<b>Focus on outcomes</b>	<p><b>We'll:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Use the Housing Representatives Forum, Residents' Voice and data from the new repairs service and estate inspections to identify service areas where residents want to see change.</li> <li>2. Make more use of task and finish groups and commissions. We'll work with residents to consider ideas such as Citizens' Assemblies.</li> </ol>
<b>Work together</b>	<p><b>We'll:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase the opportunities for TRAs to work together and encourage increased use of community halls and rooms for more activities to benefit residents and to work on the council's aim to reduce loneliness and isolation.</li> <li>2. Use meetings and events led by Council teams outside the housing service to engage with residents, gain views, and promote involvement.</li> <li>3. Form partnerships across the borough, including stronger links with Housing Associations, charities, funding organisations, and businesses.</li> </ol>
<b>Consistency</b>	<p><b>We'll:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop training sessions for those currently involved and those who want to be involved that focus on transferable skills for involvement, work and education</li> <li>2. Encourage Council staff to use their annual volunteering allowance to benefit residents</li> <li>3. Work with Tenants' and Residents' Associations to develop local agreements about how we work with them on specific areas.</li> </ol>
<b>Communication</b>	<p><b>We'll:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make sure residents have the information they need to work with us to make decisions.</li> <li>2. Explore other ways of sharing information and communicating for example social media to expand our avenues of communication.</li> <li>3. Make sure we consult with you on important issues such as planned maintenance, new waste and recycling enclosures, or a proposal to install CCTV.</li> </ol>
<b>Continuity</b>	<p><b>We'll:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Look at expanding the Investment Group model of residents proposing ideas and then being responsible for agreeing ideas to include other community events and activities.</li> <li>2. Make better use of customer feedback, complaints, and insights to inform service improvement in areas like the new repairs service and review of sheltered housing management</li> </ol>
<b>Keep listening</b>	<p><b>We'll:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Make sure that the recommendations from the Hackitt Report about the residents' voice are a part of daily housing operations.</li> <li>2. Work hard to hear from more voices from a more diverse range of residents in the borough with the aim of doubling the size of our resident involvement database during the time of this strategy.</li> <li>3. Work with you to establish Block and Street Champions, so we can hear from residents living in small blocks and street properties and other harder to reach communities.</li> <li>4. Make links with local schools to establish a Voice of the Youth for Council housing communities, with representatives sitting on Housing Representatives Forum</li> </ol>

## Small steps to big change....

We already work with a committed group of residents who offer their time to help to improve housing services and support community representation. This strategy recognises and builds on their important contributions and aims to:

- Create opportunities to hear more voices
- Make it easier for residents to be involved in key decisions, give their feedback, and influence change
- Place greater accountability on officers to listen to and respond to residents' priority areas
- Develop new ways to feedback to residents about the impact on services following their involvement
- Create a greater sense of community where residents and officers take pride in Hammersmith and Fulham.

Written by Shared Intelligence, in collaboration with Hammersmith & Fulham Council residents, Councillors and officers.