

# Prospect Tenant and Community Participation Strategy 2018-21



## Summary

Prospect's Tenant and Community Participation Strategy outlines our commitment to participation with our tenants and the wider community in west Edinburgh. Developed by tenants and staff, the strategy defines how we interpret tenant participation and the impact we intend it to have on the service delivered by Prospect from 2018-21. The objective of the strategy is to outline how, over the next 3 years, we will:

- Make it easy for our tenants and customers to communicate with us,
- Offer the information our tenants need about us including why we make the decisions and provide the services we do,
- Take an approach to participation which reflects our wide range of tenants, their backgrounds and interests,

This strategy was developed by tenants and staff and was subject to an Equality Impact Assessment before gaining committee approval.

### 1. Introduction

Prospect Community Housing was established in Wester Hailes, in west Edinburgh, by local people keen to improve the housing conditions and opportunities in the area. Over 30 years later we are proud to remain a community based housing association, committed to ensuring tenants' views continue to be at the heart of what we do and influence the way we deliver our services. Our vision is,

*Providing homes and building communities together.*

We are committed to participation by tenants and the wider community because we believe it leads to,

- better service delivery;
- more effective decision making and priority setting by staff and committee;
- increased tenant satisfaction;
- enhanced community development;
- greater accountability.

The relevant standards and outcomes of the Social Housing Charter for the Tenant and Community Participation Strategy are:

#### *Outcome 1: Equalities*

Social landlords perform all aspects of their housing services so that:

- Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs recognised, is treated fairly and with response, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

### *Outcome 2: Communication*

Social landlords manage their business 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.

## **2. Aim of this Strategy**

This strategy has been developed with tenants and staff to outline our commitment to tenant and community participation. With our tenants, we will also produce an action plan that accompanies this strategy. This action plan will ensure that the aims of the strategy are met and that the promotion of effective Tenant Participation is a function of the whole organisation.

This document is a 'Tenant and Community Participation Strategy' because it is recognised that there is a long established and well developed arrangement for community participation in Wester Hailes. We recognise that we are part of the community in the west Edinburgh area and our impact and interest is not just on our tenants, but also the wider community. As the nature and approach of participation changes, we will continue to work with representative local groups of our tenants and other residents to encourage the widest possible involvement in our work.

This strategy is not static but a flexible tool which will allow us to constantly review our performance and take on board the results of ongoing consultation and review our processes. It is not just a statement of our commitment to the principles of tenant participation but a living document which sets out the means by which we will seek to encourage and support tenants who wish to participate actively in all areas of our work. We are aware that participation should be a continuous process when information is shared, common understanding of problems strived for and a consensus for solutions is worked out. Throughout this strategy we aim to build in a recognition that our tenants are individuals with individual needs. We aim to treat all our tenants fairly and with respect when delivering our services, including encouraging participation. With that in mind, we have carried out an Equalities Impact Assessment on this strategy to ensure it meets the aims of our Equality and Diversity Policy.

Participation can mean different things to different people. It can mean simply getting information needed in a way that can be understood. At the other end of the spectrum, it can mean becoming a member of the Management Committee and directly making decisions on the way Prospect is run. Our view is that all tenants should have a chance to participate at a level which interests them. This strategy seeks to describe what is done now and how we hope to develop this further. This will help individuals to decide how much, or how little, they want to be involved.

### **3. Our Engagement Approach**

#### a) Our overall approach to information

Providing information is the activity that underpins all aspects of participation and it is the first and basic requirement to enable tenants to participate. It is recognised that simply reading this information will be the limit of some tenants' involvement whereas for others it will stimulate further participation.

We produce a wide range of information through various approaches, and we work to ensure that it is:

- Accurate and regularly updated;
- In plain English and easily understandable;
- Relevant to the needs of specific tenants, for example we will translate documents, provide an interpreter if required or provide it in a different format such as large print;
- Developed and/or co-produced with tenants where possible and appropriate;
- Offered at various stages throughout the tenancy, starting as soon as we meet a prospective tenant and regularly throughout the tenancy.
- Reflective of the diversity of our tenants.

We offer a variety of methods to respond to surveys and requests for information to maximise the potential for tenants and residents to have their say. To ensure we are doing this in the most effective way we aim to take into account individual communication preferences and will continue to expand the options available to us in this area.

#### b) Surveys

Every three years we carry out a large scale formal satisfaction survey to find out what our tenants' views are on our services. The last survey took place in 2016, we developed the questions in the survey with input from our Tenants Forum. Following each survey we produce an action plan with our tenants, this is then approved by our Management Committee. We use this plan to ensure we listen to and learn from the feedback from our tenants.

We also carry out regular surveys to ask for feedback on particular subjects, from the annual rent consultation process to feedback on our repairs service. We use a variety of formats such as written surveys, phone, text or via web based solutions such as Survey Monkey. This helps to ensure the widest range of tenants have an opportunity to respond to our surveys. Tenants' responses to the surveys help us to change and improve services.

#### c) Face to face contact

Current and potential tenants can visit our office, located in the middle of Wester Hailes, both for pre-arranged interviews and to speak to our staff. We offer meetings with tenants at a time and location which suits them to make it as easy as possible for our tenants to attend. We use a language translation service to support any of our tenants for whom English is not their first language.

#### d) Walkabouts

We undertake quarterly walkabouts in each of our areas. This gives tenants the opportunity to meet with Housing and Property Services staff to discuss any estate management or other issues they may have. At least one Manager is present so it is a way for senior staff to be accessible and visible to tenants.

#### e) Prospectus

We publish a quarterly newsletter called Prospectus and distribute it to all our tenants as well as publishing it on our website. In the newsletter we include articles on tenant participation matters such as updates from the Tenants' Forum, information on complaints, and the areas in which we have made changes to services because of tenants' feedback. We currently distribute the newsletter in paper format, over the duration of this strategy we will offer an email version.

#### f) Prospect Digi Mag

For those who have subscribed, our Prospect DigiMag drops into an email inbox every month. This gives a brief roundup of Prospect news and local events of interest with links to other website articles for more information.

#### g) Website

Our website offers a 24-hour reception in that via our tenant portal, tenants access a range of services including checking balance and making a rent payment, reporting repairs or antisocial behaviour and giving us feedback. The website also offers a weekly news article about Prospect, videos and guidance on common queries and an interactive community map of local projects and facilities. Our website was developed with and for our tenants.

#### h) Social Media

@Prospect is our twitter account and we are building followers to share what is happening both at Prospect and within the community projects we support.

We are the lead agency in developing and maintaining a Facebook page for the local area. [www.facebook.com/FromThereToHereaWesterHailesStory](http://www.facebook.com/FromThereToHereaWesterHailesStory) is used to share the social history of Wester Hailes as well as keep people informed and generate discussion and feedback on current issues or events. We will regularly consider social media options which will be of interest and use to our tenants.

#### i) Texts & Email

We use texts daily to communicate effectively with our tenants. This is a popular method with many of our tenants to receive information quickly and to the point. We also carry out surveys via text using Survey Monkey. We are working to expand our use of email as a bulk communication approach over the duration of this strategy. We will ensure our approach meets the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

j) Local events

When invited, we support and participate in a range of local community events. This allows us to strengthen our ties within our communities and allows us to offer information as well as receive feedback from our tenants and other community members. We also hold our own events to encourage and facilitate participation.

k) Prospect's Performance Report

Every year in October we produce the Prospect Performance Report including key information on our performance and present how we are meeting the outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter. Our tenants influence the content of this annually.

l) Compliments and Complaints

We welcome complaints and compliments from our tenants and handle them in accordance with the expectations of the Scottish Public Services Ombudsman. We aim to learn from complaints and improve our practice accordingly. We report on trends and what we have done about it via our publications.

m) Informal Groups

We recognise that not everyone wants to become part of a formal group with a committee structure. For those tenants who are happy to tell us what they think about a subject, we will be happy to listen to them. We will offer this approach as well as more formal approaches when carrying out consultation exercises and remain flexible about how our tenants want to feedback their thoughts to us. We meet regularly with Clovenstone Community Centre's Family Group accordingly.

n) Tenants' Forum

For those who are able and willing to give of their time on a regular basis, we have a Tenants' Forum which meets quarterly. This is a constructive, collaborative group where Tenants' Forum members meet with Prospect staff to discuss and influence policy changes and other issues that affect tenants.

o) Prospect Scrutiny Group

The Prospect Scrutiny Group (PSG) formed in 2017 and, after completing a training course, undertake regular scrutiny exercises. They view themselves as a supportive critical friend to Prospect. Their reports and recommendations are heard by Prospect's Committee and implemented by Management team.

p) Annual General Meeting

We hold our Annual General Meeting in September every year. All of our tenants are offered the opportunity to become members of Prospect Community Housing, and those who choose to do so are invited to this meeting. Each year we choose a theme of interest with a relevant speaker as well as reporting on the activities and performance of the year.

#### q) Committee Membership

Prospect is run by a Management Committee, elected by members annually at our Annual General Meeting. Most committee members live locally and a significant proportion are Prospect tenants. This undoubtedly helps us gain an awareness of the issues that are important to tenants and the Wester Hailes community.

#### r) Community Council

We work in partnership with the Community Council in Wester Hailes and we attend their meetings regularly as appropriate.

#### s) Voluntary Sector Forum

We share ideas and issues with other local agencies in the area via the Voluntary Sector Forum. This is one of the ways we listen to the wider community and work closely with agencies who provide services to our tenants and the wider community.

Finally, we have a style of approach as a community based housing association which is important to our tenants and the success of this strategy. Our Tenants' Forum identified this as an important part of the delivery of this strategy, i.e. it's not just what you do, it's the way that you do it. Accordingly, in the delivery of this strategy we aim to be reliable, honest, efficient and friendly with our tenants. We promote and encourage a sense of community and care about the individuals we work with.

### **4. Resourcing this Strategy**

Every year we agree an annual budget to support our participation and consultation activities. This budget will be used to resource all the approaches outlined above as well as financing:

- Training for tenants. We recognise that Tenant Participation can link to increased employability or be viewed as voluntary work.
- Transport, crèche or childcare costs to allow any tenant to attend a participation event.

### **5. Monitoring and Review**

All Prospect staff have a role to play in implementing this strategy. We will develop an Action Plan with feedback from tenants, committee members and staff to ensure the strategy aims are met. We will review this Action Plan annually with the Tenants' Forum and we will provide regular reports to committee on our progress.

We will review this strategy in 2021.

## PROSPECT EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT RECORD

<b>Title of policy/ practice/ strategy</b>	Prospect Tenant and Community Participation Strategy 2018-21		
<b>Department</b>	Housing Management		
<b>Who is involved in the EQIA?</b>	Catherine Louch		
<b>Type of policy/ practice/ strategy</b>	New <input type="checkbox"/>	Existing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>Date completed</b>	12 January 2018		

### Stage 1: Screening Record

#### *What is the main purpose of the policy?*

Prospect's Tenant and Community Participation Strategy outlines our commitment to participation with our tenants and the wider community in west Edinburgh. Developed by tenants and staff, the strategy defines how we interpret tenant participation and the impact we intend it to have on the service delivered by Prospect from 2018-21.

The relevant standards and outcomes of the Social Housing Charter for the Tenant and Community Participation Strategy are Equalities and Communication.

#### *Who will the policy benefit and how?*

This strategy impacts on our tenants, service users, committee, and the wider community as it outlines our approaches to communication and participation with our customers and stake holders.

#### *For each equality group, does or could the policy have a negative impact?*

Protected characteristic	Negative	Positive/no impact	Don't know
Age	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gender reassignment	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marriage & civil partnership	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Pregnancy & maternity	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Race	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Religion or belief (including no belief)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sex	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual orientation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### *Are there any potential barriers to implementing the policy?*

Our Tenant Participation budget supports the implementation of this policy.

	Yes	No
<b>Is a full EQIA required?</b>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### *If you answered no to the above question explain why a full EQIA is not required:*

No impact on equalities identified:	<input type="checkbox"/>
Other:	



## Stage 2: Data and evidence gathering, involvement and consultation

Include here the results of your evidence gathering, including qualitative and quantitative data and the source of that information, whether national statistics, surveys or consultations with relevant equality groups.

Source	Qualitative evidence provided	Quantitative evidence provided	Which protected characteristics are covered?	Gaps identified/ action taken
Management information data		Annual staff and committee equalities data	Age, disability, gender, ethnicity. In some cases other protected characteristics	Membership data not collected. Implementation of Cx may assist with data collection.
Tenant satisfaction survey		Survey carried out in 2016	Age, disability, gender, ethnicity. In some cases other protected characteristics	Data becoming out of date. Implementation of Cx may assist with data collection.
Committee, Equalities Working Group and Tenants Forum minutes	Equality related issues identified and discussed		Various	
Review of complaints received	Tenant/service user experience	Statistical data on types of complaint	All protected characteristics	Implementation of Cx may assist with data collection and analysis of protected characteristics
Observations/conversations (anecdotal)	Staff/committee/tenant/service user levels of understanding, inclusive practice		All protected characteristics	
Edinburgh Census 2011		Statistical data	Age disability, gender, ethnicity, marital status, religion or belief.	Data becoming out of date.
EdIndex data		Statistical data provided for individuals on the housing waiting list	Age, disability, gender, ethnicity. In some cases other protected characteristics.	Data becoming out of date.
SHR Annual Return on Charter data		Statistical data on staff, committee and tenant profile for RSLs	Disability, ethnicity.	
Tenant Forum discussion December 2017		Range of preferred approaches discussed.	All protected characteristics	None identified
Clovenstone Family Group discussion December 2017		Range of preferred approaches discussed	All protected characteristics	None identified

### Stage 3: Assessing the impacts

**How might the policy impact on people who share protected characteristics?** Include both positive and negative impacts.

Protected Characteristic	Description of Impact
Age	We always hold participation events at a range of accessible, local venues. Our information is available in a variety of formats on request. We have a strong and increasing digital presence and approach to participation which encourages and supports participation from anywhere. Our publicity photographs aim to reflect the communities we work within.
Disability	We always hold participation events at a range of accessible, local venues. Our information is available in a variety of formats on request. We have a strong and increasing digital presence and approach to participation which encourages and supports participation from anywhere. Our publicity photographs aim to reflect the communities we work within.
Gender reassignment	We always hold participation events at a range of accessible, local venues. We have a strong and increasing digital presence and approach to participation which encourages and supports participation from anywhere. Our publicity photographs aim to reflect the communities we work within.
Marriage & civil partnership	We meet regularly with the Clovenstone Family Group to ensure their input feeds into our decision-making process. We always hold participation events at a range of accessible, local venues. We have a strong and increasing digital presence and approach to participation which encourages and supports participation from anywhere. Our publicity photographs aim to reflect the communities we work within.
Pregnancy & maternity	As above
Race	We always hold participation events at a range of accessible, local venues. Our information is available in other languages on request. We communicate with our Polish tenants in Polish regularly. Our publicity photographs aim to reflect the communities we work within. We have a strong and increasing digital presence and approach to participation which encourages and supports participation from anywhere.
Religion or belief (including no belief)	We always hold participation events at a range of accessible, local venues. We avoid holding events in local churches which may be a barrier to some attending. Our publicity photographs aim to reflect the communities we work within. We have a strong and increasing digital presence and approach to participation which encourages and supports participation from anywhere.
Sex	We meet regularly with the Clovenstone Family Group to ensure their input feeds into our decision-making process. We always hold participation events at a range of accessible, local venues. We have a strong and increasing digital presence and approach to participation which encourages and supports participation from anywhere. Our publicity photographs aim to reflect the communities we work within.
Sexual orientation	We always hold participation events at a range of accessible, local venues. We have a strong and increasing digital presence and approach to participation which encourages and supports participation from anywhere. Our publicity photographs aim to reflect the communities we work within.

### ***How does the policy promote equality of opportunity?***

We provide a wide variety of options to participate so that our tenants have a range of ways to input into our decision-making process.

### ***How does the policy promote good relations?***

We work hard to ensure we have a barrier free approach to participation. Our publicity reflects the protected characteristics of our tenants which helps to promote our inclusive approach.

## **Stage 4: Decision making and monitoring**

### ***Identifying and establishing any required mitigating action***

If, following the impact analysis, you think you have identified any unlawful discrimination – direct or indirect - you must consider and set out what action will be undertaken to mitigate the negative impact.

Does the assessment show a potential for differential impact on any group(s)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is there potential for unlawful direct or indirect discrimination?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

### ***What arrangements could be implemented to reduce or mitigate any potential adverse or negative impacts identified?***

N/A

### ***Describing how Equality Impact analysis has shaped the policy making process***

Carrying out the Equality impact analysis encourages reflection on current practice and how to shape future practice to encourage participation from a wider range of tenants. I am satisfied that current approaches mean that our communities can and do participate at a range of levels.

However, we do not make any attempt to reach out to or reflect any needs of our LGBT tenants and this is a gap which we should aim to focus on over the life of this strategy.

There is no impact on the Tenant Participation budget because of this EQIA.

### ***Monitoring and Review***

Once this policy is agreed by Committee we will develop an action plan with the Tenants' Forum to achieve the aims of the strategy. We will include in the action plan an equalities target to reflect the outcome of this EQIA.

This action plan is reviewed annually by both the Tenants' Forum and Committee.

The strategy and this EQIA will be reviewed again in 2021 by the Housing Manager.

## Stage 5 - Authorisation of EQIA

Please confirm that:

- ◆ This Equality Impact Assessment has informed the development of this policy:

Yes  No

- ◆ Opportunities to promote equality in respect of age, disability, sex, pregnancy and maternity, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, race and religion or belief have been considered, i.e.:
  - Eliminating unlawful discrimination, harassment, victimisation;
  - Removing or minimising any barriers and/or disadvantages;
  - Taking steps which assist with promoting equality and meeting people's different needs;
  - Encouraging participation (e.g. in public life)
  - Fostering good relations, tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

Yes  No

### Declaration

**I am satisfied with the equality impact assessment that has been undertaken for **Tenant and Community Participation Strategy 2018-21****

**Name: Catherine Louch**

**Position: Housing Manager**

**Authorisation date: 12 January 2018**