



Newydd

RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY

Version 2 – September 2008

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INTRODUCTION

The Resident Involvement Strategy is produced to ensure resident involvement remains at the heart of Newydd Housing Association's services. The Association clearly recognises that tenant involvement is an important service improvement tool and aims to ensure that improvement through involvement is integrated into all the landlord functions.

A plain English version of this strategy will be available as a Service Information Leaflet along with details of how to obtain information about services and the landlord function of the Association.

The strategy will be reviewed annually through Newydd 90, Community Panels, the Board Champion for Tenant Involvement and the Newydd Board to assess how close to reaching the aims of the strategy the Association is.

The Resident Involvement Strategy consolidated a number of existing policies and strategies, namely:

- Community Development Policy
- Community Development Strategy
- Tenant Participation Policy
- Consultation Policy
- This version supersedes the September 2007 version of the Resident Involvement Strategy (RSI v1).

Newydd Housing Association (1974) Ltd has adopted the following statement as its fundamental objectives:

“Sustainable Communities, Affordable Homes, Successful Partnerships”

The measure of Newydd's success in achieving these objectives cannot be monitored without the involvement of tenants. Newydd aims to create a culture that allows the Association to work in partnership with tenants to ensure future success and fulfilment for both partners.

It is recognised that the most effective route to encouraging the widest involvement of residents is to offer the widest range of involvement choices. For this reason, the Association will continue to develop new and innovative approaches to participation to ensure every tenant who wants to participate, can participate.

How this Strategy was Developed

Version 1 of this Strategy was developed in September 2007 by officers of the Association in close consultation with the Community Panels and the Board Champion for involvement.

Version 2 (this version) has been developed with feedback from the Community Panels, the Board Champion, Tenant Survey feedback, Newydd 90 feedback and good practice. Following the drafting of this version in

September 2008, the Panels will be consulted again, a summary of the main points will be published in "In View" and a Newydd 90 on involvement options.

Legal / Regulatory Requirements

The policy will comply with the Housing Acts 1988 and 1996, Tenant Participation Compacts for Local Authorities in Wales (extended to Housing Associations in 2001) and Welsh Assembly Government's Regulatory Code, in particular:

2.2.1. Associations should provide readily accessible, clear and accurate information and advice for residents

2.2.2. Associations should be answerable to residents for the quality of services provided

2.2.3 Associations should ask for, listen to, and take account of the views of residents

2.2.4 Associations should encourage resident involvement

Other documents that were used for the development of this strategy are:

- The Welsh Assembly Government's National Tenant Participation Strategy for Wales (and Guidance)
- Evaluating Tenant Participation in Housing Management & Design
- Newydd Housing Association's BME Strategy

Key Lines of Enquiry Extracts

The Wales Audit Office has developed a series of statements against which the quality of service provided is measured. These are known as Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOEs). The extracts below are all those relevant to the section of the KLOEs referring to "Relationship to Residents".

Access, customer care & user focus

- How effectively does the organisation communicate and consult with its service users and stakeholders about resident involvement?
- How easily do service users access the service?
- How clear and comprehensive are service standards from a service user's perspective?
- How does the organisation respond to service users?
- What service user satisfaction has been achieved with this service area?
- Does the organisation comply with the statutory requirements and good practice in resident involvement?

Diversity

- How does the organisation respond to the diversity of its community to ensure that all users, or potential users, have fair and equal access to resident involvement opportunities?

Corporate Culture and Governance

- Is there clear and consistent leadership ensuring that the whole organisation has a clear customer focus?
- Have service users and relevant stakeholders been involved in evaluating the service and determining standards and priorities for improvement? How have these priorities been disseminated?
- Are external requirements – legislative or good practice being addressed?
- Do the governance structures receive the reports necessary to judge whether the organisation is delivering on customer focus?
- How does the organisation respond to service users?

Access to the service

- Are customers easily able to contact the organisation by telephone, in person or via the internet?
- Have appropriate decisions been made on where to locate offices, at what times services are available and how to structure the service.
- Are customers aware of the services available and how and when to access them?
- Are services standards comprehensive and are customers aware of them?
- Can the organisation identify customers who are not accessing the service and is appropriate action being taken to remove barriers to access?

Information

- Is the information provided to customers easy to read? Was it developed in consultation with customers and does it meet their needs and expectations.

Consultation and feedback mechanisms

- Are there a variety of methods of consulting and obtaining feedback from customers and are they effective?
- Does the approach take account of local context and ensure that a wide range of user views are obtained?
- Is good use made of this information?
- Are customers informed about what happens as a result of providing their views?

Resources for resident involvement

- How does the level of resources and training for service users demonstrate the organisation's commitment to resident involvement?

Impact of resident involvement

- Is there clear evidence that resident involvement has led to improved services and outcomes for service users?

Value for money

- How well does the organisation maximise the impact from its resources for resident involvement?
- How effectively has the organisation established partnerships geared to achieve value for money and improving its performance to service users?
- Has the organisation used procurement to achieve value for money in delivering services that benefit service users and others?

Welsh Language / Equal Opportunity Implications

The Newydd Housing Association will ensure that there is no unfair discrimination on the basis of race, sex, marital status, disability, religion or

belief, age or sexual orientation in the provision of housing, services or employment.

There is a risk that minority groups may be unable to get their voices heard and therefore, in conjunction with the Association's BME Strategy, actions will be developed to continue to attempt to engage with minority groups and to ensure that participation by those groups is not lost amongst the participation from majority groups. The Association will also monitor the involvement of minority groups to ensure there is equal access to the service. There are specific measures within this strategy to ensure that any barriers to involvement are addressed.

Newydd Housing Association has adopted the principle that in the conduct of public business in Wales, it will treat the English and Welsh languages on a basis of equality. For further information, please see the Association's Welsh Language Policy.

If requested the Policy will be made available in Braille, on tape, in Welsh or in other languages.

Risk Assessment

The implications of this policy will be assessed in accordance with the Group's Risk Management Policy.

AIMS & OBJECTIVES OF THE STRATEGY

The principal aim of the Resident Involvement Strategy is to further tenant involvement in all aspects of the Association's landlord function. In addition to this, the strategy aims to set out clearly the current routes for involvement in the Association's activities.

The aims in details are to:

- Review and update existing tenant involvement routes established through the previous Resident Involvement Strategy and as set out by continuous improvement activities
- Further develop both new and innovative methods and existing methods of involving residents to ensure that the widest possible number of residents are involved
- Continue to ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- Continue to develop involvement from minority and currently under-represented groups of residents
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident's needs
- Continue to ensure full staff commitment to resident involvement
- Monitor and review the service standards for resident involvement
- Develop and publish monitoring of the effectiveness of resident and community involvement
- Set out the annually reviewed resources available for community involvement
- Set out the way that Tenants Groups are encouraged, assisted, developed and funded
- Offer and provide training to residents to become effectively involved
- Continue to involve residents in annually reviewing this strategy

The specific themes and outcomes looking to be addressed in this version of the Residents Involvement Strategy are:

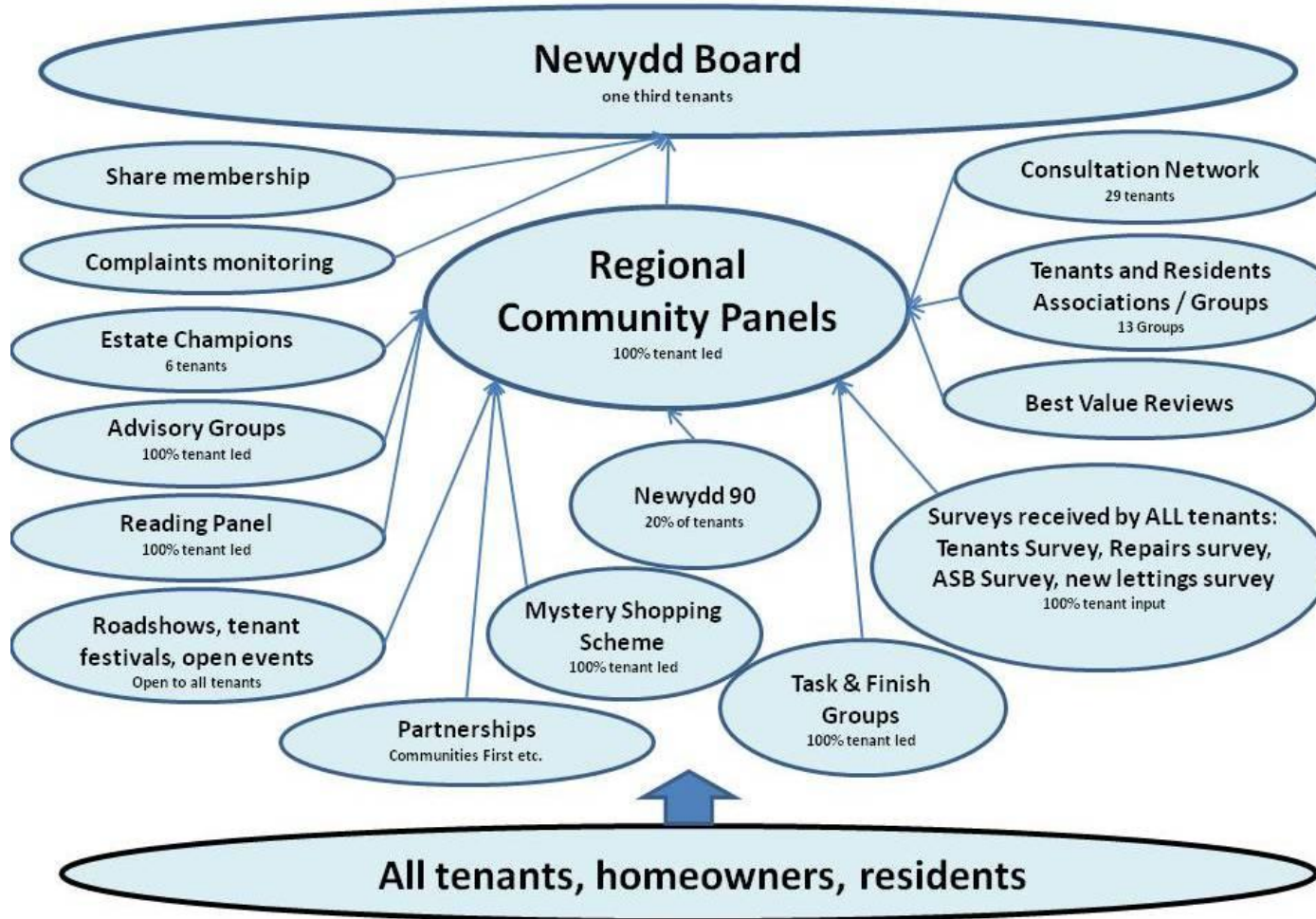
- Developing the improvements implemented by the 2007/8 version of the Residents Involvement Strategy (RSI v1)
- Acting on the Customer Insight obtained through RSI v1
- Developing more effective ways of allowing the tenants to "test" the Association's services.

SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY

Newydd Housing Association is committed to resident involvement and ensuring that all residents have the opportunity to participate in a meaningful way, and that the involvement of residents affects ALL of the Association's landlord services.

The term "resident" refers to the "Community of Interest" around locations where Newydd Housing Association owns stock. From the Tenants Survey, it is clear that tenants want the Association to target its resources at the communities in which the Association's residents live, and not try to spread the resources over a wider area which will have limited effect on the Association's communities.

DIAGRAM OF RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT IN NEWYDD



THE CURRENT POSITION & PROGRESS SINCE RSI v1

Resident Participation Methods

Community Panels – In 2007 consultation began with all residents groups to form Community Panels. The Panels are solely made up of tenants, and tenants decide the format and agenda for each meeting. The aim of the Panels is to look at performance, policy, customer care, consultation and to represent views of tenants. The Panels are formed by representatives from individual tenants and residents groups, individual tenants who represent an area (Estate Champions), and by representatives of a number of sub-groups such as a disabilities sub-group, youth sub-group, BME sub-group etc.

The Community Involvement budget is available to provide for crèche facilities, interpreting facilities or any other assistance tenants may need to attend and participate in the Community Panels.

Whilst there is no guaranteed board member place from the Panels to the main Newydd Board, Chairs of the Community Panels will be encouraged to stand for election and there are likely to be other candidates for the election to the Board (see below) from the Panels. Community Panel activity will be reported to Board on a quarterly basis.

The first year of operation of the Community Panels has been a huge success and a review will be carried out during the next year to review the way forward. Several issues which have been raised during the year need to be addressed:

- Membership of the Panels
- Role of the Panels
- Number of Panels (regional or organisational)

Advisory Groups

Since 2007 sub-groups have developed to specifically deal with gay and lesbian issues and disability issues. There has been overwhelming support for both groups and therefore during this year it is intended that the following advisory groups should be developed:

- Youth Advisory Group
- Minority Ethnic Advisory Group
- Sheltered Housing Advisory Group
- Supported Housing Advisory Group

Task & Finish Groups

Since Community Panels were formed, they have set up three Task & Finish Groups during 2008:

- Anti-Social Behaviour Task & Finish Group
- Service Charge Task & Finish Group

- Maintenance Task & Finish Group

The Task & Finish Groups have been successful in involving tenants who are only concerned about individual issues and do not want to become involved with the generic approach of the Community Panels.

The Task & Finish Groups will continue to be used as directed by the Community Panels.

Further developing the use of Community Panels, Advisory Groups and Task & Finish Groups will directly address the following strategy aims:

- Review and update existing tenant involvement routes established through previous tenant participation policies and strategies as set out by Best Value reviews and continuous improvement activities
- Develop new and innovative methods of involving residents to ensure that the widest possible number of residents are involved
- Ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- Continue to develop involvement from minority and currently under-represented groups of residents
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident's needs
- Ensure full staff commitment to resident involvement
- Develop clear service standards for resident involvement
- Develop and publish monitoring of the effectiveness of resident and community involvement
- Offer and provide training to residents to become effectively involved
- Involve residents in annually reviewing this strategy

Tenant's Groups – The Association has been very successful in encouraging Tenant and Resident groups to form. However the link between the groups and the Association has always been on a traditional basis and has usually been facilitated by Housing Officers. The Association has now strengthened that link to provide a direct route between the Tenants & Resident group to the Community Panels. The Tenants Survey 2008 has demonstrated that the Association may have reached (or be approaching) saturation point with Tenants and Residents Groups and concentration will now turn to involving individuals who are unable, or do not wish, to set up Tenants & Residents Groups. However, desire for new Groups will be monitored to ensure that opportunities to develop new Groups are grasped.

To ensure the groups sustainability and to improve the outcomes of setting the estates, the Association will use the Community Development budget to facilitate training for Tenants groups.

Continuing to support and develop Tenants and Residents groups will directly address the following strategy aims:

- Review and update existing tenant involvement routes established through previous tenant participation policies and strategies as set out by Best Value reviews and continuous improvement activities
- Continue to develop involvement from minority and currently under-represented groups of residents
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident's needs
- Ensure full staff commitment to resident involvement
- Develop and publish monitoring of the effectiveness of resident and community involvement
- Set out the way that Tenants groups are encouraged, assisted, developed and funded
- Offer and provide training to residents to become effectively involved
- Involve residents in annually reviewing this strategy

Board Membership – Newydd Housing Association currently has three tenant Board members on the Association's board. The Association agreed at its 2007 Annual General Meeting to reserve a third of the board member places for tenants elected members which would currently allow for four tenant Board members.

During 2008 nominations for Board membership were only received from the three members who now sit on the Board. A Newydd 90 exercise will be carried out to assess the reasons for only three tenants putting their names forward, and following analysis of the results actions will be taken to try to increase the number of interested tenants for election in 2009.

The next election process will be carried out early in 2009. Following the 2009 AGM the tenant elected members will become full Board members and be able to directly influence the strategic direction of the Association. In the interim it is proposed to co-opt any interested tenant members.

Expanding the membership of the Association's Board will directly address the following strategy aims:

- Review and update existing tenant involvement routes established through previous tenant participation policies and strategies as set out by Best Value reviews and continuous improvement activities
- Ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident's needs
- Ensure full staff commitment to resident involvement
- Develop clear service standards for resident involvement
- Develop and publish monitoring of the effectiveness of resident and community involvement
- Involve residents in annually reviewing this strategy

Tenant members of Audit Committee - Audit Committee is currently made up of Board Members and one space is reserved for (and taken by) a tenant Board member.

Involving a tenant in the membership of the Audit Committee will directly address the following strategy aims:

- Develop new and innovative methods of involving residents to ensure that the widest possible number of residents are involved
- Ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident's needs
- Ensure full staff commitment to resident involvement

Tenant Shareholders – The Association currently has an open shareholder policy by which any tenant, in accordance with the Association's rules, can become a shareholder and vote at the Annual General Meeting. However, at present there are only 52 sharemembers of which only 37 (1.6%) are Newydd tenants.

A Newydd 90 survey will be carried out to assess why more tenants are not share members and, once analysed, actions will be taken to increase the numbers of tenant share members to 230 (10%).

Increasing the numbers of tenants who are shareholders will assist in meeting the following strategy aims:

- Review and update existing tenant involvement routes established through the previous Resident Involvement Strategy and as set out by continuous improvement activities
- Further develop both new and innovative methods and existing methods of involving residents to ensure that the widest possible number of residents are involved
- Continue to ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- Continue to develop involvement from minority and currently under-represented groups of residents
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident's needs
- Continue to ensure full staff commitment to resident involvement

Annual General Meeting – In 2008 the Association held a Tenants Festival around the Annual General Meeting. The aim of the event was three fold – it was to inform tenants of the changes that have been made as a result of their involvement in the Association; to test out opinion in a number of areas to focus future consultation activity; and it is to increase tenant attendance and involvement in the Annual General Meeting of the Association.

The 2008 AGM had the highest tenant attendance for some considerable years and received very positive feedback from attendees. However, it was a costly exercise and tenants who did not attend have questioned whether it is an effective way to spend their rents. Therefore it is proposed that a smaller, arts-based event will take place around the AGM in 2009.

The tenant event prior to the AGM assists in meeting the following strategy aims:

- Develop new and innovative methods of involving residents to ensure that the widest possible number of residents are involved
- Ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- Continue to develop involvement from minority and currently under-represented groups of residents
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident's needs
- Develop and publish monitoring of the effectiveness of resident and community involvement

Tenant Involvement in Best Value - The Association is committed to continuous improvement and believes that tenants should be at the heart of the process to achieve that improvement. Therefore best value reviews will continue to involve tenants in the working group that is carrying the review out. This ensures that all improvements are for the benefit of the end user. Every relevant best value review will have tenants as members of the review group.

Ensuring tenant involvement in the delivery of Best Value reviews will directly address the following strategy aims:

- Review and update existing tenant involvement routes established through previous tenant participation policies and strategies as set out by Best Value reviews and continuous improvement activities
- Ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident's needs
- Ensure full staff commitment to resident involvement

Tenant Feedback Methods

Newydd 90 – The Association uses a questionnaire based system for consulting on a range of subjects. Any tenant can join Newydd 90 and will receive up to four questionnaires a year on subjects decided by Newydd 90 members. There is a £100 prize draw selected at random from all the returned questionnaires to encourage participation. At September 2008 there were 476 registered members of Newydd 90 (21% of all Newydd tenants). This represents an increase of 69% in membership since September 2007. The average response rate remains at approximately 40%. Responses and actions following the response are set out in a flyer to all Newydd 90 members

at the following survey, and are reported to all tenants through “In View” (Newydd’s tenant magazine).

Given the enormous success of the scheme, it is proposed to continue the scheme and continue to ensure its effective use. Topics proposed duration the next year include branding and tenant involvement.

Continuing the development of Newydd 90 will directly address the following strategy aims:

- Review and update existing tenant involvement routes established through previous tenant participation policies and strategies as set out by Best Value reviews and continuous improvement activities
- Develop new and innovative methods of involving residents to ensure that the widest possible number of residents are involved
- Ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- Continue to monitor and develop involvement from minority and currently under-represented groups of residents
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident’s needs
- Develop clear service standards for resident involvement
- Develop and publish monitoring of the effectiveness of resident and community involvement

Reading Panel – The Association currently has a Reading Panel made up of tenants who review the published material from the Association and suggest ways to improve its readability. The most recent example of this is when the Reading Panel reviewed all the Associations Service Standards and made recommendations on improvements.

Continuing the use of the Reading Panels will directly address the following strategy aims:

- Review and update existing tenant involvement routes established through previous tenant participation policies and strategies as set out by Best Value reviews and continuous improvement activities
- Ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident’s needs

Tenants’ Festivals – In 2008 the Association held a tenants festival in Fonmon Castle. The attendance at the festival was tremendous with over 800 people registered to attend. The events are aimed to be both fun for the attendees, but also encourage participation (whilst the children are amused). In order to address concerns raised by tenants about venue, cost, purpose and an overload of consultation at these events, it is proposed to hold a form

of photography/art competition which will culminate in an Awards Ceremony and exhibition at the Associations 2009 AGM.

Continuing the annual Tenants Festival will address the following strategy aims:

- Review and update existing tenant involvement routes established through previous tenant participation policies and strategies as set out by Best Value reviews and continuous improvement activities
- Continue to develop involvement from minority and currently under-represented groups of residents
- Ensure full staff commitment to resident involvement

Tenant's Survey – The Association's last Tenant's Survey was carried out in 2008 and followed a STATUS based format used in England. The response rate was over 30% (700 responses) and the outcomes of the survey are directing the Association's services. A smaller survey will be carried out before September 2010.

The results of the survey are used to direct the services of the Association, assist in developing the strategy of the Association and also to focus the activities of the Community Involvement section. Responses from the surveys outline the issues that face residents that may need addressing by community development activities which the Community Involvement section can tackle.

The use of the Tenant's Survey will directly address the following strategy aims:

- Review and update existing tenant involvement routes established through previous tenant participation policies and strategies as set out by Best Value reviews and continuous improvement activities
- Develop new and innovative methods of involving residents to ensure that the widest possible number of residents are involved
- Ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- Continue to develop involvement from minority and currently under-represented groups of residents
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident's needs
- Develop and publish monitoring of the effectiveness of resident and community involvement

The Consultation Network – At the Association's Annual General Meeting in September 2007, the Consultation Network was launched. This scheme is aimed to provide even more consultation options for residents by asking for volunteers to register their interest in various aspects of the Association's services. A database is then created to hold their responses and a list of interested tenants can then be produced to be consulted on any aspect of changes or performances. This is a very effective way of consulting as it engages with people who want to be consulted, logging their preferred

subjects and method of consulting, and prevents the Association from consulting those who do not wish to be consulted.

The Network has been used on a number of occasions, but needs further development to expand its membership. The Network is aimed to run alongside Newydd 90 (see above) but be more flexible to changes needed and provide faster response times.

Developing the Consultation Network will address the following strategy aims:

- Develop new and innovative methods of involving residents to ensure that the widest possible number of residents are involved
- Ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- Continue to develop involvement from minority and currently under-represented groups of residents
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement is developed in response to resident's needs
- Involve residents in annually reviewing this strategy

Tenant led Mystery Shopping - During 2008 the Association trained a number of tenant mystery shoppers to undertake mystery shopping against the developed Service Standards. The mystery shopping was carried out quarterly and reported to the Community Panels and Newydd Board.

Interest in surveyed tenants both through the Tenants Survey 2008 and through Newydd 90 indicates a number of tenants interested in participating in this project. It is proposed to recruit more mystery shoppers and to develop the scenarios to further test the service standards

Tenant led mystery shopping will address the following strategy aims:

- Further develop both new and innovative methods and existing methods of involving residents to ensure that the widest possible number of residents are involved
- Continue to ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident's needs
- Continue to ensure full staff commitment to resident involvement
- Monitor and review the service standards for resident involvement
- Develop and publish monitoring of the effectiveness of resident and community involvement

Tenant Inspection - It is proposed for 2008/9 that the Association develops the Tenant lead Mystery Shopping scheme further to allow for more detailed Tenant Inspections.

In order to progress this it is proposed to hold a Tenant Inspection Conference for interested tenants, run a Newydd 90 to establish the remit of the Tenant

Inspectors, train at least 10 tenants as Inspectors and to develop a strategy for Tenant Inspectors.

It is proposed that the Inspections would take the form of:

- Mystery shopping (see above)
- Active surveying of service users
- Shadowing of staff
- Visits eg. to assess estate conditions, assess voids ready to let etc.
- 3rd party inspections eg. shadowing contractors
- Working with Internal Auditors to desk top audit

Developing a tenant inspection scheme will address the following strategy aims:

- Further develop both new and innovative methods and existing methods of involving residents to ensure that the widest possible number of residents are involved
- Continue to ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident's needs
- Continue to ensure full staff commitment to resident involvement
- Monitor and review the service standards for resident involvement
- Develop and publish monitoring of the effectiveness of resident and community involvement

Other Areas of Resident Involvement

Underrepresented Groups – During 2007/8 involvement from underrepresented groups was enhanced considerably with the successful development of the N.E.A.D.S. Advisory Group and the Gay & Lesbian Advisory Group. However, at present involvement from ethnic minorities, youth and supported residents is limited.

The Association will continue to encourage involvement for everyone and, as part of the Community Panels will set up sub-groups for specific underrepresented areas. The Association will continue to encourage involvement in this groups, and will work with external agencies such as Tai Pawb and Age Concern to develop the groups.

Developing the involvement of underrepresented groups will address the following strategy aims:

- Review and update existing tenant involvement routes established through previous tenant participation policies and strategies as set out by Best Value reviews and continuous improvement activities
- Develop new and innovative methods of involving residents to ensure that the widest possible number of residents are involved
- Ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association

- Continue to develop involvement from minority and currently under-represented groups of residents
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident's needs
- Develop clear service standards for resident involvement
- Develop and publish monitoring of the effectiveness of resident and community involvement
- Set out the way that Tenants Groups are encouraged, assisted, developed and funded
- Offer and provide training to residents to become effectively involved
- Involve residents in annually reviewing this strategy

Staff Commitment – The Association works hard to ensure that Community Involvement is not seen as a stand-alone service and that all members of the Group adopt the key principle that it is the responsibility of all.

To improve the staff's commitment to resident involvement it is proposed that:

- The same information given to tenants at sign up regarding involvement opportunities be given to staff at induction
- Competencies be reviewed to include a clear competency on customer involvement, recognising that **all** posts play a part in customer involvement
- Appraisals be reviewed to ensure that the customer involvement competency is discussed at each appraisal
- Ensure all staff attend at least one tenant event per year
- Ensure all departments recognise and contribute to Resident & Tenant Group meetings, Community Panels and all other forms of resident involvement
- Community Involvement Officers to attend departmental staff meetings to discuss current and future activities at least once per year
- Customer Involvement will form part of one Group Briefing per year where a review of activities and proposals for further activities will be discussed
- Continue the role of the Board Involvement Champion

Ensuring staff commitment to customer involvement will meet the following strategy aims:

- Ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident's needs
- Ensure full staff commitment to resident involvement

Community Involvement section – The Community Involvement section has been operating in its present structure for over one year now and has demonstrated considerable success in projects to improve the consultation and involvement of tenants and the Community of Interest.

The work of the Community Involvement section will continue to principally focus on:

- Responding to surveys – The Community Involvement Officers will need to directly respond to the outcomes of the Association’s Tenant Survey 2008, Newydd 90’s and other surveys and plan community development activities to address the issues raised. For example, the CI Officers could develop a trail biking scheme in response to concerns raised in the survey about nuisance from youths on bikes near an estate. Success of the actions of the Community Involvement team will be measured by subsequent surveys.
- Estate action plans – Estate Action Plans have been created and piloted in some estates, but their value is questionable and it may be more effective to carry out individual estate “audits”, where staff visit estates to encourage tenant involvement and the setting up of Tenants Groups where appropriate and assess the issues for residents. The Roadshows carried out in 2008 were an effective way of engaging with local residents and will be continued for 2009. A review of the use of Estate Action Plans will need to be carried out.
- Supporting existing, and developing new tenants groups in order to ensure the widespread involvement of residents in the Association’s services. This will include supporting the groups to make bids under the Tenants Group funding scheme and assisting the Housing Managers in making recommendations to the Newydd Board for annual funding awards
- Taking the lead in encouraging underrepresented groups to get involved through involvement with specialist agencies such as Tai Pawb
- Running of annual Tenants Festivals, supporting local events where appropriate
- Accessing funds for local communities – The CI team will assist local groups in obtaining funding, internal Newydd funding and external funding, to provide activities that improve the quality of life for the communities
- Effectively spending the Community Involvement budget to ensure that the best outcomes are achieved with the resources available. Ensuring appropriate bids are made to attract funds to improve the quality of life for the Community of Interest in line with other objectives within this strategy. Annual reports will be provided to Community Panels on what the budget has been spent on (which includes Tenant & Resident Group funding)
- Improving the commitment of staff to customer involvement – the CI Officers will attend internal departmental meetings to discuss customer involvement activities and provide assistance in the individual departments improving their own involvement activities. The CI Officers will also present an annual review of Customer Involvement activities at a Group Briefing
- Assisting external stakeholders in improving the quality of life for the “Community of Interest” (defined above)

The work of the Community Involvement section will address the following aims of this strategy:

- Review and update existing tenant involvement routes established through previous tenant participation policies and strategies as set out by Best Value reviews and continuous improvement activities
- Develop new and innovative methods of involving residents to ensure that the widest possible number of residents are involved
- Ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- Continue to develop involvement from minority and currently under-represented groups of residents
- React and change the way the service, and in particular involvement, is developed in response to resident's needs
- Ensure full staff commitment to resident involvement
- Develop clear service standards for resident involvement
- Develop and publish monitoring of the effectiveness of resident and community involvement
- Set out the annually reviewed resources available for community involvement
- Set out the way that Tenants Groups are encouraged, assisted, developed and funded
- Offer and provide training to residents to become effectively involved
- Involve residents in annually reviewing this strategy

Performance Monitoring – The Association currently monitors performance in Resident Involvement through the following means:

- Tenant Surveys
- Six-monthly meetings with the Board Champion to discuss progress and seek direction
- Recording the number of staff attendances at Tenant & Resident Group meetings
- Record of Community Panel meetings
- Records of Advisory Group meetings
- Records of Task & Finish Group meetings
- Records of tenant involvement in estate management
- Responses to Maintenance & Service Charge questionnaires
- Responses to Newydd 90
- Record of Community Involvement activities
- Quarterly Board reports on activities

Monitoring the performance of Community Involvement will address the following strategy aims:

- Ensure resident involvement covers all aspects of the landlord function of the Association
- Continue to develop involvement from minority and currently under-represented groups of residents
- Develop and publish monitoring of the effectiveness of resident and community involvement

The Funding of Tenant's Groups – In December 2005, the Association reviewed the funding strategy for Tenants and Residents Groups. The strategy adopted involved any tenants group being able to bid for part of the £35,000 (as at 2007/08) in order to meet a number of aims. It was agreed that the aims would be reviewed part way through the first year of operation. A new set of criteria has been developed to assess bids for the funding year April 2008-March 2009. Where requested funding of up to £250 will be provided to any recognised tenants and residents group which will not require clear spending proposals at the beginning of the year. This is to encourage new groups to develop and operate without the burden of planning a year in advance. It is envisaged much of this funding may provide training in committee skills, keeping accounts etc.

Any funding over £250 will be subject to the following criteria:

- a clear annual action plan
- increasing (or retaining) participation in an area
- timetable for spending the money
- clear budgetary breakdown
- clear aims/targets (for example to increase attendance at participation events by 10%)
- measureable outcomes
- as far as possible, all (geographical) area of the estates and age ranges are represented
- clear strategy for marketing events within the locality and with tenants
- compliance with the Association's Equal Opportunities Policy
- an annual report on spending for Newydd Board / Community Panels

Priority will be given to groups

- attempting to increase participation of hard to reach groups
- responding to issues raised by the Tenants Survey 2008
- who manage to attract external fundraising or have clear fundraising strategy to match the allocation from Newydd
- whose events promote financial/digital inclusion, tackling anti social behaviour or combating labour market exclusion (worklessness)

The funding can go towards grants to groups, the cost of leaflets, projects, match-funding, newsletters, seminars, administration and other expenses.

The provision of Association property for use by Tenant's & Resident's Groups ("Community Flats") cannot be funded through this route and must be paid for through the service charge for the estate.

Training costs will be met from Newydd Housing Association's budgets.

Bids must be made to the Head of Housing for approval and will be ratified at Newydd Board each year.

Appeals against awards made can be directed to the Housing Director and will be heard by the Newydd Board.

All spending will be audited by Community Involvement Officers on an annual basis.

Where projects that have been funded through this route fail, any remaining money must be returned to the Association. If the project did not meet the originally agreed aims, the Newydd Board has the discretion to decide if the spent funds should be recovered.

Funding Tenants and Residents Groups assists in achieving the following strategy aims:

- Continue to develop involvement from minority and currently under-represented groups of residents
- Develop and publish monitoring of the effectiveness of resident and community involvement
- Set out the annually reviewed resources available for community involvement
- Set out the way that Tenants Groups are encouraged, assisted, developed and funded

Training for residents – Training is provided to residents through various means both in-house and via external agencies. Tenants Group members are invited to attend conferences to expand their knowledge of housing services good practise and new initiatives within the field of housing. The Association makes available attendance at the TPAS Cymru conference to Community Panel members and tenants and residents groups.

The Association will carry out annual training needs assessments of tenants and residents groups to address areas where there is a skills gap. Training will then be provided subject to the budgets being available.

Providing training for tenants and residents groups will address the following aims of the strategy:

- Review and update existing tenant involvement routes established through previous tenant participation policies and strategies as set out by Best Value reviews and continuous improvement activities
- Set out the annually reviewed resources available for community involvement
- Set out the way that Tenants Groups are encouraged, assisted, developed and funded
- Offer and provide training to residents to become effectively involved

Welsh Housing Quality Standard (WHQS) – The Association recognises that tenant involvement in the delivery of the WHQS is paramount. The consultation and participation routes outlined above will form the principal mechanisms for implementing involvement. The Association will also revise its participation for WHQS in accordance with the “Tenant Capacity Building and the WHQS” document expected to be published in the near future.

Partnership Working for Participation – The Association will consult and work with its principal partners in the delivery of service improvements through tenant participation. The key stakeholder organisations are Vale of Glamorgan Council, Rhondda Cynon Taff CBC, Neath Port Talbot CBC, Powys County Council and Vale Housing Federation.

Engagement of Other Residents - The Association will continue to engage with other residents through a variety of means:

- Partnerships with Local Authorities
- Partnerships with Town Councils (where possible)
- Regular liaison with local members
- Attendance at relevant Communities First/Next groups
- Involving organisations in Task & Finish Groups and Advisory Groups where appropriate
- Attendance at relevant local groups – eg. VCVS, Vale Housing Federation, Valleys Kids

Mainstreaming Resident Involvement within Newydd HA – It is proposed that in order to ensure resident involvement is reflected as a corporate activity, all future development of new policies and policy reviews of existing policies include a statement of how resident involvement was used to develop/review the policy. It is proposed there are four levels of involvement used which need to be referred to on the front page of any policy. The four levels are:

Level 1. Consultation through the Community Panel and Tenant's Groups – it is proposed that tenants are consulted on policies should have this level of consultation as a minimum

Level 2. Consultation through Level 1 and Newydd 90 – it is proposed that major changes to current policies be tested through Newydd 90 to ensure there is resident support

Level 3. Through Level 1 and specifically arranged consultation – Fundamental changes to policies, the development of minor policies, local initiatives or capital investment programmes will need to be tested through face to face contact with groups set up specifically to discuss the policy. The group can be in the form of a Task & Finish Group, a Best Value Group, one of the Advisory Groups (if appropriate) or a specific group set up from members of the Consultation Network.

Level 4. Through the previous levels and a mail out to all tenants – If a policy development will affect all tenants individually (such as a change to a rent setting policy), or clear consensus cannot be reached through the previous levels, then a mail shot to all tenants with an option to respond through freepost or email will be used.

Access to Financial Information – In order to ensure tenants have access to detailed financial information regarding the Association, and to ensure that tenants have a role in the decision making process around finances, two Community Panel meetings per year will be themed on finance. One of the meetings will be held during the budget setting process to ensure tenant priorities are taken into account.

Access to Other Information About the Organisation – In accordance with the Association’s policy on Access to Information About the Organisation, information regarding the Association is available for tenants to view and comment on.

Issues raised by the Tenants Survey 2008 – The following issues have been raised by the Tenants Survey carried out in 2008 and either support issued raised above or require further research and development:

Flexible approach to Community Involvement – The survey brought up that tackling the issues that prevent the full engagement of the community and removing the barriers to involvement were very important to progressing the involvement role in the Association. “Traditional” forms of involvement such as Residents Associations and open meetings were working but were possibly reaching saturation point and alternatives need to be develop to engage with the remainder of residents

Format of Residents Associations – The survey suggested that there was little support for developing more Residents Associations and that the focus should be on reviewing and, where appropriate adapting, the format to allow residents to raise issues without the formality of chairs, agendas, membership etc. which may be perceived as barriers to involvement.

Digital Inclusion – the was high usage of the internet and email, but low contact with the Association through this route which may be as the Association is not promoting this area.

Anti-social behaviour – Perceptions of anti-social behaviour were considered to be the most important issue for tenants with litter, vandalism and lack of play areas for children being raised as development areas.

Review of Community Panels – there was perceived to be a limited knowledge of the Association’s principal involvement routes, even though there had been significant publicity during the year. However, they were less than one year old and it was felt that whilst there needs to be a review of Community Panels after one year, that it is too early to be concerned about the lack of recognition for these routes.

Financial Exclusion / Inclusion – There were some concerning results around financial inclusion and it was recommended that this strategy should develop the Association’s Financial Inclusion Strategy and drive its implementation, linking in with Fuel Poverty and Affordable Warmth.

Worklessness – Issues around employment and training should be developed as the Association is able to offer employment and training opportunities to its tenants and families.

REVIEW OF THE STRATEGY

The strategy will be reviewed annually in September and an updated action plan will be produced outlining the performance of the previous year. The review will be presented to Tenants and Residents Groups, Senior Management Team, Community Panels and Newydd Board. A summary will be produced for the Tenant Involvement Newsletter.

Measuring the Effectiveness

The Action Plan has been developed to ensure that each action has clear ownership, a deadline and a measureable outcome. The Strategy as a whole will, as part of the annual review measure the effectiveness of the participation of the Association through strict record keeping and assessment of progress through the Action Plan.

Resident Involvement Strategy

ACTION PLAN October 2008

Newydd 90

Action	Responsibility	Deadline	Measureable Outcomes	Progress
Further promote Newydd 90	Head of Housing	September 2009	Maintain 20% of current tenants in membership of the scheme	
Maintain 40% response rate for Newydd 90	Housing Director	September 2009	Achieve 40% response rate	

Community Panels & Advisory Groups

Review Community Panels	Head of Housing, Community Involvement Officers	September 2009	Newydd 90 on involvement; Community Panel review of past year	
Develop Advisory Groups namely: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minority Ethnic sub-group • Youth sub-group • Sheltered Housing sub-group • Supported Housing sub-group 	Community Involvement Officers	September 2009	Set up each sub-group	
Give access to Community Panels to financial information	Finance & Resources Director	September 2009	Hold two finance themed Community Panel meetings with one during the budget setting process	

Tenants & Residents Groups

Assess and monitor the desire for Tenants and Residents Group to set up	Community Involvement Officers	September 2009	Survey unrepresented estates of more than 10 properties	
Encourage and provide training for tenants and residents groups	Community Involvement Officers	September 2009	Re-run annual survey of all TRA's to ensure training needs are met.	
Analyse self-evaluation forms for Tenants &	Community Involvement	December 2008	Quarterly returns from Tenants	

Residents groups to assess their effectiveness on an annual basis	Officers		Groups	
Encourage all recognised tenants and residents groups to put forward bids for funding in accordance with the strategy	Community Involvement Officers	December 2008	Total spend requested for funding tenants and residents groups	

Governance

Publicise tenant board membership and carry out election process	Chief Executive	September 2009	Four tenants places are filled	
Carry out Newydd 90 on governance to assess tenants appetite to become board members	Housing Director	November 2008	Encourage enough tenants to stand for election to Board in 2009	
Carry out Newydd 90 on governance to assess tenants appetite to become share members	Housing Director	November 2008	Analyse results of Newydd 90	
Encourage tenants to take share membership	Chief Executive	December 2009	Have more than 230 (10%) tenants as share members	
Hold a tenant's event in conjunction with AGM	Community Involvement Officers	September 2009	Ensure every tenant who wants to be involved is involved	
Continue to support a tenant Board member on Audit Committee	Chief Executive	October 2008	One member of Audit Committee is a tenant Board member	

Other Consultation Routes

Continue the Reading Panel	Head of Housing	September 2009	All published documents to be reviewed by Panel	
Continue to ensure that every Best Value Service Review has tenants as part of the review group	Chief Executive	September 2009	Every best value review group will have a tenant member	
Review the use of the Consultation Network and, if appropriate,	Head of Housing	September 2009	300 members of the Network	

publicise and increase membership of The Consultation Network				
Continue to publicise involvement options through newsletter	Head of Housing	September 2009	Publish another tenant involvement newsletter ("Involve")	

Tenant Inspections

Continue Tenant Mystery Shopping Scheme	Head of Housing	September 2009	Quarterly reports on performance against service standards	
Recruit more tenant mystery shoppers	Community Involvement Officers	September 2009	30 tenant mystery shoppers	
Develop scenarios to more accurately test Service Standards	Head of Housing	December 2008	Full set of scenarios	
Hold "Tenant Inspection" Conference	Housing Director	February 2009	Decision on what areas should be tested through Tenant Inspection	
Carry out Newydd 90 on Tenant Inspections	Housing Director	June 2009	Analysed responses on Inspection	
Provide training to 10 potential tenant inspectors	Community Involvement Officers	September 2009	10 trained Inspectors	
Develop Tenant Inspection Strategy	Housing Director	September 2009	Tenant Inspection Strategy approved by Community Panels, Audit Committee and Board	

Resident Involvement Strategy

Analyse 2008 Tenants Survey and incorporate findings into Resident Involvement Strategy	Housing Director	December 2008	Analyse tenants survey; Produce revised Resident Involvement Strategy	
Review Resident Involvement Strategy	Housing Director	September 2009	Report to Newydd Board	
Discuss reviewed Resident Involvement	Head of Housing	October 2009	Report to Newydd Board	

Strategy with TRA's & Community Panels				
Publish review of Resident Involvement Strategy	Head of Housing	November 2009	Article in newsletter	

Staff Commitment

Review staff induction procedure to include tenant involvement options	Human Resources Manager / Head of Housing	September 2009		
Allocate one Group Briefing to Community Involvement to promote current themes and activities	Community Involvement Officers	September 2009	All staff aware of Community Involvement and importance of involving tenants	
Subject to review of competencies, review competencies to include a customer involvement competency	Human Resources Manager	September 2009	Clear involvement competency	
Subject to review of competencies, review staff competencies to assess level	All Managers	September 2009	Every staff member to have competency on customer involvement	
Subject to review of competencies, review appraisals to ensure that customer involvement competency is discussed at each appraisal	All Managers	September 2009	Every appraisal to review staff member customer involvement competency	
Continue to ensure staff attend at least one tenant event per year	All Managers	September 2009	Every staff member to have attended an event	
Ensure departmental involvement in Resident Involvement activities where required	Senior Management Team	September 2009	Minuted attendance from staff	
CI Officers to attend departmental meetings annually to discuss current and future activities	Community Involvement Officers	September 2009	Attendance at least one meeting per department per year	
Encourage tenants to become employed by Newydd Housing	Community Involvement Officers / HR	September 2009	5% of staff to be tenants of the Association	

Association	Manager			
Encourage tenants to train within social housing	Community Involvement Officers / HR Manager	September 2009	1 tenant to be a "sponsored student", employed by the Association during Easter & Summer	
Encourage work experience of social housing	Community Involvement Officers / HR Manager	September 2009	1 tenant to be employed during summer to assist with Community Involvement / Housing activities	

Issues raised by Tenants Survey 2008

Identify the barriers to involvement through engaging with tenants who are not currently involved	Community Involvement Officers	April 2009	Identifiable barriers	
Review the alternative approaches for the use of 'traditional' Residents Groups for engaging Communities, giving tenants the opportunity to engage when they want	Community Involvement Officers	September 2009	Increase involvement through alternative methods	
Set up Newydd email addresses for chairs of all tenants & residents groups (who have access to the internet)	Housing Director	February 2009	All chairs accessible by email	
Pilot wireless internet connection (subject to funding)	Housing Director / Head of IS	September 2009	Two Newydd estates to have wireless internet connection	
Develop strategy for Community Involvement in low level anti-social behaviour (youth annoyance, litter, vandalism, play areas / activities for children)	Community Involvement Officers	September 2009	Strategy launched	
Set up Financial Inclusion working group of staff and tenants to implement Financial Inclusion Strategy	Community Involvement Officers	January 2009	Group launched	

Develop Affordable Warm / Fuel Poverty Strategy	Property Director	September 2009	Strategy implemented	
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Miscellaneous

Review relevance of estate actions plans for each estate of over 10 Newydd properties	Community Involvement Officers; Housing Officers/Assistants	September 2009	Decision on use of Estate Action Plans	
Provide summary of spending of Community Involvement budget on an annual basis to Community Panels	Community Involvement Officers	June 2009	Paper on budget spending provided to each Community Panel	
Continue to monitor effectiveness of Community Involvement role with Board Involvement Champion	Community Involvement Officers; Board Champion	September 2009	Six-monthly meetings held	
Test Involvement options with a Newydd 90 survey	Housing Director	September 2009	Assessment of success of current involvement options	
Mainstream involvement across the organisation	Chief Executive	September 2009	Ensure all new or reviewed policies involve tenants to the levels set out in the strategy	
Support tenant volunteers who give time to the Association to be involved	Community Involvement Officers	March 2009	Develop "Volunteer Policy" setting out training and appraisal support for tenant volunteers	