

Housing Services Tenant Engagement Policy

Department	Housing Services
Responsible Person	Director of Housing
Last Reviewed	18 June 2026
Next Review	17 June 2028

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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that tenants are meaningfully involved in shaping, influencing, and scrutinising the services that are provided by the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham (the Council). The Council recognise that tenants are best placed to talk about their experiences of living in their own homes and communities, and their insight is essential to improving service quality, strengthening accountability, and building trust.
- 1.2 This policy outlines the Council's commitment to embedding engagement across all areas of its work and ensuring that every tenant can participate in ways that suit their needs and preferences.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all tenants, including both secure and introductory tenants.
- 2.2 It also applies to all Council staff, contractors, and Board or Committee members who deliver or oversee Housing services.

3. Regulatory and Legal Framework

- 3.1 The Council's approach to tenant engagement is guided by the regulatory and legal requirements that govern social housing in England.
- 3.2 This includes the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards (2024), particularly the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard, which requires landlords to provide clear information and enable tenants to influence decisions.
- 3.3 The Council also complies with the;
 - Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023,
 - Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code,
 - Equality Act 2010,
 - Data protection legislation including the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.

4. Engagement Principles

- 4.1 The Council's approach to engagement is built on a set of core principles;
- Inclusive - ensuring that all tenants regardless of background, identity, or circumstance can participate.
 - Accessible - offering a range of channels and formats to suit different needs.
 - Transparent – the Council commits to being transparent by sharing information openly and honestly. It also commits to being responsive by acting on tenant feedback and demonstrating how this feedback has influenced decisions taken.
 - Engagement - should be collaborative, with tenants treated as partners who will be able to scrutinise the Council's performance and hold the Council to high standards.

5. Levels of Engagement

- 5.1 The Council will provide a range of opportunities for tenants to engage at different levels depending on their interest and availability
- 5.2 At the “inform” level, the Council will share clear and timely information through newsletters, digital platforms, and service updates.
- 5.3 At the “consult” level, the Council will seek tenants' views before making decisions, using surveys, meetings, and targeted consultations.
- 5.4 At the “involve” level, tenants will work with the Council directly through workshops, service improvement groups, and training opportunities.
- 5.5 At the “collaborate” level, tenants will share decision-making through forums and scrutiny activities.
- 5.6 At the “empower” level, tenants will lead engagement through tenant-led scrutiny, community projects, and participation in governance structures where appropriate.

6. Engagement Methods

- 6.1 The Council use a blend of digital, face-to-face, and community-based engagement methods to ensure that participation is flexible and accessible.

This includes online surveys, virtual meetings, in-person events, estate-based sessions, and targeted outreach.

- 6.2 The Council also provides information and engagement opportunities in accessible formats such as easy-read, large print, and translated materials.
- 6.3 The Council's aim is to ensure that tenants can engage in ways that are convenient and meaningful to them.

7. Supporting Inclusive Engagement

- 7.1 The Council are committed to removing barriers to participation. This includes providing translation and interpretation services where needed, offering reasonable adjustments for disabled tenants, and proactively engaging groups who may be under-represented or less likely to participate.
- 7.2 The Council will work with community partners, local organisations, and specialist groups to ensure that engagement is equitable and reflective of the diversity of its communities.

8. Feedback, Accountability, and Reporting Back

- 8.1 The Council will ensure that tenants can see how their input has influenced decisions. After consultations or engagement activities, the Council will provide clear feedback explaining what the Council heard, what decisions were made, and why.
- 8.2 The Council will publish regular updates on engagement outcomes, scrutiny findings, and service improvements. Tenants will also have opportunities to challenge the Council's performance through scrutiny panels, complaints processes, and direct dialogue with senior leaders.

9. Monitoring and Review

- 9.1 The Council will monitor the effectiveness of this policy through tenant satisfaction measures, engagement participation data, scrutiny outcomes, and regulatory feedback.
- 9.2 The policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if required by changes in legislation, regulation, or tenant priorities. Tenants will be involved in the review process to ensure the policy remains relevant and effective.

10. Equality Impact

- 10.1 Applying this policy consistently and sensitively will ensure that all tenants and their household members in Council owned homes who have protected characteristics and/or are deemed vulnerable for other reasons receive services that are based on a recognition of their vulnerability. The Council will make all appropriate adjustments to the services they receive in order to mitigate any potential negative impacts on them and to ensure they receive fair and equal treatment from the Council as their landlord.