**Policy: Tenant and Community Participation Policy**



**MUIRHOUSE HOUSING ASSOCIATION**

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| **Title of Policy:** | Tenant and Community Participation Policy |
| **Date of Adoption or Last Review:** | 11 April 2016 |
| **Lead Officer:** | Ainan Groat, Housing Services Leader |
| **Date of Next Review:** | April 2019 |
| **Scottish Social Housing Charter Outcomes & Standards:**  **Regulatory Standards of**  **Governance and Financial Management** | Outcome 2: Communication  *“Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides*”.  Outcome 3: Participation  *“Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to participate in and influence their landlord’s decisions at a level they feel comfortable with”.*  Standard 1: The governing body leads and directs the RSL to achieve good outcomes for its tenants and other service users.  Standard 2: The RSL is open and accountable for what it does. |

Tenant and Community Participation Policy

# Introduction

* 1. Muirhouse Housing Association (MHA) is committed to:-
* Improving the services which tenants receive;
* Improving local housing;
* Helping to improve the quality of life locally by creating a safe, attractive and stable community.
  1. We believe that it is important that tenants, and those living elsewhere in the Muirhouse area should be as involved as they want to be in our

work, the community and to improve the area . To help achieve this we

will:

* produce a Tenant Participation Strategy in consultation with our tenants
* produce a Community Development Strategy which complements the work of local groups and partnerships.
* work closely with local tenants and residents groups
* work with our local partners to arrange and fund events to build on our existing strong bond with the community.
  1. We recognise that there are already many and various projects

Involved in community participation in the area. We want to build on these arrangements and encourage the widest possible involvement in its work, by individuals and by other groups.

* 1. “Participation”, or “taking part”, can mean different things to different people. It can mean simply getting the information needed in a way it can be understood. Or it can mean becoming a member of the Housing

Association or applying to become a member of the Board.

* 1. Our Tenant Participation Strategy describes what is done at the moment,

and what is planned for the future. We will promote this to help tenants

decide how much, or how little, they want to be involved.

* 1. Each year we will agree an Action Plan for Tenant Participation in

consultation with our tenants and in line with our Business Plan and Tenant Participation strategy. This will set out targets and timescales and how we will feedback how we have used tenants’ views to improve our service.

# Information

* 1. The information we provide is the key to ensuring that tenants and others

are able to participate in our work. A wide range of information, for

example in booklets, leaflets or newsletters is already produced. We will

work with tenants to make sure that:

* All our information is in plain language, whether it is written or spoken;
* Information is presented clearly and in different ways, with drawings, photographs, models or exhibits being used where appropriate;
* The information provided is clear and relevant;
* Information is available in other languages or in other forms to meet specific needs;
  1. We will review the content of booklets and leaflets regularly in consultation

with our tenants to ensure that they are relevant and up to date.

* 1. The views of tenants and other community organisations will be sought on:
* The content of the information booklets and leaflets produced;
* The need to produce information leaflets on other subjects;
* What information tenants and others would like to see in a newsletter;
* Other ways to provide the information tenants or the community need.

# Improving Housing

* 1. The local community and individual tenants have in the past participated in the planning of new housing developments or the upgrading of existing properties through various ways:
* where tenanted properties are being upgraded, through the tenants being involved in the decision making on details for their home;
* through membership of the local groups which are set up to discuss the plans for particular areas.
* We will seek to build on these arrangements for involving the community and tenants in future plans through working closely with local groups, the City of Edinburgh Council and other local partnerships.

# Housing Services

* 1. We want to make sure that everyone receives the best service possible. To achieve this it will continue to:
* make sure the information on housing services is clear and easy to understand;
* issue at least 3 Tenant Newsletters each year;
* follow up on our commitments in our Business Plan and Tenant Participation strategy.
  1. We will also seek views on, and work towards:
* having regular meetings with tenants or their representatives to find out their views
* letting tenants and others concerned know how well we are performing, compared with the targets set at the beginning of the year;
* when reviewing the policies which cover housing services, provide tenants with opportunities to comment on what the policy should say;
* providing the opportunity to comment on services through regular “Tenants Satisfaction Surveys”.

# Community Engagement

* 1. We will produce a Community Development Strategy to show how we will

work with the community, local politicians and key public and voluntary

sector partners to create a better Muirhouse.

* 1. As part of our Strategy, we will consider how we can support and

encourage local employment or training opportunities either directly or

through our partners or suppliers.

We will organise age and interest groups throughout the year and also

special events such as the annual trip to the pantomime which continues to be very popular amongst our tenants and their families. We will consult with tenants on which groups or events would be of most interest.

# Monitoring and Review

* 1. The Board Management Committee will receive a report every three

months on the progress made towards meeting the aims of our Tenant

Participation Strategy and the actions from our Tenant Participation

Policy. The Board will receive regular reports on how we are fulfilling the

aims of our Community Engagement Strategy.