



## **Draft Tenant Participation Strategy 2024-2029 (Easy to read version)**

We know that sometimes documents can be hard to read. We have made a question and answer version of our revised Tenant Participation Strategy below. If you have any more questions or if there is something that you do not understand, please get in touch with us and we will try to help.

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## 1. What is tenant participation

Tenant participation is about having a say in the decisions that affect your home and community. It includes sharing information and ideas but is also about influencing policies and taking your views into account when making decisions.

## 2. What is the purpose of the Tenant Participation Strategy?

You have a legal right to be involved in decisions about housing services. Our Tenant Participation Strategy sets out how we will take account of your views and support you in our decision making processes.

You can read the full version of our Tenant Participation Strategy on our website at [www.moray.gov.uk/tenantparticipationstrategy](http://www.moray.gov.uk/tenantparticipationstrategy) or ask us for a copy.

## 3. What laws relate to tenant participation?

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 introduced a legal framework for tenant participation. By law, all social landlords must have a strategy which sets out how they will involve tenants in their decision making processes. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 introduced the **Scottish Social Housing Charter**.

The Charter sets out 16 standards and outcomes that we need to achieve and by which our tenants can measure our performance and hold us to account. It has specific outcomes related to tenant participation. They are:

### 🏠 **Equalities**

Every tenant has their individual needs and rights recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

### 🏠 **Communication**

Tenants find it easy to communicate with and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.

### 🏠 **Participation**

Tenants find it easy to participate in, and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.



The Act also established the **Scottish Housing Regulator** (SHR). The Regulator is responsible for monitoring, assessing and reporting on how well social landlords achieve the Charter's outcomes and standards.



#### **4. What is the aim of the Tenant Participation Strategy?**

Our overall aim is to work in partnership with our tenants to design and deliver good quality housing services.

#### **5. What are the outcomes of the Tenant Participation Strategy?**

We have identified 3 outcomes to help us achieve our aim.

🏠 **Outcome 1: A strong representation of tenants' views and a wide range of engagement opportunities.**

We want to promote and develop a wide range of opportunities for you to share your views with us at a level that suits you. This includes providing both digital and non-digital participation opportunities. We also want to encourage under-represented groups such as young people to get involved.

🏠 **Outcome 2: Our tenants are fully engaged in the process of policy formulation, service review, scrutiny and decision making**

We provide information on our performance identifying any areas for improvement. We also make sure you can compare our performance with similar councils. You can influence our decisions by taking part in consultations, becoming tenant representatives, attending meetings, or taking part in estate walkabouts.

🏠 **Outcome 3: Our tenants, Council staff and elected members have the capacity to work together effectively**

We work with other housing providers to share good practice and resources. We will also offer training for staff, tenants and elected members relevant to tenant participation. There may also be an opportunity for our tenants to work towards a qualification to improve their knowledge of housing and tenant scrutiny.

## 6. Why should I get involved?

Your opinions can help us to identify your priorities, what we are doing well and where we can improve. By working together, we can improve on and continue to deliver good quality services which are value for money. You bring a wealth of skills and experience and can provide a unique perspective on our housing services.

Depending on how you choose to be involved, you may also:

- 🏠 Provide a voice for the wider tenant community
- 🏠 Find out about what is going on in your area
- 🏠 Help improve your estate and create a better sense of community
- 🏠 Meet new people and make friends
- 🏠 Build your confidence and self-esteem
- 🏠 Develop new skills and knowledge
- 🏠 Choose to access free training opportunities or work towards a recognised qualification
- 🏠 Enhance your CV

## 7. How can I get involved?

There are a range of ways to get involved at a level that suits you. The different options are described in more detail below.

### **Moray Tenants Forum**

The Forum is a tenant-led group that represent the interests of our tenants. Their aim is to improve housing services and conditions. They are an informal and friendly group and any of our tenants can join. They get together every few months and we talk to them about our plans and gather their feedback. Sometimes guest speakers from housing, another

department, or another organisation are invited along to discuss topics of interest to tenants. The Forum helps us develop information for tenants such as leaflets and articles for our newsletter, the Tenants' Voice. They also represent you at events locally and nationally.



## Tenant Scrutiny Groups

Tenants interested in reviewing our services closely may want to join a tenant scrutiny group. These groups independently review our housing services to ensure they are delivered to a high standard and that tenants' views are considered. The scrutiny group chooses a topic and gathers a range of information on it by:

- ⬆ looking at policy documents or performance information;
- ⬆ mystery shopping;
- ⬆ commissioning surveys;
- ⬆ interviewing staff; and
- ⬆ visiting our offices or empty properties.

We can provide training and support to assist with all activities the group is involved in. The group will then make recommendations to senior managers and elected members on how we can improve.

## Housing and Community Safety Committee

Up to three tenant representatives from Moray Tenants Forum can take part in the Committee meetings where they sit alongside elected members. The tenant representatives are involved in the oversight of the Council's housing function, receiving reports on a range of service, strategy and policy issues, and contributing to the decision-making processes in these areas. There is also a webcasting facility where Committee meetings are available to view for 12 months online at:

[www.moray.gov.uk/webcasting](http://www.moray.gov.uk/webcasting)

## Regional Networks

The Regional Networks were established in 2008 to allow tenants and residents from across Scotland to work in partnership with the Scottish Government on



issues of national policy to improve housing and well-being. There are 4 Regional Networks which cover the whole of Scotland. Members of Moray Tenant Forum can be nominated to represent Moray on the North of Scotland Regional Network. More information about Regional Networks is available at: [regionalnetworks.org](http://regionalnetworks.org)

## Partnership working

We are members of the Northern Tenants Partnership (NTP) and **North East Tenants Residents and Landlords** together (NETRALT). These groups include social landlords and their tenants or residents in their membership. There are many benefits from working in partnership such as sharing good practice, skills, resources and access to training opportunities. There is an option to join the meetings online so you can get involved from the comfort of your home.



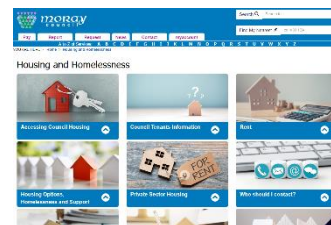
## Estate walkabouts



Tenants have a say on how our estate improvement budget of £100,000 gets spent. Each year, tenants, housing staff and councillors carry out joint inspections to identify and agree on projects which could improve our estates. These improvements include a range of projects such as replacement fencing, upgrading of paths, parking improvements and landscaping projects.

## Consultations

If we are reviewing a service or making any major changes to our policies we always ask our tenants for their feedback. We advertise consultations on our website at [www.moray.gov.uk](http://www.moray.gov.uk), on social media, and where possible in the **Tenants' Voice** newsletter.



## List of interested tenants

We realise that some tenants do not want to join a tenant group but would still like to be involved in decisions about housing services. We can add you to our list of interested tenants and contact you when there are consultations that are relevant to you. In the past we have used the list to ask tenants with internet access to test our website or to inform tenants about consultations or events taking place that might interest them.

### Tenant events and conferences

We sometimes organise or attend events to encourage tenants to find out more about tenant participation opportunities. Tenants and staff also have the opportunity to attend events together to learn from and share good practice with other housing providers. This includes national events such as the annual Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) conference and more recently online events in partnership with NETRALT and NTP.



### Themed meetings or working groups

We will sometimes organise themed meetings or working groups on a particular area of interest. This gives an opportunity for smaller groups of tenants to get involved in an area that interests them the most.

### Satisfaction surveys

We carry out regular surveys on a wide range of topics to gather feedback. We also carry out a larger independent survey every three years. When you fill in surveys, the results and comments are passed to service managers who use them to make improvements and prioritise spending.



### Digital engagement

As well as the Council's main Facebook page, we have a closed Facebook group for our tenants. We use this group to share news and information and you can leave comments or questions, fill in polls and take part in events. Join us at



[www.facebook.com/groups/MorayCouncilTenants](http://www.facebook.com/groups/MorayCouncilTenants) or scan the QR code below:





## **Sheltered housing groups**

Our sheltered housing schemes have their own tenant-led groups that meet regularly. We talk to them about our plans and consult them on housing issues. Sometimes guest speakers from housing, another department, or another organisation are invited along to discuss topics of interest to tenants. Sheltered housing tenants also have the option to attend Moray Tenants Forum.



## **Participatory Budgeting**

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a way for tenants and other customers to get involved in making decisions about their local area and decide where public money is spent. We work in partnership with the Community Support Unit to help identify and deliver projects. Recent PB projects have included projects to improve play areas in Buckie (pictured) and Tomnavoulin.



### **8. How will you support tenant participation?**

We will give support and assistance as necessary including staff resources and training opportunities. We provide financial support through grant funding for Registered Tenant Organisations such as Moray Tenant Forum. This funding helps them cover running costs and expenses such as travel and childcare costs. We also have a dedicated tenant participation budget. We will continue to tell tenants about our services by producing a wide range of information which is easy to read and understand. This will be available on our website, social media, twice yearly newsletters, tenant handbook and annual performance report.

### **9. How will you monitor progress on the Tenant Participation Strategy?**

The strategy contains a detailed action plan with key milestones. A monitoring group consisting of tenants and housing staff will review progress and produce an annual report to update the Housing and Community Safety Committee. We will share the results of this annual review alongside regular updates on our tenant participation activities via our website, Facebook, and tenant newsletter Tenants' Voice.



## **10. How can I contact you about tenant participation?**

If you'd like to get involved, have a suggestion, or want to find out more about tenant participation please get in touch:

**Housing and Property**

**Moray Council**

**PO Box 6760, Elgin**

**IV30 1 BX**

**Phone: 0300 1234 566**

**Email: [tenantparticipation@moray.gov.uk](mailto:tenantparticipation@moray.gov.uk)**