

One Vision Housing

Resident Involvement Statement 2009/2010



Building communities & futures

1. Introduction

Involving residents improves the effectiveness with which housing association services are delivered, bringing also the benefits of new skills and increased confidence for residents.

The new housing regulator, the Tenant Services Authority (TSA), has just finished a national consultation exercise with residents to establish how it will regulate in the future. Early indications are that there will be more opportunity for residents to help to regulate and steer housing services and that tenants and service users will have a direct relationship with the TSA.

One Vision Housing, through its Resident Involvement Structures has already started to embrace the likely changes and this statement demonstrates its commitment to involving residents in shaping service delivery.

The statement has been amended to take account of the 2008/09 Impact Assessment and it has been endorsed by the Resident Involvement Service Specific Panel (SSP) and the Scrutiny and Review Panel (SRP).

2. How does involvement fit into OVH's Business?

The Corporate Plan details our priorities, aims and objectives, a number of which require resident involvement. These are outlined in annex A.

Effective involvement with our customers will enable OVH to ensure that residents are provided with the opportunity to influence service delivery.

3. The Resident Involvement Organisational Structure

The Resident Involvement structure is supported by a team which is made up of a Resident Involvement Manager and two Resident Involvement Officers. The Resident Involvement team are dedicated to promoting and supporting formal and informal resident involvement in delivery of our services.

The involvement structure was determined as a result of meetings and consultation with tenants' and residents' groups. The structure works well, but is subject to regular review in consultation with the SSP and the SRP.

The structure provides an opportunity for residents to move up or down the involvement structure and to choose the level of involvement they want and at a level they feel comfortable with.

A summary of the involvement structure is outlined in annex B.

6. How does the involvement structure work?

6.1 Board of OVH

The Board has overall responsibility for:-

- Setting strategy policy and direction;
- Ensuring OVH is self sufficient;
- Establishing plans of action;
- Managing risk;
- Monitoring performance;
- Regulatory compliance.

The Board is made up of five tenants, one of whom must be a leaseholder, four independent members and two representatives of Sefton Council. Some board representatives attend the Scrutiny and Review Panel, which provides a two way flow of communication between the Board and our tenant and resident representatives.

6.2 Scrutiny and Review Panel (SRP)

The role of the panel is to improve resident involvement in decision making at the highest level.

The SRP is made up of tenant and leaseholder representatives. The meetings are attended by Officers of OVH and other stakeholders as appropriate e.g. Police, voluntary agencies etc.

The panel are involved in:-

- Performance monitoring;
- Corporate planning;
- Policy formulation ;
- Review of action plans/strategies.

There are plans to involve panel members in the future in identifying service reviews.

We recognise that the linkages between the board and the SSP's need to be further developed to assist with Board succession planning and ensure that there is a clear two-way flow of Information. The linkages will be developed by SRP members attending Board meetings on a quarterly basis.

6.3 Service Specific Panels (SSP)

OVH has eleven service specific panels that enable customers to get involved in an area of the business that is important to them.

Service specific panels have been established for:-

- Income management;
- Home Search and empty property management;
- Tenancy and Estate Management;
- Supported Housing;
- Investment;
- Repairs and adaptations;
- Anti Social Behaviour;
- Leaseholders;
- Customer access;

- Resident involvement;
- Living in flats

The main focus of the panels is to:-

- Discuss, agree and monitor service standards;
- Provide a nominated member to the SRP, thereby ensuring the link between the SRP and the SSP's;
- Discuss practical issues around service delivery on the ground.
- Discuss value for money initiatives;
- To take part in service reviews/mystery shopping;
- Review policies and procedures;
- To monitor customer satisfaction and complaints;
- To discuss and agree relevant budgets.

The SSP's meet at least every three months, but some meet more frequently, depending on the amount of business there is to discuss.

6.4 Community Events

OVH runs a number of community events, to compliment its community development strategy. Over the next 12 months, we plan to use these events to conduct more informal resident consultation.

6.5 Residents' Seminars

Seminars are open to all residents and individual invitations are sent to Tenant and Resident groups. The seminars are popular and well attended and have varied themes including:-

- Tenants' agendas;
- Joint training events;
- Guest speakers from external agencies;
- Updates from different service areas of OVH;
- Consultation on policy initiatives;
- Tenant representatives' Christmas Party.

All seminars are also now used to obtain residents views on issues or to identify any particular concerns.

6.6 Resident's Conference.

This year, OVH will host its first residents' conference, which will include a speaker from the TSA, some educational workshops, but also a lot of fun. The conference will be used to talk to residents informally about how happy they are with OVH services and also to try to engage more residents in the involvement structures, at a level that suits them.

6.7 Tenant and Resident Groups

A number of tenant and residents groups exist. OVH will continue to support these and any new emerging groups. Our main focus, however, will continue to be to develop more informal mechanisms for involvement rather than setting targets to establish a number of new and constituted groups.

Many of the residents who are involved in formal groups also engage with us through other parts of the involvement structure.

6.8 Youth Engagement

OVH continues to try and engage with young residents and we are currently working with a number of agencies in working towards developing a full youth engagement structure.

Over the next twelve months a youth engagement strategy will be developed in consultation with young people to drive forward and establish a structure of youth involvement.

In the past year OVH has developed its first Junior Warden Scheme and more will be established over the next twelve months. The youth engagement strategy will identify how consultation will be developed with the junior wardens in the future.

6.9 Customer Panel

The OVH customer panel has expanded over the last twelve months and now has in excess of 400 in number. During the past 12 months significant feedback has been achieved through engagement with members of the panel.

Those customers, who volunteer, participate in postal and telephone surveys to comment on different areas of the services and are also invited to attend focus groups from time to time.

A further marketing and recruitment campaign will be carried out over the next twelve months to increase the number of members on the panel.

6.10 Surveys

We carry out a number of surveys and we use the results to prioritise budgets, identify Corporate Plan objectives and to improve services to customers.

Surveys include:-

- The Tenant Services Authority (TSA) STATUS survey;
- Day to day repairs and maintenance, investment programme and gas.
- New tenant and exit surveys;
- Anti Social Behaviour satisfaction;
- Sheltered and supported housing; Complaints.

6.11 Informal Methods of Involvement.

Residents can also get involved by:-

- Feeding back comments via the OVH website;
- Estate walkabouts;
- Accompanied viewings;
- Feedback forms/complaints;
- Resident approved panel, which considers OVH publications.
- “Word on the Street”. An informal conversation with customers to find out how they feel about OVH services.

7.0 Promoting Resident Involvement

Resident involvement is promoted via:-

- The OVH website, where residents can email us on getinvolved@ovh.org.uk;
- The quarterly newsletter;
- Leaflets, which are displayed in the Neighbourhood Offices and provided on sign up;
- The tenants’ handbook;
- Community events;
- The Residents’ conference.

Over the next 12 months we are planning to review the website and all of the leaflets, in conjunction with the SSP’s.

8.0 How will OVH ensure that customers have an equal opportunity to get involved?

8.1 Equality Scheme

We are keen to ensure that we have a cross representative sample of the community on all our resident involvement structures, which is re-enforced in the Equality and Diversity Strategy, associated equality schemes and action plans.

This year we are planning to combine all of our actions plans and equality schemes into a Single Scheme, which will make our equality and diversity targets easier to understand and monitor.

In the last twelve months OVH has carried out a customer profiling exercise of all residents and this information will be used to further develop and influence how OVH develops involvement structures.

9. How will OVH ensure that Customers have information on service delivery

Feedback is provided through the resident involvement structure; however, in addition, we provide feedback on how well we are performing via the internet, the quarterly newsletter and annual report.

10.0 What resources are available to enable involvement?

10.1 Tenant Participation Budget

There is currently a budget of £152,360 allocated for the provision of the resident involvement service.

The main budget headings include:-

- Staffing costs;
- Publicity;
- Photocopying;
- Printing;
- Community Room Hire;
- Tenant training;
- Start up grants.

Resources are also available within the Community initiatives team to assist in the development and promotion of resident Involvement.

10.2 Start up grants and financial support

We provide start up grants of £150.00 for each new constituted tenant group. Every year a review of each tenants group is conducted and if the group meets the criteria additional funds will be provided to reimburse the group to the £150.00 level.

We have also recently concluded a review of funding arrangements to our constituted tenant and resident groups and have agreed the levels of financial support we

provide to each. The review was undertaken with involvement from tenants involved in the SRP.

This year the SRP has agreed an incentive scheme for involvement and positive behaviour which covers three areas;

- Resident Involvement;
- Community Initiatives and Involvement;
- Positive behaviour.

10.3 Tenants' and Residents' Associations with communal rooms

Two tenants' and resident's associations continue to take responsibility for developing and running communal meeting rooms in converted OVH property. The rents for these communal meeting facilities are met from the resident involvement budget.

Oxford House and Sefton Moss Villas all currently have communal rooms and use them for a variety of functions including, OVH meetings, committee meetings and social events.

In addition Stanley House and Irlam House have community rooms which are available for all residents to use.

OVH also has some community centres, which are available for residents to use.

10.4 Training and development opportunities

We recognise that a robust Training Strategy is necessary to ensure that residents are equipped with the skills they need to influence service delivery, provide personal development opportunities, and to enable successful Board succession planning.

Annual training audits are carried out, which feed into the Training Strategy. The strategy will need to be reviewed in the future to include the SSP's.

In addition, we provide internal and external learning opportunities for all tenants to attend regardless of whether they are part of the formal tenant involvement structure.

10.5 Other resources

We will help formally constituted groups to perform their basic functions i.e. produce newsletters, hold meetings etc.

We will provide appropriate support for people to get involved. This includes travel expenses, child care and other reasonable out of pocket expenses.

We identify within the Resident Involvement Budget areas of expenditure for different aspects of spend which allows more detailed monitoring.

11 Collective Disputes

OVH is committed to strengthening its framework for successful landlord/tenant relations and in doing so, as far as possible, prevent collective disputes arising and where this is not possible to have in place a viable mechanism for resolution which embeds good practice to prevent further disputes arising.

This process will involve several stages which are to be considered and, in agreement with residents, introduced in the coming year. This process will include:

A review and where necessary a strengthening of the framework in place that establishes the relationship between OVH and resident groups including the roles and responsibilities and Communication processes;

Through consultation establish a mutually agreed procedure for resolving disputes.

12.0 What has been achieved in the past 12 months?

12.1 We have:

- Completed our annual impact assessment for 2008/09 - residents identified seven priority outcomes for 2009/10;
- Agreed constitutions for all resident groups;
- Established 11 SSP's;
- Agreed an incentive for resident and community involvement;
- Agreed job descriptions and reviewed and agreed terms of reference for all our involvement structures;
- Reviewed the effectiveness of community rooms;
- Established a number of focus groups;
- Published our program of community events; Introduced tenant led mystery shopping;
- Replaced the Resident Involvement Strategy with our Resident Involvement Statement;
- Introduced action point tracking introduced for all Resident Involvement meetings;
- Developed an Equality Impact Assessment action plan;
- Reviewed our resident involvement budget;
- Completed our annual audit of residents groups and financial support provided where applicable;
- Provided impact assessment and resident involvement training to all staff;
- Established five new residents groups;
- Re-launched the resident involvement web page.

13.0 What do we want to achieve over the next 12 months?

13.1 We want to achieve the following:

- Improved accountability to customers;
- Help residents to enhance their skills, confidence and quality of life;
- Improved access services;
- Services which offer better value for money;
- Further development of the Resident Involvement Structures, including the SRP and the SSP's;
- Continue to provide more opportunities for customers to get involved at a local level;
- Promote and encourage input into the design, ongoing maintenance and improvement of homes and environment;
- An established pool of tenants to act as mystery shoppers working across a number of Registered Providers;
- Set targets for involving underrepresented groups and review targets against area profiles.
- The TPAS landlord accreditation, which will help us to achieve all of the above and more.

13.2 In addition to the above, our tenants during the recent Impact Assessment evaluation also identified the following priorities:

- Reduce ASB;
- Increase resolution of enquiries by the Customer Service Centre;
- Improve re-let times;
- Improve communication to residents;
- Improve satisfaction on repairs;
- Improve monitoring on Resident Involvement and demonstrate Value for Money (VFM);
- Involve customers in setting service standards;

Throughout the year we will work with the SSP's and SRP to monitor progress against these priorities.

14.0 How will we assess and monitor the impact and success of the Involvement Statement and how will we review it?

14.1 Assessment and monitoring

- We will develop a more robust resident involvement tracking system to ensure that we can accurately log progress in relation to the priorities identified by residents and understand the costs associated with resident involvement;
- Feedback forms, informal complaints and complaint forms will continue to be evaluated.
- We will use the feedback obtained from customer surveys to improve and direct our services.
- Monitoring our performance and reporting this back to the SRP, focus groups and in our annual report to customers;
- Evaluating the performance indicator “opportunity to get involved”. OVH expects that if the Resident Involvement Statement and associated strategies are effective that satisfaction levels should continue to increase;
- Evaluation of “word on the street” feedback.

14.2 Reviewing the statement

The Resident Involvement Statement will be reviewed on an annual basis with the resident involvement Service Specific Panel and the SRP.

The statement will be reviewed to take account of progress and any emerging priorities.

Annex A

OVH objective	Target
Deliver excellent services to meet the needs and aspiration of customers.	To achieve TPAS accreditation by March 2010.
Continually review and improve performance	<p>Improved tenant/customer satisfaction year on year (will be measured via the STATUS survey)</p> <p>Top quartile tenant satisfaction with opportunities for involvement.</p>
Deliver services that embrace diversity and offer equality of access	<p>Improved access to services for all groups, measured through satisfaction surveys and using customer profiling information</p> <p>Establishment of a Customer excellence award</p>

Annex B

