Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version:</th>
<th>Final Version 1</th>
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<tr>
<td>Date Approved:</td>
<td>15th March 2016</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Plan:</td>
<td>Annually</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Date:</td>
<td>February 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Owner:</td>
<td>Highstone Housing Association</td>
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<td>Document Controller:</td>
<td>Supported Housing Director</td>
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1. Introduction

In April 2012 the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England set out its expectations of registered providers within its consumer standards. It then produced a further document detailing what the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard should consider. There are three clear elements:

- Customer service, choice and complaints;
- Involvement and empowerment;
- Understanding the diverse needs of tenants

Highstone Housing Association (HHA) has used this framework to consider its approach to: tenant participation and how it can provide the opportunity to influence policies, service standards and future strategy and plans. This requires particular sensitivity and consideration recognising the special needs of our tenants as vulnerable adults.

2. Tenant Participation Strategy

HHA is committed to improving the services we offer to our tenants, putting them at the centre of all we do. We will enable our Tenants and/or their representatives to participate in the decision making process and have real ability to influence decisions taken by HHA at a level they choose. We will use what they tell us to continuously improve our service offer.

Our strategy will focus on the three key elements detailed below. We will achieve this by: deploying best practice ideas for involving tenants who are vulnerable adults, taking input from respected sources; developing an approach and vehicles for generating feedback; clear statement of data to be gathered and analysed; action plan for deployment; review and future action planning process; timeline.


HHA is required to put in place standards that are clear, fair, appropriate and accessible encompassing customer service, choice and complaints.

We have in place the following policies: Customer Service Charter, Equality and Diversity, Tenants Handbook (including an Easy Read version) and Tenancy. We recently invested in a property management software system- Pyramid, by Omniledger. This enables us to accurately capture and manage tenant specific data to better meet needs and obligations around equality and communication.

4. Involvement and Empowerment

The regulatory framework requires HHA to ensure tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in decision making processes and improvement strategies in: housing related policies and strategic priorities; delivery of related services and setting standards; scrutiny of performance and how it might be improved; management of repairs and maintenance services.

As already stated, this will require careful consideration. However, our size means that our housing officer is able to make frequent and regular visits to each tenant. Although some visits are reactive,
most are proactive and concerned with building rapport as well as identifying problems/issues early. In the meantime, we will develop our strategy as outlined above.

The following policies are in place: Property Service Standards.

5. Understanding and Responding to Diverse Needs

HHA is committed to treating all tenants with fairness and respect and expresses this in its Equality and Diversity Policy. As previously stated, our new software management system enables us to have a clear understanding of tenant needs and considerations, especially when making visits to site and when communicating with individual tenants and/or their representatives. This data will be used when developing our strategic response to involvement and empowerment.

6. Annual Report

Highstone Housing Association commits to produce an annual tenants report detailing the following information:

Financials
- Income and Expenditure Account
- Balance Sheet

Performance Information
- Voids:
  - Rent Loss
  - Re-let time
- Rents:
  - Charges per flat (per number bedrooms)
  - Shown as a comparison: HHA/Local providers/National
- Repairs:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Priority</th>
<th>Target Day</th>
<th>No Repairs</th>
<th>On Time</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Target</th>
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- Cost of Repairs:

- Tenants Satisfaction with Repairs:
  Results of feedback gathered after each repair.