



tenant participation strategy



river clyde
homes



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foreword

'River Clyde Homes' vision is an Inverclyde with exceptional housing and vibrant communities. Our mission is to transform housing and delivery of services and, by doing so, transform the lives of our tenants and the communities we serve. Because tenants are best equipped to identify local problems and workable solutions, they are at the heart of our proposals.'

The above statement is taken from the opening paragraph of the River Clyde Homes' Business Plan. It shows the clear emphasis being placed by the association in informing, consulting and involving tenants in the running of the organisation.

The reason I took the opportunity to get involved with the Board was to ensure that my views, and those of fellow tenants were heard when River Clyde Homes and their proposals for the management and maintenance of the housing stock were being developed.

In 2006 I was nominated for, and elected to, the position of Chair of the organisation. At the same time another tenant, Alex Bowers, was elected vice chair.

Since joining the Board I have been impressed by the genuine commitment shown by both the Board and staff of River Clyde Homes to involve tenants in the running of the organisation. The views of tenants heavily influenced the proposals put to tenants in the historic transfer ballot last year, when an overwhelming majority of tenants voted in favour of transfer.

In 2006 the Board approved River Clyde Homes' Tenant Participation Policy. This affirmed the commitment to work in partnership with tenants and other stakeholders in the running of the organisation.

This strategy underpins the Tenant Participation Policy, and shows how River Clyde Homes will meaningfully engage with and involve tenants.

As a fellow tenant I can assure you that I will be monitoring the progress of this strategy. I would urge all tenants to take up some of the opportunities to be involved in the running of River Clyde Homes as outlined in the strategy. After all, it's our housing association.

Finally I would like to thank the staff and, in particular, the tenants who took the time to be involved in the Tenant Participation Working Group. I believe that they have produced an excellent document which will ensure that River Clyde Homes is an organisation run by tenants, for tenants.

Roy Steel
**Chair of the Board,
River Clyde Homes**

welcome

It was a great honour for me to be appointed as Chief Executive of River Clyde Homes in 2006.

One of my main tasks since then has been to speak to tenants and listen to what they would like to see in both the condition of their homes and the service they receive.

I have had the pleasure in speaking to a great number of tenants, either individually, or at public meetings, information road shows or meetings with tenants groups.

At all of these events I gave a very clear promise that River Clyde Homes would be a tenant-led and tenant-focussed organisation. I found this an enjoyable and rewarding experience as it gave me a good understanding of what improvements tenants would like to see.

It was the views of tenants that shaped River Clyde Homes and the services that will be delivered. I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm my ongoing commitment to involving tenants in the running of their housing association.

Karen Neary
**Chief Executive,
River Clyde Homes**

federation of inverclyde tenants & residents associations (fitra)

As the umbrella organisation for tenants and residents groups across Inverclyde, FITRA is pleased to have been involved in the development of the many River Clyde Homes policies, prior to the ballot to transfer the houses in 2006.

We are also delighted that members of our committee have been involved in the working group set up to develop the Tenant Participation Strategy.

This important document outlines how River Clyde Homes will work with tenants and tenants and residents groups across Inverclyde to make sure that tenants can have a say in how their homes are managed and maintained.

We welcome the opportunity to build on previous tenant participation practice that has developed in our communities over the years and we look forward to making a difference to the housing service that tenants receive in the future.

The FITRA Executive Committee





tenant participation strategy development group (TPSDG)

Tenants worked together with staff of River Clyde Homes and Inverclyde Council over several months to put together this first River Clyde Homes Tenant Participation Strategy.

We based the detail of the Strategy and in particular the Action Plan on comments and feedback from tenants and tenants' representatives at the first tenants' conference held by River Clyde Homes in March 2008.

We worked together to make sure that tenants' views and ideas were included in the Strategy and we are committed to making sure that the Strategy encourages tenants to have a say on how their housing service is delivered.

message of thanks

River Clyde Homes would like to thank all those who participated in the formation of this tenant participation strategy.

In particular, thanks are due to:

Tenants on the Tenant Participation Strategy Development Group (TPSDG)
The Federation of Inverclyde Tenants and Residents Association (FITRA)
The Community Work Team at Inverclyde Council
The Tenants Information Service (TIS)



section 1 introduction

Welcome to River Clyde Homes' Tenant Participation Strategy 2008 - 2011.

This strategy was developed by a Tenant Participation Strategy Development Group (TPSDG) made up of tenants, RCH staff, and Council officers.

River Clyde Homes is committed to continually developing and promoting tenant participation practice throughout Inverclyde on all housing and housing related issues.

It is our intention that this will lead to a good working relationship with all tenants, and ensure services are developed to meet tenants' changing needs and aspirations within the finances available.

This Tenant Participation Strategy outlines the following:

- River Clyde Homes commitment to tenant participation and consultation
- Details of the legal framework for tenant participation and how it links to other policies, strategies and services
- The range of tenant participation and consultation opportunities available to tenants, tenants and residents groups and owner occupiers
- The implementation of the strategy and how it will be supported and resourced
- The key strategic actions that will be taken to ensure the continual development of effective participation and consultation
- The monitoring and evaluation mechanisms



the legal framework

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 sets out the statutory requirement for the development of a Tenant Participation Strategy and the setting up and maintenance of Registered Tenant Organisations, within Section 53 (1). In addition, Section 54 (1) outlines the duties placed on landlords to consult with tenants and registered tenants organisations on the issues affecting them.

links to other policies, strategies & services

This Strategy is consistent with the aims of other River Clyde Homes' policies and strategies such as:

- River Clyde Homes' Business Plan.
- River Clyde Homes' Tenant Participation Policy
- River Clyde Homes' Internal Management Plan
- River Clyde Homes' Estate Management Policy
- River Clyde Homes' Equal Opportunities Policy

In addition, this strategy complements the priorities of other agencies' publications such as:

- The Inverclyde Community Plan
- The Inverclyde Alliance Community Engagement Strategy
- The Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy
- Scottish Executive's National Strategy for Tenant Participation, 'Partners in Participation' 1999.
- 'National Standards for Community Engagement' 2005
- Equal Opportunities (Schedule 5 the Scotland Act 1998)

The Strategy also reflects the Scottish Executive's National Tenant Participation Working Group's codes of practice on:

- Tenant Participation at Local Level
- Tenant Participation in Best Value
- Tenant Participation in Regeneration
- Tenant Participation in Stock Transfers
- Tenant Participation in Rural Areas

tenant participation policy

Outlines River Clyde Homes' approach to ensuring that tenants are sufficiently informed about all aspects of our work and are able to participate in and influence decisions that have a bearing on the way their housing is managed.

equal opportunities

River Clyde Homes will strive to encourage equal opportunities and diversity, responding to the different needs and service requirements of people, regardless of sex, race, colour, disability, age, nationality, marital status, ethnic origin, religious beliefs, residential location, sexual orientation or gender reassignment.

When seeking to involve tenants in participation and consultation activities we will use a variety of methods to suit both the needs of tenants and the topic.

We will also ensure information is available in various languages and formats to suit the needs of all tenants and prospective tenants on request.



equal opportunities

This Tenant Participation Strategy outlines the following:

- In large print for those with visual impairment or deteriorating eyesight.
- On tape for those who are unable to read printed matter.
- In braille for those who prefer this means of communication.
- Translated into another language.
- In any other feasible format that tenants may find helpful.

We will also provide a sign or language interpreter for anyone attending a meeting – to give sufficient time to locate a suitably qualified person, as much prior notice as possible should be given to the organiser of the meeting.

To assist participation across as many tenants as possible, facilities will also be made available in terms of transport, childcare costs and associated support costs, where required.



section 2 background

Prior to the ballot to transfer ownership of the Council's Housing Stock to River Clyde Homes, it was agreed that River Clyde Homes would continue to develop and build upon the tenant participation practice that had taken place in Inverclyde over many years.

This commitment to tenant participation was evidenced through the work carried out with the Federation of Inverclyde Tenants and Residents Associations (FITRA) to ensure tenants representatives could influence the housing management proposals recommended by River Clyde Homes, including the River Clyde Homes' Business Plan.

River Clyde Homes recognises that more meaningful tenant participation can be developed through a planned approach and strives to deliver on the tenant participation sections of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

We aim to fulfil the provisions of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and will ensure that we provide tenants and tenants and residents groups with an effective and efficient voice within River Clyde Homes that assists tenants to influence the decision making processes in relation to housing and housing related services, both at local and strategic levels.

To this end, River Clyde Homes recognises and will work to the key principles as outlined in 'Partners in Participation – a National Strategy for Tenant Participation'. In doing so, we will:

- Create a culture of mutual trust, respect and partnership between tenants, elected members, and housing officers at all levels, working together to improve housing conditions and services.
- Ensure tenant participation is a continuous process that covers all aspects of the service.
- Enable tenants and staff to set a participation agenda jointly, ensure an easy and timely sharing of information, and ensure that all processes of decision making are open, clear and accountable.
- Ensure adequate time is given to tenant representatives to consider the issues properly.
- Recognise the independence and autonomy of tenants' organisations.
- Recognise that good working relationships evolve gradually and we will assist tenants and staff to develop flexible arrangements to suit local circumstances.
- Recognise that tenants' organisations require adequate resources for organisation, training and support.
- Ensure that tenant participation practice reflects the needs of both urban and rural areas communities and reflects the needs of tenants in the differing areas
- Provide equal opportunities to participate for all our tenants, removing barriers to effective participation arising from ethnicity, geographic location, special needs, language difficulties, learning difficulties, age, sexual orientation or disability.



section 2 background

In addition to working to the above principles and the landlord statutory obligations outlined in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, River Clyde Homes' Tenant Participation Strategy is directly linked to the governing principles and the National Standards for Community Engagement.



section 3 aims and objectives

Our overall aim is to ensure that tenants are sufficiently informed about all aspects of River Clyde Homes' work and are able to participate in and influence decisions that have a bearing on the way their housing is managed.

This particularly applies to the development of key housing management policies and service standards, as outlined in Sections 53 and 54 of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001.

Our strategic objectives are to:

1. Provide regular and comprehensive information to our tenants
2. Provide practical support to enable effective participation
3. Develop a range of methods to gauge customer opinion
4. Develop participation amongst traditionally excluded groups
5. Encourage and support tenant Input to policy development, service delivery, monitoring and review
6. Monitor the effectiveness of the strategy and take corrective action where necessary



section 4 tenant participation and consultation opportunities

River Clyde Homes will, as a matter of course, meaningfully engage with appropriate stakeholders during the course of its business.

It will use a range of techniques in order to do this. Outlined below is a sample of the occasions when we will involve our customers and the techniques we will use in order to do so.

individual tenants

Regular information on the activities and performance of River Clyde Homes will be published on the website (<http://www.riverclydehomes.co.uk/>).

In addition performance information will regularly be advertised throughout our offices.

We will regularly send a tenants newsletter to tenants giving them news of our activities.

Where appropriate, localised newsletters or information leaflets will be sent to tenants in a particular area, with information specific to their area.

River Clyde Homes will also gauge the satisfaction of tenants who are in receipt of our services. Customer satisfaction surveys will be undertaken at regular intervals, covering a range of services.

A formal tenants' survey will be undertaken every two years.

Tenants will be able to participate in Local Investment Planning Groups that will be set up to discuss how best to manage the River Clyde Homes' investment programme.

Individual tenants will also be invited to participate in Tenant Led Inspections which will, at regular intervals, monitor the environment of their neighbourhoods.

River Clyde Homes will also explore options for setting up Area Committees and the devolving of decision making to these committees.

Any individual affected by River Clyde Homes' housing renewal and regeneration proposals will also be meaningfully engaged throughout the regeneration process.

Regular public meetings will be held in such areas and all tenants will be eligible to attend. Newsletters, e-mails and other such techniques will also be used to gauge the views of residents.

It should be noted that it is not proposed to merely provide information on regeneration activities to tenants.

They will be actively involved in proposals and in taking forward developments. The views of tenants on what type of housing they would like to see will be sought.

All tenants will be eligible to stand to become individual members of River Clyde Homes. This will give them the right to attend the Annual General Meeting of the organisation.

Crucially, membership also gives tenants the right to nominate, or be nominated, to stand for election to become a member of the board of River Clyde Homes.

Six such places on the board are reserved for tenants and make them the largest individual group on the board.

River Clyde Homes will proactively seek to maximize membership amongst its tenant base.



section 4 tenant participation and consultation opportunities

registered tenant organisations

Tenants groups will specifically be consulted in any proposals affecting their area.

Staff from River Clyde Homes will attend appropriate meetings of tenants groups to discuss any relevant issues.

River Clyde Homes will seek to increase the number of such groups operating in the area.

Representatives from RTO's will also be involved in the selection process for any consultants, designers, developers or other such contractors for their area. RTO's will also be involved in the Local Investment Planning groups being developed. River Clyde Homes will consult with RTO's on strategic and policy proposals for the organization in both development and review stages.

fitra

FITRA will be regularly consulted on strategic housing issues. Copies of all non-confidential Board reports will be available to FITRA and, where appropriate will be consulted in the production of these reports.

FITRA will also be involved when any policy or service is developed or reviewed.

River Clyde Homes' officials will attend any appropriate FITRA meetings to discuss such pertinent issues.

FITRA shall also be involved in the monitoring and evaluation of the tenant participation strategy.

independent tenant advice

There may, on occasion, be a requirement to appoint Independent Tenant Advisors to maximise opportunities for participation and ensure that tenants remain fully informed with regard to tenant participation activities.

River Clyde Homes will resource such appointments if so required from the Tenant Participation Budget.

other stakeholders

River Clyde Homes will take steps to involve and consult with other stakeholders in the running of its business.

- An Owners Forum has been established to ensure that owner - occupiers have an input into the development of the Factoring Service.
- Discussions will also be held with owners affected by the Local Investment Plans.
- In addition, it is understood that there will be a number of owners who are affected by the ambitious River Clyde Homes regeneration proposals. As with tenants, these owners will be fully involved in all stages of the development process.



section 5 tenant participation resources

It is acknowledged that dedicated resources must be allocated to ensure effective tenant participation and the implementation of this strategy.

To this effect RCH will allocate both financial and other practical resources to address the tenant participation agenda.

River Clyde Homes has a specific Tenant Participation budget of £60,000 per annum, over the period of this strategy. In addition to this we will:

- Work with local partner agencies to provide a resourced tenants office to enable effective participation for tenants and their representative groups.
- A dedicated Tenant Participation Coordinator will be employed. The remit of this post-holder is to work in partnership with staff and tenants to ensure high levels of participation are achieved and to manage communications effectively to ensure that information is disseminated to key stakeholders.

It should be stressed, however, that River Clyde Homes believes that all staff have a responsibility to engage with customers.

To this effect training on this strategy will be given to all staff in order to mainstream the tenant participation ethos throughout the organisation.

In particular, Neighbourhood Housing Officers will have a specific remit to facilitate, encourage and support new groups and provide ongoing support to existing ones.

River Clyde Homes' officers will work in partnership with tenants, their representative groups and any other relevant organisation to seek to access any additional funding that may be available to provide enhanced support for activities involving tenants.



section 6 training & support

It is essential that training and other practical support is provided to a wide range of stakeholders to ensure that the tenant participation agenda is appropriately addressed.

These stakeholders may include staff, tenants RTO's, FITRA and community representatives.

staff

The Tenant Participation Co-ordinator and other key managers will be comprehensively trained on effective tenant participation.

All staff in the association will be provided with awareness raising sessions on the tenant participation policy and strategy to ensure that they are aware of their responsibility in this area.

Wherever appropriate this training will be delivered jointly to staff and tenants.

tenants

Any individual tenant involved in consultation or other aspect of tenant participation will be given comprehensive information and training, in order that they can meaningfully contribute to discussions.

registered tenants groups

River Clyde Homes will undertake a growth agenda in respect of Registered Tenants groups operating in the area.

A mapping exercise will be undertaken to identify any geographical areas not covered by the existing network of tenants groups.

Thereafter practical support will be given to tenants in that area, provided primarily by the Tenant Participation Co-ordinator and appropriate Neighbourhood staff, in an attempt to establish new groups.

Staff from River Clyde Homes will also be available to Chair the inaugural meeting in order that office bearers from the local area can be elected.

Ultimately, assistance will be given to enable new groups to meet the requisite criteria to become a Registered Tenants Organisation.

An annual grant will be offered to individual groups to assist with incidental costs such as stationery etc.

Groups will also be given an opportunity to apply for individual project grants to assist in the development of tenant participation within their area.

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section 6 training & support cont.

registered tenants groups (continued)

Appropriate officials from River Clyde Homes will also be available to attend meetings of tenants groups, upon request, to discuss any relevant matters.

All groups will be offered training on other practical issues to ensure the effective operations of their group.

This may include, for example, topics such as:

- Chairing meetings
- Secretarial skills or minute taking
- Budget or financial monitoring
- Equal opportunities / involving traditionally excluded groups

fitra

The Federation of Inverclyde Tenants and Residents Association will be given appropriate support.

Any reasonable costs incurred by FITRA in River Clyde Homes' tenant participation activities will also be paid.

FITRA committee members will be offered training on similar topics to those offered to individual tenants groups.

Opportunities to deliver training in conjunction with training being provided to River Clyde Homes' staff will also be explored.

The Tenant Participation Co-ordinator and other senior officials will be available to attend committee or other relevant ad-hoc meetings to discuss pertinent issues.

Assistance will also be given to access and network with any developing tenants groups in the area.



section 7 monitoring & evaluation

River Clyde Homes appreciates that tenant participation does not stand still and that mechanisms and structures developed to improve and increase tenant participation activity will need to be evaluated and adapted as tenant participation progresses.

The Tenant Participation Strategy will therefore be regularly reviewed and the effectiveness of the strategy in delivering tenant participation will be closely monitored.

The Tenant Participation Monitoring Group will be responsible for leading the evaluation and review process and will establish a clear monitoring and review framework.

To make sure the Strategy continues to be both relevant and applicable across Inverclyde, the implementation, monitoring and review processes will include involvement of all stakeholders including:

- Tenants
- Registered Tenant Organisations
- FITRA
- Non Registered Tenants and Residents Groups
- Board Members
- Staff

Appropriate training and information will be provided to assist all TPMG members to fully participate in this process.

The review will evaluate the success of the Strategy in meeting its' identified aims and objectives, as laid out in Section 3 (Our Strategic Aims and Objectives) and Section 8 (Action Plan) and identify future actions required to ensure that Tenant Participation practice continues to develop and evolve to include all RCH tenants and relevant stakeholders.



section 8 action plan

theme 1: provide regular and comprehensive information to our tenants

objective 1.1	2008 2009	2009 2010	2010 2011	participants	outcome
Deliver an introductory newsletter to all tenants and tenants and residents groups re RCH, policies available and how to access them and timescale for reviews				RCH FITRA TPS Monitoring Group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All tenants aware of RCH, policies and timescales for reviews Tenants interested in getting involved in policy reviews identified Interested tenants data base set up
objective 1.2					
Develop a "who's who" within RCH with photos and distribute to all tenants and tenants and residents groups				RCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All tenants aware of RCH staff structure, responsibilities and contact details
objective 1.3					
Produce tenant newsletters, including area specific information and feedback opportunities for tenants				RCH (identify which staff members) FITRA Local TARA's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular information to tenants Local projects / issues highlighted
objective 1.4					
Write articles in local press to update and inform tenants				RCH (identify which staff members) TPS monitoring group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All tenants and other interested parties updated on RCH progress and issues
objective 1.5					
Attend local meetings, events and forums to inform residents of RCH proposals and developments				Appropriate RCH staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved working practices between local groups and RCH Regular feedback to and from RCH and local groups
objective 1.6					
Develop a new tenant information pack, ensuring that it meets the varied target audience and includes area specific information				RCH TPS monitoring group FITRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All tenants informed of RCH and tenant responsibilities and local services and facilities



section 8 action plan cont.

objective 1.7	2008 2009	2009 2010	2010 2011	participants	outcome
Produce a tenants handbook, including flow chart on "Rents & How we Spend your Money" and RCH tenants' rights & responsibilities				RCH TPS monitoring group FITRA	All tenants aware of all aspects of RCH business and how to contact staff and other relevant agencies All tenants aware of housing revenue and capital account expenditure All tenants aware of their rights and responsibilities as RCH tenants
objective 1.8					
Engage with tenants affected by regeneration activities. Involve tenants reps in selection of proposals and in recruitment of design team etc.				RCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shared ownership of regeneration activities • Tenants increased awareness of development procedures
objective 1.9					
Involve tenants in selection of materials / finishes during investment works				RCH Appointed contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased tenant satisfaction



section 8 action plan

theme 2: provide practical support to enable effective participation

objective 2.1	2008 2009	2009 2010	2010 2011	participants	outcome
Provide support and development to local tenants and residents groups and FITRA, including encouraging groups to remove barriers to TP at local and Inverclyde wide levels				RCH – local / management staff TPO Community workers Tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued TARA operation Increased involvement in TP Increased FITRA membership Increased tenant influence at a strategic and operational level with RCH and others
objective 2.2					
Develop new tenants and residents groups in under represented areas				RCH TPO FITRA Community workers Tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased no. of TARA's to 1 per neighbourhood annually or extension of existing group boundaries to include other areas
objective 2.3					
Develop an owners forum				RCH Owners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Owners forum set up Aims & objectives agreed
objective 2.4					
Organise an annual tenants conference linked to RCH Annual General Meeting				RCH FITRA TARA's Tenants others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing of information and views between RCH and tenants and residents
objective 2.5					
Develop joint tenant / staff estate walkabouts across Inverclyde (linked to local tenants and residents groups and operational neighbourhoods)				RCH – neighbourhood officers TARA's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regular meetings between RCH staff and tenant representative to identify issues and agree solutions
objective 2.6					
Provide opportunities for all tenants to contribute to the business of RCH through working groups, focus groups, surveys and consultation events				RCH – all staff FITRA TARA's Tenants Interested tenants group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Timetable of TP opportunities developed Joint working groups / focus groups established Surveys conducted Consultation events carried out



section 8 action plan

objective 2.7	2008 2009	2009 2010	2010 2011	participants	outcome
Deliver joint tenant / staff discussion & training sessions on policies and procedures to promote awareness and opportunities for influence				RCH FITRA TARA's Tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training delivered and evaluated • Increased understanding of issues & topics • Improved staff/tenant working relationships
objective 2.8					
Deliver staff training on TP practice, roles and responsibilities and other topics to support staff to encourage tenant activity, both locally and strategically in policy development and reviews				RCH Trainers (where required)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased staff awareness and commitment to TP • Increased tenant involvement in all aspects of RCH business
objective 2.9					
Develop a TP expenses policy, including a policy and procedure for the provision of transport, transport costs and caring costs to and from meetings to encourage attendance				RCH FITRA TPS working group TARA's	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and review mechanism set up • Increased levels of participation
objective 2.10					
Promote the use of new technology to encourage people to get involved				RCH FITRA TARA's Tenants others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative methods used i.e. telephone surveys, text messaging, internet
objective 2.11					
Deliver staff training to ensure they have the skills to promote tenant participation and work with local groups				RCH TPO FITRA Community workers Tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training delivered • Increased TP support at the local office levels



section 8 action plan

objective 2.12	2008 2009	2009 2010	2010 2011	participants	outcome
Carry out a resources review with FITRA and TARA's to ensure adequate funding available locally to encourage inclusive TP				RCH FITRA TARA's TPS working group CWT Council funding officer Alternative funders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources policy established TP Budget set Quarterly monitoring and review process set up
objective 2.13					
Provide Independent tenant advice for complex issues when required				FITRA ITA RTO's TPWG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Informed tenants to improve and enhance participation



section 8 action plan

theme 3: develop a range of methods to gauge customer opinion

objective 3.1	2008 2009	2009 2010	2010 2011	participants	outcome
Establish a mechanism for staff to gauge tenant opinion and how tenants want to be involved at point of service i.e. when doing repairs, interviews, attending meeting and including a free post card in welcome packs for new tenants				RCH staff and contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuous flow of information from tenants to RCH Issues and problems • identified early and mechanisms to address them put in place • Information gathered and methods used in future participation and consultation
objective 3.2					
Conduct a tenants satisfaction survey and sample telephone surveys on service delivery i.e. repairs, allocations, estate management, arrears <i>(using pre ballot survey as baseline indicator)</i>				RCH FITRA TARA's TPS working group Tenants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants opinion gathered and issues addressed • Feedback to tenants on outcomes of survey and future action agreed
objective 3.3					
Develop a register of interested tenants from details gathered form above and other contact with tenants				RCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Register set up and tenants priorities for involvement identified
objective 3.4					
Use the customer satisfaction / complaints procedure to encourage tenant feedback				RCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Day to day feedback collated and acted on • Evaluations of tenants satisfaction surveys, completed every two years post 2008 • Newsletter feedback collated • All information relayed back to tenants
objective 3.5					
Link into other surveys being carried out in the area i.e. community care forum, community planning partnership etc				RCH FITRA Partner Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation with partners in information collection, collations and sharing
objective 3.6					
Investigate options for developing local area committees				RCH TRA's FITRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Greater empowerment of tenants • More localised solutions to issues



section 8 action plan

theme 4: develop participation in traditionally excluded groups

objective 4.1	2008 2009	2009 2010	2010 2011	participants	outcome
Promote TP and raise awareness of housing issues with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • young people • sheltered housing tenants • older people • people with disabilities • people from minority ethnic communities 				RCH FITRA TARA's CWT Partner agencies Other service providers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased uptake of TP opportunities across tenant demographics
objective 4.2					
Link with partner organisations, agencies and resources in the promotion of tenant participation				RCH Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good working relations with partner organisations and agencies • Increased awareness of TP • Complimentary involvement / activities for TP



section 8 action plan

theme 5: input to policy development and service delivery

objective 5.1	2008 2009	2009 2010	2010 2011	participants	outcome
Re-examine the RCH current policy review timetable to ensure participation in reviews can be spread out to allow preparation and planning for effective involvement				RCH FITRA TPS working group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revised review timetable established
objective 5.2					
Establish a calendar of participation, including training and development support for staff and tenants to ensure understanding of policy and service prior to involvement in review				RCH TPS working group FITRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Details of participation opportunities published and circulated Information and training provided prior to start of reviews and developments
objective 5.3					
Promote tenant involvement in the review and development of RCH policies and service delivery				RCH FITRA Interested tenants Partner agencies Trainers and advisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of policy development and service delivery issues Increased tenant influence in policy development Increased tenant influence in levels of services provided to tenants
objective 5.4					
Promote tenant involvement in the review of service contracts				RCH FITRA Interested tenants Trainers and advisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased awareness of procurement processes Tenant influence in contract conditions and approval and service levels
objective 5.5					
Encourage tenant involvement in all contract renewals to ensure continuous improvements				RCH FITRA Interested tenants Trainers and advisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenant influence in contract renewals and assessment
objective 5.6					
Include articles from tenants involved in TP activity in RCH newsletters and other promotional materials					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tenants views shared and promoted



section 8 action plan

theme 6: monitor the effectiveness of the strategy and take corrective action where necessary

objective 6.1	2008 2009	2009 2010	2010 2011	participants	outcome
Set up TPS monitoring group				RCH TPS working group FITRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and implementation group set up
objective 6.2					
TPS monitoring group to set aims and objectives and timescales for review and implementation				TPS monitoring group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring and review aims, objectives, timescales and methods set up
objective 6.3					
TPS monitoring group to provide feedback to tenants on TPS progress, implementation and finances				TPS monitoring group RCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> TPS implementation and progress given to tenants
objective 6.4					
Identifying gaps in TPS and revise accordingly				TPS monitoring group RCH	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gaps identified and addressed



details of tenants / residents organisations

The following groups are currently operating within the River Clyde Homes area:

Bardrainey Tenants & Residents Association
Belville Drive Community Association
Bow Farm Action Group
Branchton Association of Tenants and Residents
Broomhill and Ann Street Tenants & Residents Association
Cartsydyke Court Tenants & Residents Association
Chapelton Tenants & Residents Association
Clune Park Tenants & Residents Association
Cowdenknowes Tenants & Residents Association
Eastern View Residents Association
Grieve Road/Fancy Farm Tenants & Residents Association
Federation of Inverclyde Tenants and Residents Associations (FITRA)
Gibshill Residents Association
Greenock Centre Residents Action Group
Mallard Crescent Action Group
Park Farm Tenants & Residents Association
Port Glasgow Central West Tenants Association
Port Glasgow Town Centre Tenants & Residents Association
Rankin Court Residents Association
Riverside Gardens Residents Association
Slaemuir Tenants & Residents Association
South Maukinhill Tenants & Residents Association



how to set up a tenants and residents group

introduction

Tenant participation is about tenants taking part in the decision making processes and influencing decisions about:

- Housing policies
- Housing conditions, and
- Housing and related services

It is a two way process between tenants and landlords, which involves the sharing of information, ideas and power.

The aim of tenant participation is to improve the standard of housing conditions and services.

One of the main ways to ensure you have a voice and are able to influence the decisions that affect your home and your tenancy is to become involved in a tenants and residents association.

why set up an association?

There are many reasons why communities set up local tenants and residents groups including:

- You would like to work with your landlord on tenants issues
- You would like to try to get your ideas taken up with your landlord
- You want to have more of a say in how the housing service is delivered and how policies are developed.
- You wish to work with your landlord and other agencies to make your area more neighbourly.

what can an association do?

Associations can perform a number of functions, including:

- To organise around issues that effect the majority of people in your community, i.e. some tenants may be unhappy about the standard of the repair service or there may be refurbishment work planned for your area that tenants want to be fully consulted on
- To have a representative voice
- To give accurate information and advice to tenants and residents
- To concentrate on tackling one particular issue or a range of issues over a period of time

how to start

Most tenants'/residents' associations start with just a handful of people who are keen to do something for the area. To get started:

Find other interested people by:

- Talking to neighbours as they may share your concerns and be willing to help.
- Putting up notices locally to see if other tenants are also interested in setting up a tenants' association (River Clyde Homes will assist you with this)



how to set up a tenants and residents group

small planning meeting

You may wish to arrange a small planning meeting with interested neighbours. The neighbourhood officers and tenant participation co-ordinator will provide assistance to do this, if you wish.

At this meeting consider the following:

- What you want to achieve
- How to do it
- Share responsibility
- Find out who can give you help & support
- What you want to do
- Allocate tasks
- Operate democratically

public meeting

Arrange a public meeting to test wider support for your ideas. If you miss out this stage you run the risk of assuming that your first small planning meeting actually represented everyone's views. You could misjudge how many people also feel the same way as your small group.

At the public meeting you can also formally launch the tenants'/residents' group and elect a committee. At the meeting agree a date for a further meeting to discuss priorities and decide how to get things moving. Most groups delegate responsibility for this work to a group of people who form a working group or committee.

public meeting

A committee has certain structures and functions. These will be outlined in your constitution. The Neighbourhood Officers and the Tenant Participation Co-ordinator will be on hand to assist you put together your constitution and plan for future meetings.

It is important is that your group is open and accountable to your membership and that you involve everyone.

Remember that if you are going to apply for financial assistance from River Clyde Homes or other sources you will require a constitution.

funding & support

River Clyde Homes will provide funding and support to assist tenants and residents groups to get started and keep going.

One off Project Grants will also be considered by application, in particular projects which involve the development of participation of 'equalities' or 'hard to reach' groups.

River Clyde Homes will also provide support and assistance to groups where required through the Neighbourhood Officers and the Tenant Participation Co-ordinator.

Training for tenants and residents groups can also be provided to groups on topics such as:

- [Committee skills](#)
- [Roles of office bearers](#)
- [Producing newsletters](#)
- [River Clyde Homes' Housing Policies](#)

Contact River Clyde Homes' Tenant Participation Co-ordinator on **01475 712639**.



related documents

The following related documents are available directly on the River Clyde Homes' website or via links to related websites. They are also available in print and in alternative formats, such as tape, large print and in other languages. These will be made available by River Clyde Homes at no additional charge. If you, or anyone you know, would benefit from this, please contact River Clyde Homes' Tenant Participation Co-ordinator on 01475 712639.

These include:

- Registered Tenants Groups with River Clyde Homes
- Tenants and Residents groups operating within River Clyde Homes' area
- River Clyde Homes' Staff Structure
- River Clyde Homes' Guide to Setting up a Tenants/Residents Association
- Becoming a Registered Tenants Organisation with River Clyde Homes
- River Clyde Homes' Business Plan.
- River Clyde Homes' Tenant Participation Policy
- River Clyde Homes' Internal Management Plan
- River Clyde Homes' Estate Management Policy
- River Clyde Homes' Equal Opportunities Policy

In addition, this strategy complements the priorities of other agencies' publications such as:

- The Inverclyde Community Plan
- The Inverclyde Alliance Community Engagement Strategy
- The Inverclyde Local Housing Strategy
- Scottish Executive's National Strategy for Tenant Participation, 'Partners in Participation' 1999.
- 'National Standards for Community Engagement' 2005
- Equal Opportunities (Schedule 5 the Scotland Act 1998)

The Strategy also reflects the National Tenant Participation Working Group's Codes of Practice on:

- Tenant Participation at Local Level
- Tenant Participation in Best Value
- Tenant Participation in Regeneration
- Tenant Participation in Stock Transfers
- Tenant Participation in Rural Areas