

**TENANT
INVOLVEMENT
STRATEGY**

17/20



**Your Choice
Your Voice**

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Foreword



Michael McDonnell
Group Chief Executive

Welcome to the first Choice Tenant Involvement Strategy covering the period 2017 – 2020.

I am delighted to introduce our vision for tenant engagement and the associated Action Plan for the next 3 years.

This Strategy outlines how Choice intends to engage and consult with tenants and demonstrates how we will support you to get involved with your Association.

Genuine engagement with tenants is vital for the successful delivery of our services.

We are committed to putting tenants at the heart of everything we do and to provide that personal touch to ensure we become the landlord of choice. With recent changes in our Tenant and Client Services Directorate – informed by your feedback - it is important to keep tenants involved to help shape the future of our housing services.

I look forward to working in partnership with tenants to improve our services and to create an Association that makes a positive difference to you and the wider community.

Thank you for being a Choice tenant.



Bill Jeffrey
Chair of the
Central Forum

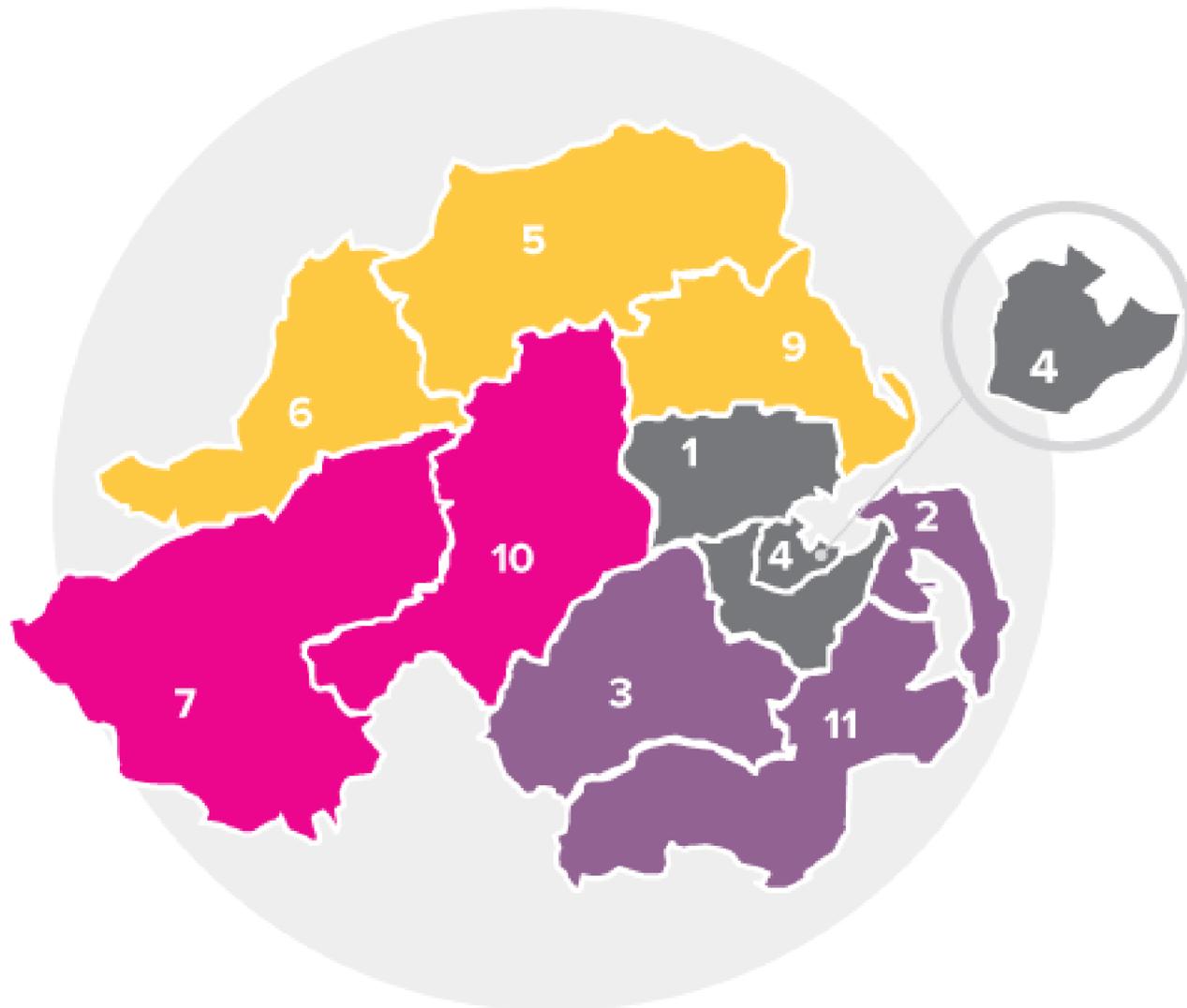
My rich and broad history with tenant involvement started over a decade ago and I have thoroughly enjoyed the experiences and many successes achieved for all tenants. I believe it is very important that tenants can participate at whatever level they feel most comfortable.

As Chair of the Tenants' Forum I welcome the range of opportunities that this Strategy and Action Plan offers and I hope tenants will be encouraged to take part and become involved in whatever area suits their lifestyle. However, the focus of the Officers and myself is on a very strong recruitment campaign to the Tenants' Forum right across the Province and we all believe that this much needed drive will achieve success in all areas of tenant involvement.

This Strategy and Action Plan will continue to look after tenants' needs and positively sets out how Choice will deliver tenant involvement to its residents and support them on this journey over the next three years.

I look forward to a continuing positive working relationship with Choice Housing.

Our 4 Tenants' Forum Regional Areas



In each regional area we hold meetings every 8 weeks. We welcome you to join for the area in which you live. If interested contact us on: **0300 111 2211.**

Introduction

Choice Housing Ireland believes that it is essential to consider the views of our tenants with regard to the services and housing schemes we provide.

Choice is committed to placing our customers at the heart of service delivery and we believe that by listening to and taking on board tenants' views, we can ensure that policies and services are more responsive to changing needs and rising aspirations.

The Association recognises it is important to offer a range of involvement methods which are fit for purpose and appropriate to the needs of our tenants, providing the opportunity for tenants to get involved with us on whatever level best suits their lifestyle.

The purpose of this Strategy is to set out the Association's plans for increasing tenant involvement, to ensure our services meet the needs of our customers and to support them in making a difference to the quality of service we provide. Our Core Values are the building blocks of our culture, providing common language and acceptable standards of behaviour.





Tenant Involvement is about tenants taking part in decision making, processes and influencing decisions about their homes

1.1 Context

Following the merger of Oaklee, Trinity, Ulidia, Open Door and SHAC Housing Associations, Choice has not only made progress in the development of our services, it has also continued to ensure tenants are consulted on decisions which may affect them and the quality of service they receive. In partnership with Supporting Communities, an initial tenant consultation exercise was undertaken in 2015 to assist with developing this Strategy. Feedback from that process and other consultation exercises with staff and Tenants' Forum members, together with best practices identified in relation to other tenant involvement strategies have been incorporated within this document. This Strategy is also in compliance with the regulatory standards published by the Department for Communities.

While Choice has produced this Strategy, with the assistance of Supporting Communities, and incorporates the views of tenants that are representative of sheltered and general needs accommodation, the Association is also fully committed to improving its engagement methods with tenants from our care and supported accommodation.



Due to the complex needs of the tenants within the care and supported sector, it is recognised that a separate engagement structure is required, one that is flexible and tailored to reflect the diverse needs of the tenants within this tenure. In order to achieve this, Choice will continue to work with Supporting Communities to develop an effective engagement structure for tenants and clients from our care and supported accommodation, one that will encourage participation in the monitoring and review of housing related services.

1.2 What is Tenant Involvement?

Tenant involvement is about tenants taking part in decision making, processes and influencing decisions about their homes. It is an evolving two way process of communication between tenants and their landlord, whereby:

- Tenants are given a voice to help improve the services received from Choice
- Information and ideas are shared between tenants, Choice staff and Board/Committee members
- The quality of services provided are improved and the level of customer satisfaction increased.



1.3 Regulations Guiding Tenant Involvement Activities

The Department for Communities introduced a new Tenant Participation Strategy to its Regulatory Framework. This requires all housing associations in Northern Ireland to:

- Develop a Tenant Involvement Strategy by 2017
- Consult with tenants in the development of services and policies.

The Department for Communities has stated that:

“This strategy is not intended to interfere with existing good practice. Its aim is to build upon it and challenge all social housing landlords to increase the extent and effectiveness of tenant participation in their individual organisations”.

Guidance from Department for Communities sets out 10 key principles:

1. Tenant participation comes from and promotes a culture of mutual trust, respect and partnership between tenants, board members and staff at all levels. It exists when all these interests work together towards a common goal of better housing conditions and housing services.
2. Tenant participation is a continuous process. Participants share information, ideas and influence. They work towards a common understanding of problems and a consensus on solutions.
3. Good tenant participation is about sharing information. All participants need to have all the information available to consider issues properly. That information needs to be clear, timely and accessible. Information must be in a form that all participants can understand.
4. Decision-making processes should be open, clear and accountable.
5. Tenant representatives should have enough time to consider issues properly. They should have the opportunity to work out a common view before meeting landlord representatives.
6. The landlord must recognise the independence of tenants’ organisations.
7. Good working relations evolve gradually so must be flexible to adapt to local circumstances.
8. Tenants’ organisations need adequate resources for organisation, training and support.
9. Tenant participation in rural areas must suit the particular circumstances and needs of rural tenants.
10. Tenant participation must meet the requirements of legislation on equality and Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998.

As well as following the 10 principles landlords are also required to ensure:

1. Tenants/other service users have a choice in:

- The areas they want to participate in
- The level of participation
- Whether to be involved as an individual or part of a group.

2. Tenants have an opportunity to influence:

- Policy decisions that will affect them
- Decisions that will affect their general area or community
- Services that they receive as an individual user
- Their landlord organisation’s business planning and identification of future priorities.

3. Tenants, particularly under-represented groups, are encouraged and supported to become involved through training and other support mechanisms.

Choice has therefore developed a Tenant Involvement Strategy reflective of the principles contained within the Department’s Regulatory Framework.

Choice is committed to treating people equally and fairly and ensures our service is accessible to all, irrespective of a person's disability, gender, age, race, religious or political belief or sexual orientation.



1.4 Equality

Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 requires public authorities, in carrying out their functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the need to promote equality between all the Section 75 groups. The Department for Communities is also required, in carrying out its functions relating to Northern Ireland, to have due regard to the desirability of promoting good relations between persons of different religious belief, political opinion or racial group.

Choice is committed to treating people equally and fairly and ensures our service is accessible to all, irrespective of a person's disability, gender, age, race, religious or political belief or sexual orientation.

Therefore:

- All groups and individuals involved in our Tenant Involvement Programme will have equal access, be encouraged and supported to participate
- Information is available in a variety of formats including languages, large print on request and is easily understood
- We will identify groups that are under represented and through consultation we will actively encourage them to be involved throughout the period of the Strategy
- In return the Association expects those involved in the Tenant Involvement Programme to promote equality and welcome participation from all our communities.

1.5 Barriers to Involvement

What stops tenants participating is the most fundamental question of any Tenant Involvement Strategy. It is therefore important to identify the barriers and how these can be overcome. Tenant Involvement requires a commitment of time and resources from both Choice and its tenants. We recognise there are many barriers which prevent tenants from engaging with the Association including:

- Lack of training / confidence
- Understanding published information
- Transport
- Child care requirements
- Travel and other expenses
- Time constraints.

Choice is therefore committed to offering practical solutions to make tenant involvement a viable option for as many tenants as possible. These solutions include, but are not limited to:

- Providing training and support for tenants who are committed to engaging with the Association
- Providing information in alternative formats to ensure it can be understood by all
- Providing transport and covering the financial costs incurred by tenants in carrying out their roles
- Offering a wide range of involvement methods to suit all lifestyles
- Arranging meetings at times and locations most accessible to tenants
- Providing practical and financial support to establish resident groups.

Removing Barriers

Facilitate accessible locations and times for meetings and events

Support the creation of new resident groups and support them financially in community events

Provide training to support tenants and information in different formats, joint training for tenants and staff to develop relations

Develop Community Champions to help tenants in our general needs estates who in turn will closely work with staff on the ground

Support tenants with child care or carer costs to encourage greater involvement

Provide transport or pay expenses for travel to attend meetings or events

2.1 Commitment to Tenant Involvement, why it is important to Choice and what are the benefits

Choice has a dedicated Tenant Involvement Team to develop and take forward this Strategy, reflecting our commitment to the tenant participation ethos. This Strategy has been developed in consultation with members of the Tenants' Forum, staff and Supporting Communities. Consultation included:

- A workshop with our Tenants' Forum on the draft Strategy
- Draft Strategy was placed on our website for a 3 week consultative period
- Draft Strategy was placed on our Intranet for staff to view and provide comment
- Draft Strategy was reviewed by the Senior Management Team

The draft Strategy was produced and consulted upon before being shaped into a finalised Strategy. The fact that the draft Strategy was disseminated to all key parties demonstrates Choice's commitment.

Choice believes tenant involvement and consultation should be at the heart of everything we do and it is essential to our success. Tenants should have a say in relation to their home, their neighbourhood and the services they receive.

Obtaining the views of our tenants is vital. Listening to what is important to our tenants will help us enhance and improve our services. Choice is committed to working in partnership with our tenants. We want to ensure they have an influence in the management of their homes and the communities they reside in.

The Association recognises that tenant involvement can lead to real, positive outcomes for residents, communities and indeed for Choice.

These benefits may include:

- Services that reflect tenants' needs
- Improved services
- Increased tenant satisfaction
- Enhanced community spirit
- Sustaining communities
- Better quality of life for tenants
- Ensure tenants have a real say
- Better relations between landlord and tenant each being more aware of the others position
- Build mutual respect and trust
- Improved effectiveness and efficiency giving better value for money.

2.2 Our Strategic Aim

Customer excellence is a key business objective for Choice. Our aim is to:

“provide customers with excellent services to meet their expectations and needs”

In Choice, we recognise the importance of working in partnership with our tenants both individually and through groups.

The main aim of this Strategy is

“to place tenants at the heart of everything we do and to develop and promote positive engagement with our customers in the design and delivery of our services”.

Our Key Strategic aspirations include:

- Reinforcing our commitment to Tenant Involvement
- Continually engaging and consulting with our tenants in many aspects of the business
- Reviewing our levels of resources allocated to the Tenant Involvement Programme
- Raising awareness of tenant involvement and increase Tenant Forum membership
- Providing tenants with relevant and timely information
- Ensuring information and services are accessible to tenants
- Ensuring tenants feel supported and sufficiently trained to engage with the Association on whatever level best suits their lifestyle
- Providing Tenant Involvement training to both tenants and staff which will help to develop partnership working with our staff on the front line
- Listening and responding to issues raised by tenants “you said we did “
- Removing barriers that may prevent tenants from getting involved
- Build on Community Development initiatives and encourage tenants to be involved
- Developing relationships with other statutory agencies to address local issues across our housing stock
- Ensuring tenants are represented at Committee level
- Promoting Social Enterprise Projects
- Continually reviewing this Strategy to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our tenants.

2.3 Communication Methods

Choice uses a variety of communication methods to ensure our services and published information is fully accessible. These methods include:

- In writing to tenants
- Information leaflets
- Phone calls
- Home visits
- Scheme Noticeboards
- Email
- Text messaging service
- Social media such as Facebook and Twitter to provide regular updates to tenants
- Choice Tenant Newsletter detailing services and local news stories – published quarterly
- Choice website. A dedicated Tenant Participation Section advising tenants how to become involved is included in our website
- Tenants’ Handbook
- Tenants’ meetings
- Interagency meetings – held in partnership with outside agencies.

2.4 How can Tenants become involved?

We want to encourage as many tenants as possible to have their say, become engaged and participate in our business. To enable this to happen and to fulfil the aims of this Strategy we have developed a range of options in our “Menu of Involvement” for tenants to influence decisions at whatever level suits their lifestyle. The “Menu of Involvement” can be found on page 32 & 33 or can be downloaded from our website www.choice-housing.org

Formal methods of involvement may include attendance at meetings, writing of reports, e.g. Tenants’ Forum, Policy Consultation Group, and the commitment to this level is quite high. Informal methods of involvement include: Tenant Inspectors Estate Walkabouts, Mystery Shopping, Editorial Team or responding to surveys; these methods require less commitment and would be seen as low level.



Residents Groups

Tenants are encouraged to represent their local community on a wide range of issues by being part of an informal Residents Group in their area e.g. steering group. The formation of the group will be supported by Choice.



Community Champion

Where no Residents Group exists, the role of Community Champion will be promoted. This provides a point of contact for local housing staff. Champions will represent tenants on issues and services that affect them, helping Choice improve and maintain service standards.



Tenants' Forum Group

Choice currently has one Central Forum and four Regional Forums to cover the Province, (Belfast, North West, South East and South West), each discussing housing related issues and sharing best practice ideas.

- **Central Forum:**

The Central Forum consists of tenant representatives from the Regional Forums to ensure there is representation from all areas. There are a total of 12 members on the Central Forum who are elected from each Regional area on a two yearly cycle. The Central Forum's role is to: consider policy, they do this as part of the Policy Consultation Group; review service areas; participate in specific working groups / task groups; and address outstanding issues from the Regional Forums.

- **Regional Forums:**

Each Regional Forum consists of members who represent the views of their local areas. To become a member of the Regional Forum each tenant must register their interest by completing the Menu of Involvement and be formally voted in at a Regional Forum meeting by members. Regional Forums are the voice of tenants in a specific geographical area. Each Regional Forum will elect a Chair and Vice Chair for a term of two years. Each Regional Forum will also elect one other representative, and together with the Regional Chair, will sit on the Central Forum.



Tenant Inspectors

Tenant Inspectors will examine two service areas annually. The inspectors will report twice a year on services scrutinised and provide recommendations for improvement where necessary. Relevant training and expenses will be provided.



Editorial Team

The Editorial Team, consisting of Tenants' Forum members and staff, will work together to produce a Newsletter four times a year. The Editorial Team will also help design and produce an annual calendar which will be sent to all tenants.



Estate Walkabouts on General Needs schemes

Estate Walkabouts enable tenants who live on our estates and schemes to identify common concerns or areas for improvement. Tenants will have the opportunity to come together and walk schemes, with Choice staff and Tenant Inspectors from within the Tenants' Forum, to discuss and consider any important housing, environmental or social issue. Notification of Estate Walkabouts will be provided by letter, through our website, and in our Newsletter.



Financial Stakeholders Group

This Group provides a platform to offer tenants the opportunity to review the financial areas of housing e.g. Tenants' Forum budgets, service charges and related financial matters.



Policy Consultation Group [PCG]

To assist with the development and review of policies and procedures, as and when required, members of the Tenants' Forum will be invited to participate in focus group workshops to discuss and develop specific housing policies; this is usually Central Forum members. This will provide an important conduit from tenants to input into the development of new policies.



Mystery Shopping

This facility allows tenants to examine the quality of the housing service provided by Choice and provide a strong customer based feedback mechanism. Feedback will then help contribute to the improvement of services. Appropriate training will be provided to tenants who participate.



Information Technology Focus Group

To assist with the continual development of the Choice website and innovative self-service technology.



Tenant Satisfaction Survey Focus Group

Choice invites our Tenant Forum members to become fully involved in the design and delivery of its bi-annual Tenant Satisfaction Surveys. The results are evaluated and monitored by an independent company and tenants are advised of the results.



Register of Tenants

The Register allows tenants to become involved through responding to surveys or commenting on specific service areas which they are interested in. Contact can be made via text, post, email or telephone call.



Conferences and Training

Funding has been and will continue to be provided by Choice to allow tenants the opportunity to develop their skills by attending conferences, workshops and seminars. These are aimed at increasing tenant's knowledge and understanding of good housing service practice, sharing ideas and best practice from other parts of the UK and Ireland and increasing their IT and communication skills and general confidence levels.



Fun days and Community Events

Choice will support the work of local resident groups in our schemes and estates.

We plan to do this through the promotion of community events to encourage inclusiveness and good relations across our housing areas. The community events will be supported by:

- Choice financially
- Members of the Tenant Involvement Team
- Tenant and Client Services staff will attend, where appropriate, to offer assistance and advice to our residents.

The community events will be appropriate to the needs and profile of the tenants in that area.



Other ways to engage and consult with tenants:

Choice will use different ways to consult and make it possible for tenants to participate.

We will consult with tenants on all areas of the Housing service and on some policies and procedures that affect tenants. Some of these main areas are:-

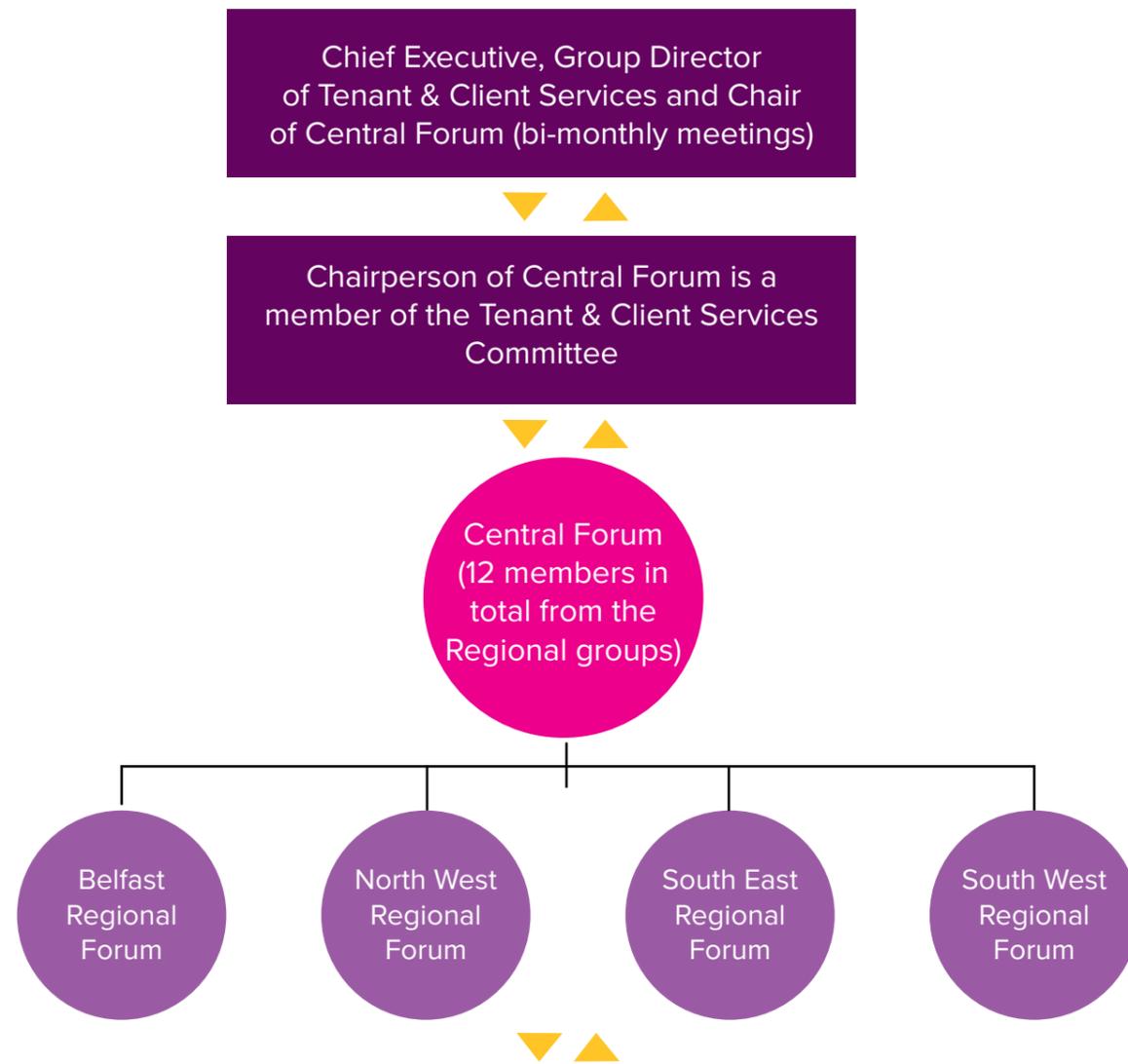
- Housing Management Policies including, Rent setting, Anti-Social Behaviour
- Repairs Service
- Planned Maintenance Programme
- Tenant Involvement Strategy.



We recognise that it is important to offer a range of involvement methods which are fit for purpose and appropriate to the needs of our tenants, providing the opportunity for tenants to get involved with us on whatever level best suits their lifestyle.

2.6 Choice Tenant Involvement Structure

The ethos of Tenant Involvement is promoted throughout the management structures of Choice. The diagram below outlines the current Tenant Involvement Structures.



Choice Tenants' Menu of Involvement

Register of Tenants	Resident Groups	Tenant Satisfaction Survey Focus Group	Community Champion	Information Technology Focus Group	Estate Walkabouts
Tenants' Forum Group	Tenant Inspectors	Mystery Shoppers	Financial Stakeholders Group	Policy Consultation Group Central Forum	Editorial Team

2.7 Complaints

Choice is committed to providing a high quality customer service and value complaints. Choice operates a Complaint, Compliments and Comments Policy and utilises complaints to help us improve our services. The Association also has a Customer Promise document and within this we clearly demonstrate our commitment to tenants in all aspects of our business.

A Complaints Panel has been developed to review complaints at Stage 2 of the Complaints Procedure. There are five tenant representatives who are members of the Panel. All have completed training to undertake this area of work. Training was provided by Supporting Communities.

2.8 How to Become Involved

Any tenant who is interested in working with Choice on our Tenant Engagement Programme can apply by completing the Menu of Involvement.

Choice will use different ways to consult and make it possible for tenants to participate. These include:

- Consulting with residents groups
- Roadshows
- Local meetings
- Setting up focus groups to deal with specific topics
- Surveys, questionnaires
- Quarterly Newsletters

Training will be made available to ensure tenants are able to fully participate. Tenant Forum members have clear guidelines for meetings agreed by both Choice and Tenant Forum members e.g. Terms of Reference, Standing Orders and Code of Conduct.

The Tenants' Forum host an Annual Conference where the achievements of the year are highlighted and Forum members have an opportunity to network and communicate with each other and staff members from various Departments of the organisation.

2.9 Investing in Tenant Involvement

Choice believes it is important to provide sufficient resources to achieve the aims of the Tenant Involvement Strategy. Resources of over £30k per annum have been made available to support and resource Tenant Involvement Strategy. The Tenant Involvement budget is reviewed quarterly by the Financial Stakeholders Group which involves both staff and tenants.

Tenant Involvement funding is used to fund a number of activities, some examples are identified below:-

- Training to promote Tenant Involvement
- External conferences attended by Tenants' Forum members
- Best Practice Conference visits
- Conference/Annual General Meeting costs
- Catering costs
- Transport, visits and out of pocket expenses
- Advertising/presentation costs
- Venue hire
- Tenants' Forum Christmas event
- Translation expenditure
- Carer and child care costs
- Promotional work.

Tenant and Client Services will continue to lend their support with the work involved in annual Estate Walkabouts, Interagency meetings, Housing Clinics and Community Fun Days and events in local areas.

Staff across all departments will be involved in achieving the aims of this Strategy including, Tenant & Client Services, Assets, Development, Finance and Governance and Communications. All staff have a role to play in Tenant Participation. For some staff this will be limited, however tenant facing staff can encourage tenants to take part in activities, listen to tenants views and provide feedback from tenants. The Association believes this will strengthen the staff tenant relationship and ultimately improve services.

The Tenant Involvement Champion's role is key to:

- Supporting, mentoring and organising tenant training on Tenant Involvement activities
- Help establish residents groups
- Implement the Tenant Involvement Strategy and Action Plan
- Monitor and report on the progress of the Strategy to the Tenants' Forum, Senior Management and Committee.

2.10 Monitoring and Evaluation of the Tenant Involvement Strategy

The Strategy will be reviewed and monitored on an annual basis through:

- Central Forum Monitoring Group
- Senior Management Meetings
- Tenant & Client Services Committee.

A full detailed final evaluation will be carried out in the autumn 2020. This follows the Department for Communities guidelines. The evaluation will focus on the effectiveness of the Strategy as a whole and will make reference to future requirements. Central Forum Officers will assist with the review.

The Association will also provide feedback to the wider Regional Forum Groups. The final evaluation will make reference to both the strategic targets and other output targets such as:

- The topics that are being raised by tenants
- Demographic profile of those taking part
- How we have provided feedback to tenants
- The number of tenants taking part in meetings, Estate Walkabouts and other areas of our Tenant Involvement Programme
- Number of community events in the year
- The number of any new residents groups
- Compliance with Department for Communities Tenant Involvement Framework.



Choice is investing over £30,000 each year to support and resource the Tenant Involvement Strategy.

2.11 The Future

Choice recognises the contribution made by our traditional structure in relation to tenant participation, and we will continue to support tenant involvement in this way. However, the Association recognises that the majority of our tenants are not involved. Therefore, we will actively promote and develop our formal and informal methods of involvement to ensure all sections of the community are reached.

Choice will continue to provide training and support to enhance and equip our tenants to be become involved.

By 2020, Choice anticipates that we will have active engagement from a wider tenant base which will be reflected in the Tenants' Forum. Formal Tenant Involvement Structures currently in place will be retained, however, these structures may change to reflect new Tenant Forum membership.

2.12 Accessibility

The agreed Strategy will be available on our website and distributed widely through our Tenants' Forum Groups. A copy will also be made available to all tenants on request.



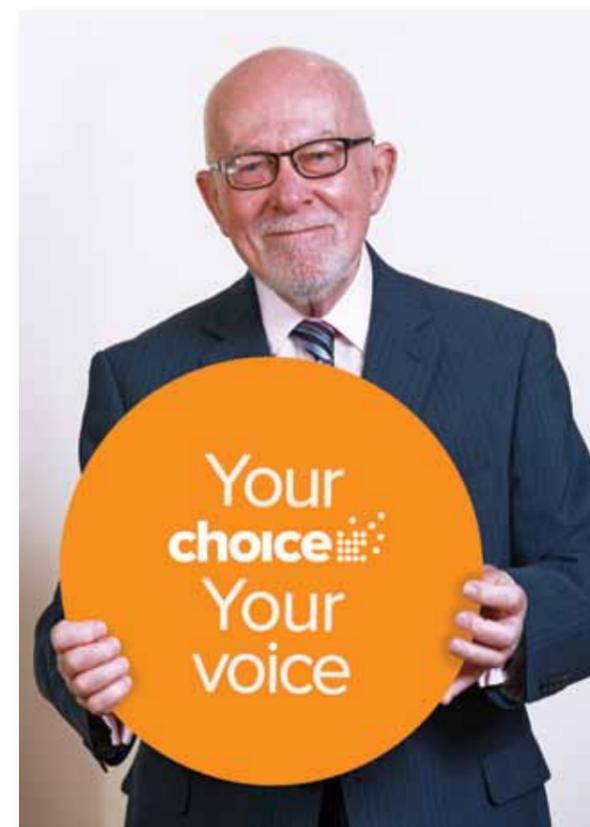
Aims	Action	Who by	When	Outcome
Review the current Tenants' Forum structure and develop a model that best serves the needs of Choice tenants	Review operational guidelines e.g. Terms of Reference, Code of Conduct and Rules	Tenants' Forum and Tenant Involvement Team	Q1: Year 1	Establish new Tenants' Forum infrastructure
	Devise election guidelines and develop a new structure for the new Tenants' Forum	Tenants' Forum and Tenant Involvement Team	Q1: Year 1	Open, transparent and fair election process
Ensure the new Tenants' Forum structure is effective following the Departmental Service Delivery review	Monitor the effectiveness of the Tenants' Forum following the implementation of the new service delivery model	Tenants' Forum and Tenant Involvement Team	Q4: 2018, 2019	Tenants' Forum remains fit for purpose following the Departmental Service Delivery review
Increase resident involvement and the diversity of tenants involved.	Complete bi-annual tenant satisfaction surveys	Governance and Communications Team	Q1: April 2018	To provide statistical information on tenant participation
	Conduct annual Mystery Shopping exercises	Tenant Involvement Team and tenants	Year 1, 2, 3	Improve services
	Conduct annual Tenant Inspector exercises	Tenant Involvement Team and tenants	Q4: 2017, 2018, 2019	Improve services
	Host an annual Tenants' Forum event to summarise progress on Strategy and achievements during the year	Tenant Involvement Team and tenants	Q4: 2018, 2019	Increase communication, provide feedback on progress of Strategy, increase tenant participation by 5%

Aims	Action	Who by	When	Outcome
Increase resident involvement and the diversity of tenants involved.	Review 'Menu of Involvement' annually	Tenant Involvement Team and Tenants' Forum	Year 1, 2, 3	To retain an effective Menu of Involvement
	Review the Muriel Smith Annual Tenant Award.	Corporate Services	Q3: 2017, 2018, 2019	Annual Organisational recognition of individual tenant participation
Increase resident involvement and the diversity of tenants involved.	Organise open days / evenings and information sessions, at suitable venues and times that are convenient to tenants to encourage tenant involvement	Tenant Involvement Team and tenants. Housing Officers and Property Services Officers	Q1: 2018 & On-going	Increase tenant participation by 5%
	Run a pilot Tenants' Forum promotional event in each region	Tenant Involvement Team and Tenants' Forum	Q1: 2018	Increase tenant participation by 5%
	Provide personal development training for Tenants' Forum members	Tenant Involvement Team to arrange provision of external training source	Year 1, 2, 3	Ensure tenants have appropriate knowledge, skills and experience to develop scrutinise and monitor Choice services
	Develop online communication and engagement	Governance and Communications and ICT Tenant Focus group	Year 1, 2, 3	Increase tenant participation by 5% annually
Increase resident involvement and the diversity of tenants involved.	Carry out annual Estate Walkabouts at General Needs Schemes and sheltered	Tenant Involvement Team, tenant representatives Housing Officers and Property Services Officers	Year 1, 2, 3	Local tenant scrutiny of services.

Aims	Action	Who by	When	Outcome
Provide sufficient resources, support and training to residents and staff to make Tenant Involvement effective	Make provision for an annual Tenant Involvement budget, to be reviewed quarterly	Financial Stakeholders Group, SMT and Tenant & Client Services	Year 1, 2, 3	Financial support for Tenant Involvement
	Provide relevant front line staff with Tenant Participation training	External trainer	Q3/4: 2017 & ongoing	Enhance staff participation
	Conduct training needs analysis of Tenant Forum members and develop a training programme to meet those needs	Tenant Involvement Team and tenants Human Resources External trainer	Q2: 2017	Enhance skills for Tenant Forum members
	Deliver Tenant Inspector Training to tenants	External trainer	Q4: 2017	Improve Tenant Inspector tenants' skill set
	Support Tenant Forum members to attend relevant conferences	Tenant & Client Services department	Year 1, 2, 3	Improve Tenant Forum members skill set
Support grassroots community initiatives	Provide financial assistance for community events that improve Good Relations at schemes	Tenant & Client Services department	Year 1, 2, 3	Gain awareness of best practice and new ideas on participation
				Enhance Good Relations and community cohesion.

Aims	Action	Who by	When	Outcome
Effective communication to tenants	Provide Tenant Forum updates in our quarterly newsletters	Editorial Team, Governance & Communications Department and Tenant Involvement Team	Year 1, 2, 3	Increase awareness of tenant participation options and highlight the work of the Tenants' Forum
	Ensure leaflets to tenants are reviewed by the Tenants' Forum	Tenant Involvement Team and Tenants' Forum	Year 1, 2, 3	Ensure tenant information is fit for purpose
	Develop a Tenant Involvement leaflet in line with the Strategy	Tenant Involvement Team and Tenants' Forum	Q2: 2017	Increase tenant involvement by 5%
	Continue to promote tenant involvement at New Tenant Visits	Housing Officers	Year 1, 2, 3	Increase tenant involvement by 5% annually
	Publicise a programme of Estate Walkabouts and encourage tenants to get involved	Tenant Involvement Team, tenants, Housing Officers and Property Services Officers	Q3: 2017	Increase tenant participation by 5% annually Improve tenant satisfaction
Improve tenant satisfaction with their local scheme and environment	Introduce a pilot initiative of Clean Up Days with "Live Here, Love Here" to improve the local areas.	Governance and Communications. Housing and Tenants Forum	Q1: 2017	Improve community cohesion and pride in the area

Aims	Action	Who by	When	Outcome
Promote Social Enterprise Projects	Choice will support social enterprise projects. e.g. Choice Savings scheme and Choice Trainee Work Programme	Tenant Involvement Team, Governance & Communications, Tenant & Client Services Dept	Q1: 2017 & ongoing	Promote a savings culture and enhance tenants' employment skills
Promote Tenant Involvement in unrepresented demographics areas	Target General Needs schemes. Encourage youth participation - use leaflets, introductory letters, newsletters, website, social media	Tenant Involvement Team, Tenant & Client Services and Governance & Communications Dept	Q3, 2018 & ongoing	Tenant engagement that is balanced and representative of the profile of Choice tenants
Tenant representation at Committee level	Continue with the provision of tenant representation at Committee level	Elected Chair of Tenants' Forum	Year 1, 2, 3	Tenants have a role in the decision making process
Review the Tenant Involvement Strategy to ensure it meets the needs of all tenants	Establish a Tenant Involvement Monitoring and Review group to review the effectiveness of the Strategy. Outcomes to be presented to Central Forum and relevant Committees	Central Forum, Tenant Involvement Team and Regional Heads of T&CS	Q2: 2017 & Ongoing	Strategy meets tenants' needs and aspirations Ensure successful partnership working between Choice and tenants to enhance our continuous improvement cycle





MENU OF TENANT INVOLVEMENT

Choice Housing Ireland believes that it is essential to consider the views of our tenants with regard to the services and housing schemes we provide. We are committed to putting our customers at the heart of service delivery and we believe that by listening to and taking on board your views, we can ensure that policies and services are more responsive to changing needs and rising aspirations.

We recognise that it is important to offer a range of involvement methods which are fit for purpose and appropriate to the needs of our tenants, providing the opportunity for you to get involved with us on whatever level best suits your lifestyle.

If you are interested in working with Choice Housing Ireland staff to improve our services, please indicate in the table overleaf which option would be most appropriate for you and return the completed form to the Association.

Why get involved?

Being involved with Choice will give you the chance to:

- Be active in shaping Choice services
- Make your area a better place to live in
- Give Choice your views on the services you receive
- Be part of a group to review and improve services
- Help Choice better understand the needs of tenants
- Gain useful skills
- Receive relevant training
- Meet new people

How do I get involved?

You can choose how to get involved and when by selecting the type and level of involvement that suits your lifestyle.

Choice would be delighted to hear from you. Please complete the Menu of Involvement and return to Choice or hand it to a member of Choice staff.

Telephone 0300 111 2211 and ask for the Tenant Involvement Team.



MENU OF TENANT INVOLVEMENT

YES NO

Resident Groups

Represent your community on a wide range of issues by being part of a Resident Group in your area. Meets as and when required –2.5 hours per meeting.

Community Champion

Where no residents group exists become a Community Champion to represent your local community, working beside Choice housing staff to address any issues in your area. 1 hour per week.

Tenants' Forum Group

We currently have one Central Forum and four Regional Forums to cover the Province, (Belfast, South East, South West and North West), discussing housing related issues and sharing best practice ideas. Meets every 2 months –2.0 hours per meeting.

Tenant Inspectors

Carry out an inspection of our services alongside housing staff to identify areas for improvement. Training is provided and expenses paid. Meets quarterly–Additional project work every 6 months.

Editorial Team

Write and review articles for our Tenant Newsletter and website and report on the work of the Tenants' Forum. Meets quarterly–1.5 hours per meeting.

Estate Walkabouts

Walk around your estate with your Housing and Property Services Officer to identify areas of concern and agree priorities for the local community. Meets annually–2 hours per meeting.

Financial Stakeholders Group

Review the financial areas of housing, eg Tenants' Forum budgets, service charges and related financial matters. Meets quarterly–2.0 hours per meeting.

Policy Consultation Group (Central Tenants' Forum Group)

Assist with the development and review of policies and procedures as and when required. We anticipate approximately 4 meetings per year–2 hours per meeting.

Mystery Shoppers

Test services and provide feedback as a mystery shopper by carrying out a series of pre-agreed tasks, such as telephone calls or reception visits, and report on findings. Mystery shopping exercises will be carried out annually–1.5 hours per meeting.

Information Technology

Assist with the ongoing development of Choice website and innovative self-service technology. As and when required.

Tenant Satisfaction Survey

Assist with the development of a Tenant Satisfaction Survey to help us identify our strengths and weaknesses. Meets twice per year, as agreed with staff.

Register of Tenants

Respond to surveys or comment on specific service areas which you are interested in. We can contact you by text, post, email or telephone call. As and when required–time commitment can be as little as 20 minutes.



We welcome all feedback

Please respond to us in writing, by telephone, by email or on our website.

Office Address:

37/41 May Street, Belfast

Tel: **0300 111 2211**

Email: info@choice-housing.org

Website: www.choice-housing.org

Appendices:

- 3 year Action Plan
- Menu of Involvement

Acknowledgements:

Tenants' Forum Members
Supporting Communities

Author:

Claire Darby
(Tenant Involvement Champion)



GET
IN
TOUCH

Choice

Leslie Morrell House
37 - 41 May Street
Belfast
BT1 4DN

T: 0300 111 2211
choice-housing.org

