



Moray Council

**Tenant Participation Strategy
2017 - 2020**

Supporting Tenant Participation in Moray

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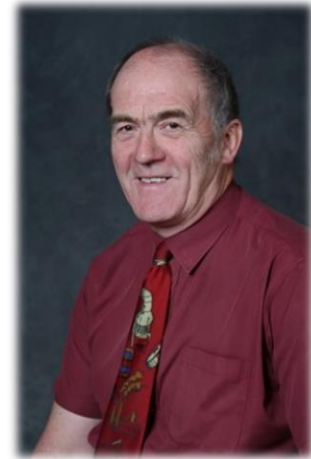


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Foreword

I am pleased to introduce our fourth Tenant Participation Strategy which has been developed in partnership with our tenants and other stakeholders.

Tenant participation is about involving our tenants in the design and development of housing services. This strategy helps us to meet legal requirements, identifies how we will meet the relevant outcomes of the Scottish Social Housing Charter and sets out our local priorities for the next few years.



Tenant involvement benefits tenants, staff and their landlords. We offer a range of engagement opportunities so everyone has the option to get involved at a level that suits them. We also offer support to tenants who would like to develop their skills and build on their confidence so that they can effectively influence decisions about housing services. If you are interested in getting involved, please phone us on 0300 123 4566 or email housing@moray.gov.uk.

We are committed to improving our homes and services in partnership with our tenants. I would like to thank the tenants who have given up their time to give us their feedback by attending meetings or events, assessing our services or filling in surveys. Your feedback is essential in helping us to improve our performance. I am confident that this strategy and action plan will help us to deliver services which meet our tenants' needs and expectations.

George G. Alexander

Councillor George Alexander
Chair of Communities Committee

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1. Introduction

1.1 Moray is located in the north-east of Scotland and covers an area of 2,200 square kilometers. The area is largely rural with a dispersed population and this presents challenges for the way in which we involve our tenants. The Council is the biggest provider of social rented housing in Moray with over 6,000 houses.

1.2 This is our fourth Tenant Participation Strategy produced and developed in partnership with the Moray Tenants' Forum, staff and Elected Members. The strategy sets out:

- ⬢ What we mean by tenant participation and what we want to achieve by engaging with tenants;
- ⬢ How we will keep tenants informed about important housing matters;
- ⬢ How we will involve tenants and residents in decisions about housing services;
- ⬢ How we will consult with our tenants and how we will take account of their views; and
- ⬢ How we will support tenants to participate.

It also contains a set of 3 key outcomes with a supporting action plan to guide and measure progress towards the delivery of the strategy.

1.3 The focus of our Tenant Participation Strategy has evolved over time to meet emerging challenges and tenant aspirations but there are a number of overarching principles that guide and inform all of our strategies. These principles are based on the Scottish Government's National Strategy for Participation, "Partners in Participation", and include:

- ⬢ Create a culture of mutual trust, respect and partnership between tenants, elected members and housing officers at all levels, working together towards improving housing conditions and housing services.
- ⬢ Ensure tenant participation is a continuously evolving process.
- ⬢ Enable processes of decision making that are open, clear and accountable.
- ⬢ Recognise the independence of tenant organisations.

- ⬢ Recognise that tenants' organisations require adequate resources for organisation, training and support.
- ⬢ Tailor tenant participation in remote areas to suit the particular needs of tenants in these communities.
- ⬢ Provide all tenants with an equal opportunity to contribute, removing barriers to effective participation.

2. What Is Tenant Participation?

- 2.1 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 places a statutory duty on social housing landlords to publish a tenant participation strategy demonstrating how they will communicate with and consult tenants and residents on a range of housing and housing-related services.

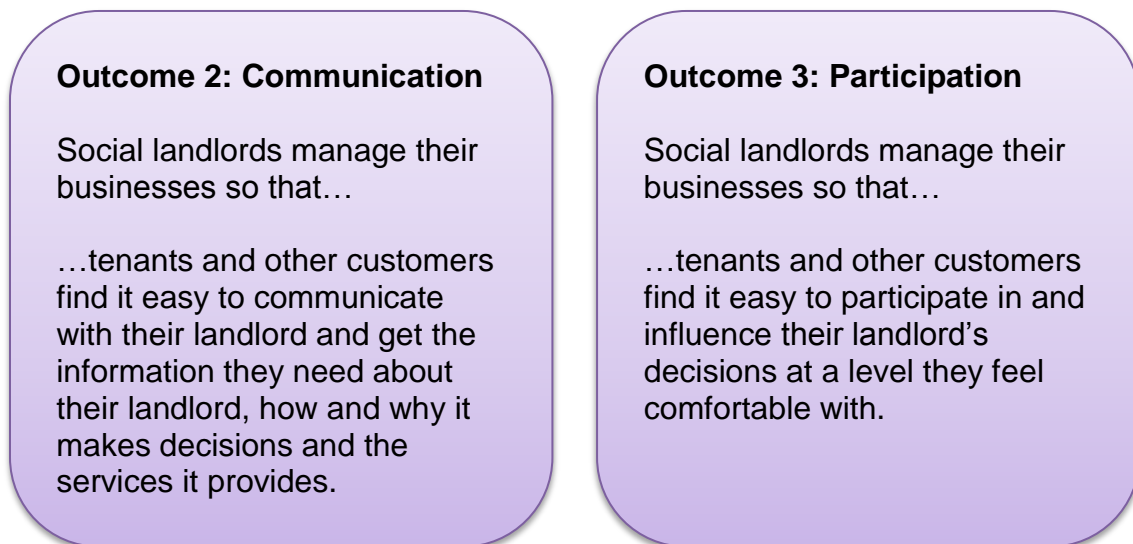
“Tenant participation is about tenants taking part in decision making process and influencing decisions about housing policies, housing conditions and housing related services. It is a two-way process which involves the sharing of information, ideas and power. It aims to improve the standard of housing conditions and service”.

The Scottish Government, Partners in Participation: A National Strategy for Tenant Participation

- 2.2 The right to participate is based on a reasonable expectation on the part of tenants that housing services and policies should take account of their needs and priorities. By doing so, effective participation helps landlords become more responsive to the views of their customers, helping them to improve services and achieve better value for money. This produces greater tenant satisfaction with their services, homes and neighbourhood and promotes a sustainable business model for landlords. Tenant participation helps landlords to better understand what is

important to their tenants but it also offers tenants an opportunity to shape housing services to reflect their own priorities.

- 2.3 The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010 introduced the Scottish Social Housing Charter which sets out the standards and outcomes that tenants can expect from their landlords in terms of service performance, opportunities for communication and participation in decisions that affect them. Outcomes 2 and 3 are the most essential for tenant participation.



- 2.4 The Charter encourages tenants to get involved and also to scrutinise their landlord's performance. Tenant-led scrutiny of housing services marks a significant change in the evolution of tenant participation and can empower tenants to drive service improvements and challenge their landlord's performance in areas that are most important to them.

3. Where we are now

- 3.1 Moray Council has long recognised that understanding and meeting the needs of our customers is the key to business success. Since the publication of our first Tenant Participation Strategy in 2003, we have developed engagement structures and a range of techniques to encourage and support effective tenant involvement.

We know that participation must continually evolve to meet tenants and others expectations and needs. This strategy continues that process.

- 3.2 Over a number of years, our approach to tenant participation has enabled us to not only meet our statutory requirements but also to improve the ways in which we engage with our tenants and their representatives. Our achievements include:

Keeping tenants informed

- ⬢ Producing a range of information, including a comprehensive handbook, advice leaflets and housing policies;
- ⬢ Publishing a twice yearly tenants' newsletter with topical subjects;
- ⬢ Communicating using a variety of channels, including direct correspondence, press releases and through digital means such as our website and social media;
- ⬢ Since 2013, making available to our tenants and other customers an annual report which sets out our performance against the outcomes of the Charter and compares our performance with other landlords; and
- ⬢ Producing easy to understand information which can be made available in different formats such as large print, Braille or translated into other languages.

Involving tenants in decision-making

- ⬢ Including tenant representation on Housing Service performance scrutiny groups such as the Housing Best Value Group;
- ⬢ Including tenant representatives as members of Council committees responsible for housing matters.
- ⬢ Giving tenants a key role in the development of two tenant handbooks, a wide range of leaflets, the annual performance report and major customer satisfaction surveys; and
- ⬢ Setting up and supporting the Service Improvement Panel, a tenant-led scrutiny group which review services and makes recommendations for improvement.

Consulting tenants and taking account of their views

- ⬢ Seeking tenant feedback on a range of housing issues including service changes, consultations and policy development;
- ⬢ Since 2004, carrying out a comprehensive tenant satisfaction survey every three years;
- ⬢ Using feedback from a wide range of surveys for new tenants, tenants moving into new build properties, repairs and planned maintenance;
- ⬢ Using feedback forms to inform future performance reports;
- ⬢ Including a “you said we did” section within tenant newsletters;
- ⬢ Using tenant feedback to develop and improve the Council’s website;
- ⬢ Setting up a register of interested tenants to seek views on service developments;
- ⬢ Using tenant feedback to prioritise Housing Revenue Account (HRA) spending for improvement works; and
- ⬢ Getting tenants to identify and prioritise improvement works through estate walkabouts and the environmental improvement budget;

Supporting tenants to participate

- ⬢ Providing a dedicated tenant participation budget;
- ⬢ Providing staff resources and support;
- ⬢ Reviewing and developing our Registered Tenant Organisation (RTO) arrangements to meet the evolving needs of our tenant representatives;
- ⬢ Working in partnership with North East Tenants, Residents and Landlords Together (NETRALT) a forum for social landlords in Grampian and their tenants to share good practice, resources and training opportunities;
- ⬢ Setting up the Moray Tenants Partnership, the Moray equivalent to NETRALT;
- ⬢ Providing training, capacity-building support and funding to support the development of our tenant groups; and
- ⬢ The design and organisation of tenant conferences and tenants’ open day.

Membership of Council Housing Function Committee

- 3.3 Since 2007 tenant representatives have been members of the Council Committee responsible for housing matters. This is currently the Communities Committee. In this role, 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.

Tenant Participation Strategy 2014-2016

- 3.4 The focus of our previous Tenant Participation Strategy was in preparing our tenant engagement arrangements to respond to the challenges of the Scottish Social Housing Charter. The period of the strategy saw the development of an annual performance report with our tenant representatives playing a key role in determining the look and content of the report. This report has become the essential platform for reporting our performance to our tenants and service users, demonstrating that we are meeting the Charter outcomes and comparing our performance with other landlords. This report is a vital resource for enabling our tenants to hold us to account for our performance.
- 3.5 The 2014-2016 strategy saw significant developments in our tenant scrutiny and landlord self-assessment processes. A key objective of the strategy was to prepare and build the capacity of our tenant representatives to lead a programme of scrutiny. In March 2016, the Chartered Institute of Housing delivered the "Stepping Up to Scrutiny" training programme for our tenants, Elected Members and officers. As part of the local arrangements, an independent tenant-led Service Improvement Panel was formed to oversee and implement the scrutiny framework.

The Service Improvement Panel has a remit to:

- ❖ work on behalf of tenants and service users to ensure that housing services are delivered to a high standard therefore making sure that tenants and service users are at the heart of the business;
- ❖ continually review and improve housing services; and
- ❖ make recommendations to senior managers and councillors on how housing services can be improved.

The Moray Tenants' Forum

- 3.6 Following an independent review of our RTO structure in 2012 by the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS), the Moray Tenants' Core Group and representatives from Local Area Forums agreed to revise the structure of tenant groups in Moray and consolidate the various RTOs into a Moray-wide tenant group. The Moray Tenants' Forum became operational in April 2015 and aims to encourage participation equally and fairly amongst all our tenants, recognising the needs of groups such as younger and older people.
- 3.7 This strategy has been developed in line with the National Standards for Community Engagement. The standards are outlined in **APPENDIX V**.

4. What we are trying to achieve

- 4.1 Although we will build on the foundations and structures developed by our previous strategies, the key themes and emphasis of current strategy will continue to strengthen the role of tenants in challenging our performance and driving service improvements. We will also continue to widen the opportunities for tenants to shape and influence our housing services, making it easier for them to participate and make their views known to us.
- 4.2 The strategy will also seek to address some of the key challenges of tenant participation in Moray, including:
- ⬢ Implementing the tenant-led scrutiny framework;
 - ⬢ Encouraging tenants to get involved in our decision making processes;
 - ⬢ Engaging with hard to reach groups such as younger people, the disabled, ethnic minorities and those living in remote communities; and
 - ⬢ Developing new forms of involvement such as social media and digital communication.

- 4.3 Our overall strategic aim for the Tenant Participation Strategy is to:

“work in partnership with our tenants to design and deliver good quality housing services”

To achieve this, we have identified a number of outcomes and supporting actions which set out the steps we will take to implement the strategy. Our three outcomes are detailed below. Alongside these outcomes we highlight some key actions we will be taking to make sure these goals are met.

- 4.4 These key outcomes are supported by a detailed action plan, which forms the basis of how we will check if the Strategy is working. The detailed action plan is shown in **APPENDIX I**.

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

- 4.5 Both the Council and the Moray Tenants’ Forum are committed to encouraging the involvement of tenants at a level that suits them. During the course of the strategy we will seek to expand and promote the range of opportunities that tenants have to make their views known to us. Tenants can choose to be members of the Tenants’ Forum or other tenant groups in Moray and beyond but they could also, on an occasional basis, express their views by responding to service feedback surveys or through social media. By doing so, we aim to encourage as diverse a range of tenants as possible to engage with the work of the Housing Service.
- 4.6 One of the achievements of the previous strategy was the setting up of a register of interested tenants who have asked to be kept informed on issues of their choice. This allows tenants to be contacted, consulted and kept up to date on the issues affecting tenants, as they arise. We will continue to promote and further develop our register of interested tenants as a resource for getting tenants’ views on a range of matters.

- 4.7 One such area which has not been fully explored is digital engagement. Developments in digital technology and social media present an opportunity for the groups in local housing networks to develop new ways of communicating with each other and sharing information.
- 4.8 We will work alongside our partners to share good practice and promote tenant participation in Moray. This could include arranging joint events or working together to seek tenants' views.

We will continue to:

- ❖ Consult with tenants on key housing issues in relation to housing management, repairs and maintenance, as well as policy development and changes to rent.
- ❖ Carry out a comprehensive tenant satisfaction survey every three years.
- ❖ Use a variety of methods to communicate with tenants, including the Council's website, Facebook, and Twitter.
- ❖ Provide a range of information to tenants in an accessible format.

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

- 4.9 We will seek to develop and implement our tenant scrutiny framework which will be overseen by Service Improvement Panel (SIP). During the course of the strategy, the SIP will oversee a programme of scrutiny that will monitor the performance of our housing services and the effectiveness of our housing policies and strategies. The SIP will decide what part of the service they want to examine in greater detail, establish if there are any service gaps and make recommendations for improvements in service delivery and value for money.

We will continue to:

- ❖ Include tenant representatives as members of our housing function Committee, currently the Communities Committee.
- ❖ Include tenant representatives as members of service performance monitoring groups, such as the Housing Best Value Network, and short-life working groups as appropriate.
- ❖ Include tenant representatives on estate walkabouts to identify projects and influence how the environmental improvement budget is spent.

Outcome 3: Our tenants, council staff and Elected Members have the capacity to work together effectively.

- 4.10 We want our tenants to be empowered and have opportunities to build the skills that will enable them to make a real contribution to the work of the Housing Service. We will work with our tenant representatives to make sure that appropriate training and capacity-building opportunities are made available to our tenants. **APPENDIX II** sets out our commitment to training for tenants.
- 4.11 Keeping up to date is essential for staff, elected members and tenants. There is value in joint training where possible, although some training specifically for tenants will always be appropriate. We will seek opportunities to access training and share resources with partner organisations including North East Tenants Residents and Landlords Together (NETRALT) and the Moray Tenants Partnership.
- 4.12 In recent years, the emergence of accredited learning courses has been a significant development in capacity building initiatives for tenants. Such initiatives offer tenants the opportunity to undertake a programme of learning that will help build their capacity not only to undertake tenant representative duties but also get a better understanding of a range of housing services such as resident scrutiny or inspection, tenancy sustainment, performance management, repairs and finance.

Such courses, which can be accredited by agencies such as Housing Plus and TPAS, have helped tenants gain the knowledge and skills required to work in partnership with their landlords to improve services. They have also helped them build their capacity to undertake vocational learning opportunities and achieve a level of attainment suitable for employment. The strategy will consider options for developing accredited training for tenants in Moray.

We will continue to:

- ❖ Carry out a training needs analysis to identify training requirements for tenants and relevant staff.
- ❖ Identify and evaluate training providers, both in-house and external.
- ❖ Provide tenant groups with a list of in-house training courses.
- ❖ Give housing staff regular training on tenant participation.

5. How we will support tenant participation

- 5.1 We recognise that every customer has different skills, interests and knowledge. We want to make the best use of our customer's experiences by providing opportunities for them to get involved in the things they are most interested in.
- 5.2 We will make sure that tenants and others who want to participate are supported appropriately. This support will be delivered in different ways ranging from providing good quality information on specific topics to customers who ask for it, through to direct support to tenants who want to form and run a tenants group.
- 5.3 We will work together to promote equal opportunities and remove barriers to participation. We recognise that certain groups may be under-represented and that a special effort may be needed to encourage involvement. The action plan identifies such groups and we will support informal and innovative methods of engagement that may better meet their needs. Appropriate methods to involve

under-represented groups will be explored and investigated, for example, partnership working with other agencies and informal discussions.

5.4 We will provide the following resources to support the strategy:

- ✧ A dedicated budget for tenant participation (details of the tenant participation budget for 2016/17 can be found in **APPENDIX III**).
- ✧ Grant funding for Registered Tenant Organisations.
- ✧ Tenant travel and specified out of pocket expenses.
- ✧ Provide funding for priorities identified for environmental improvements.
- ✧ Staff time, expertise and advice to tenants groups and others.
- ✧ Tenant participation training for staff.
- ✧ Information and training to help build the capacity of tenant groups.
- ✧ Independent advice from the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS), Tenants Information Service (TIS) and the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH).
- ✧ Provision of accessible meeting facilities.
- ✧ Encouraging tenants to attend conferences and wider professional discussion events.
- ✧ Provide advice and assistance to tenants on Committee reports.
- ✧ Maintain a register of interested tenants to draw upon to seek tenants' views.
- ✧ Maintain an updated tenant handbook, using tenant input during production.
- ✧ An up to date, easy to use and accessible website.

5.5 Our staff will also support tenant participation by:

- ✧ Coordinating tenant consultation.
- ✧ Working with other departments to enhance participation.
- ✧ Attending relevant training events to keep their skills in tenant participation updated.
- ✧ Providing advice on issues such as training for tenant representatives, funding and successfully running tenant and resident groups.
- ✧ Attending meetings and events with tenant representatives.
- ✧ Encouraging participation with under-represented groups.

- 5.6 Training can be provided in a range of subject matters and at various levels as detailed in **APPENDIX II**. Attending these courses will:
- ⬢ Help raise confidence levels;
 - ⬢ Help the role of the committee member;
 - ⬢ Help with work in their community;
 - ⬢ Help reach full potential; and
 - ⬢ Give tenants the opportunity to work towards a recognised housing qualification.
- 5.7 We will review our resource requirements annually as part of the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget preparation, to ensure effective delivery of the strategy and its actions.
- 5.8 To keep tenants informed, we will publish and distribute the Tenants' Voice newsletter twice annually (Summer and Winter). We will maintain a Housing Service Facebook page that will keep tenants up-to-date on issues that affect their homes and communities. We will also provide a range of information on tenant participation on our website.

6. How we will monitor and measure progress

- 6.1 The Tenant Participation Strategy and action plan are working documents subject to continuous review to make sure that outcomes and targets are met. In particular, in the first year of the strategy we will make sure that our approach is in line with the Scottish Social Housing Charter outcomes and covers any self-assessment and other requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator.
- 6.2 Continuous monitoring of the strategy and action plan is essential in identifying issues or areas of slow progress. This will be monitored by the Moray Tenants' Forum which includes tenants, housing staff and elected

members. The strategy and action plan will be reviewed regularly by the Forum so that the milestones in the action plan and set outcomes are met. This will also help to identify any issues or areas of slow progress.

- 6.3 Annually, a report outlining tenant participation activities over the period will be presented to the Communities Committee. The Communities Committee scrutinises performance information for the service and makes sure that it achieves maximum value for money and best value in service delivery. Tenant representatives are encouraged to attend these meetings.

Appendix I – Action Plan 2017-2020

Ref	Action	Who Involved	Resources	Timescale	Desired outcome
Outcome 1: A strong representation of tenants' views and a wide range of engagement opportunities.					
1.1	Provide a wide range of options for tenants to get involved and develop new methods of engagement such as digital and social media opportunities.	Housing Information Team	Staff time.	Ongoing	Increased number of opportunities for tenant participation.
1.2a	Assist with advertising and recruitment of new tenant members.	Housing Information Team and tenant reps	Tenant reps and staff time. Advertising costs.	Ongoing	Increased number of tenant representatives.
1.2b	Consider how best tenant meetings can be programmed to maximise attendance.	Housing Information Team and tenant reps	Tenant reps and staff time.	Ongoing	
1.3	Promote and further develop our register of interested tenants as a resource for getting tenants' views on a range of housing matters.	Housing Information Team	Staff time.	Ongoing	Increased number of tenants on the register.

Ref	Action	Who Involved	Resources	Timescale	Desired outcome
1.4	Produce tenant newsletters.	Housing Information Team.	Staff time. Production and distribution costs.	Annually, Summer and Winter	Tenants are aware of service developments and opportunities to participate.
1.5	Develop a key point summary of the tenant participation strategy.	Housing Information Team and tenant reps	Tenant reps and staff time.	April 2017	Tenants with reading and literacy problems find the strategy easier to read and understand.
1.6	Develop tenant participation leaflet/information pack.	Housing Information Team and tenant reps	Tenant reps and staff time. Production and distribution costs.	December 2017	Increased tenant awareness of the range of opportunities for tenant participation available.
1.7	Develop 'tenant approved' stamp for use on housing service documents which have been developed in partnership with tenants.	Housing Information Team and tenant reps	Tenant reps and staff time.	December 2017	Evidence that tenant views have been incorporated in the development of service documents.

Ref	Action	Who Involved	Resources	Timescale	Desired outcome
Outcome 2: Our tenants are fully engaged in the process of policy formulation, service review, scrutiny and decision making.					
2.1a	Provide support to Service Improvement Panel to develop and implement programme of tenant-led scrutiny.	Housing Information Team and Service Improvement Panel	Tenant reps and staff time.	Ongoing	Improvement in Housing Services in line with tenant priorities
2.1b	Work with Service Improvement Panel to implement improvement actions arising from scrutiny programme.	Housing staff and Service Improvement Panel	Tenant reps and staff time.	Ongoing	
2.2	Produce a list of policies for review and consultation annually.	Housing Policy Team	Tenant reps and staff time.	Ongoing, Annually	Tenants and tenant representatives are clear about which policies they will be consulted on, how and when.
2.3a	Encourage tenant representatives to join service scrutiny groups such as HBVG.	Housing staff and tenant reps	Tenant reps and staff time.	Ongoing	Tenants are fully involved with staff in service performance management.

Ref	Action	Who Involved	Resources	Timescale	Desired outcome
2.3b	Invite tenants from the Register of Interested Tenants and others to participate in short life review groups.	Housing Information Team and tenant reps	Tenant reps and staff time.	Ongoing	Positive outcomes from tenants involved in participation and evidence of their contributions to service delivery.
2.4	Make sure that environmental audits/estate walkabouts are carried out in line with the Estate Management Policy	Area Housing Teams	Tenant reps and staff time.	Ongoing	Tenants influence where improvement works are carried out.
2.5	Review of the environmental grant and estate audits.	Housing Information Team and tenant reps	Tenant reps and staff time. Budget already identified.	March 2017	Improved clarity and co-ordination of environmental audits and the improvement programmes that flow from these.
2.6	Produce annual performance report.	Housing Information Team and tenant reps	Staff time. Production and distribution costs.	Annually, by October 31	Tenants have access to performance information which is easy to understand.

Ref	Action	Who Involved	Resources	Timescale	Desired outcome
2.7	Consider the scope for an independent audit of tenant participation activities.	Housing Information Team	Staff time.	December 2017	Identify whether an independent review would be worthwhile.
2.8a	Commission next major tenant satisfaction survey.	Housing Information Team	Staff time. Costs will be identified within the tendering process.	June 2018	Feedback from tenants improves housing services and influences the Housing Investment Plan.
2.8b	Implement improvement actions identified from 2018 survey.	Housing staff	Staff time.	Will be confirmed following completion of action 2.8a	
Outcome 3: Our tenants, council staff and Elected Members have the capacity to work together effectively.					
3.1	Continue to develop the Council website with easily accessible and comprehensive information.	Housing staff, ICT staff and Tenant reps	Tenant reps, housing and ICT staff time.	Ongoing	Housing section is easy to use and has a comprehensive list of information for tenants including tenant participation.

Ref	Action	Who Involved	Resources	Timescale	Desired outcome
3.2	Maintain and sustain a register of tenants who require information in alternative formats or need specific assistance to effectively participate.	Housing Information Team	TP Budget and Staff time.	Ongoing	There is a comprehensive and updated register of tenants who need support and this is targeted to those who need it.
3.3	Enable tenant representatives and staff to attend relevant professional seminars, e.g. TPAS conference.	Housing Information Team and tenant reps	Funding for conference fees and expenses.	Ongoing	Tenant representatives, staff and Elected Members are aware of developments in TP.
3.4	Make sure that information publicised is clear, in plain language and can be accessed in a range of different formats.	Housing staff, corporate equalities staff and tenant reps	Costs to be agreed within overall TP budget.	Ongoing	Consensus and clarity of high standard of communication. Information complies with the Council's Equalities Policy and appropriate legislation. Information is

Ref	Action	Who Involved	Resources	Timescale	Desired outcome
					clear, in plain language and accessible in the right formats.
3.5a	Review the training needs for tenants, staff and Elected Members for tenant participation and deliver a training programme flexibly in different ways and venues.	Housing Information Team and tenant reps	Cost of venues and tenant reps and staff time.	February 2017 and ongoing	Tenant participation is fully understood and embedded at all levels within the Council. Improved skills and knowledge evidenced by feedback sheets and basic skills audit.
3.5b	Have a broader programme of training opportunities including accredited programmes over the next 3 years.	Housing Information Team and tenant reps	Tenant reps and staff time. TP budget costs to be identified.	Ongoing	Tenants have the skill, confidence and capacity to undertake effective service scrutiny.

Ref	Action	Who Involved	Resources	Timescale	Desired outcome
3.6	Produce a list of the range of information the Council will provide, how, when and in what formats.	Housing staff and tenant reps	Tenant reps and staff time.	31 March 2017	It is easy for tenants to get information on a range of housing services at a time and in formats that suit them.
3.7a	Prepare support and training material for tenants involved in tenant scrutiny.	Housing Information Team and tenant reps	Tenant reps and staff time. TP budget costs to be identified.	March 2017 and ongoing	Tenants have the skill, confidence and capacity to undertake effective service scrutiny.
3.7b	Staff deliver the “Stepping up to Scrutiny” training programme in-house.			March 2017 and ongoing	
3.8	Update the Tenants’ Handbook to make sure it is relevant, informative, helpful and well used.	Tenant reps, Housing Policy and Information Team	Tenant reps and staff time. Additional funding from HRA will be required. Cost to be identified.	December 2019	Tenants find the Handbook to be relevant, informative, helpful and well used.

Ref	Action	Who Involved	Resources	Timescale	Desired outcome
4.	Monitoring and evaluation				
4.1	Present an annual review of the strategy to Communities Committee.	Housing Information Team	Staff time.	April 2018, annually thereafter	Progress is scrutinised and improvement actions agreed.
4.2	Publicise the results of the annual strategy review.	Housing Information Team	Staff time, Tenants' Voice newsletter (summer edition).	April 2018, annually thereafter	Results of progress are regularly publicised on the website and Tenants' Voice with positive reviews from tenants.

Appendix II – Training Statement

We are committed to providing a high quality training programme on a wide range of practical and personal development courses that give tenants and residents the opportunity to participate effectively in the decisions that affect their community and the management of their homes.

The aim of these courses is to equip our tenants and residents with the skills, information and knowledge to help get them involved in a meaningful way in the tenant involvement activities they may wish to undertake.

The training programme offers advice, training and support to tenants and residents by:

- ⌞ bringing tenants together from different neighbourhoods to discuss their experiences;
- ⌞ helping individual tenants to engage with us on a range of issues and services;
- ⌞ offering face-to-face training with expert advisors; and
- ⌞ providing a tenant training programme to help tenants make the most of the powers they have, from accredited courses to local training systems and e-learning.

By doing this, new and existing tenants will be equipped with the skills they need to engage and negotiate confidently with us. All training courses are completely free of charge and we can cover expenses incurred by participants, such as travel costs. Training is available to cover a range of subjects including:

- ⌞ committee skills;
- ⌞ how to run effective meetings;
- ⌞ chairing a meeting;
- ⌞ minute taking;
- ⌞ confidence building;

- ✧ report writing;
- ✧ interview skills;
- ✧ equalities awareness; and
- ✧ presentation skills.

Training is provided by the Council's Corporate Development Training Team as well as some external providers such as:

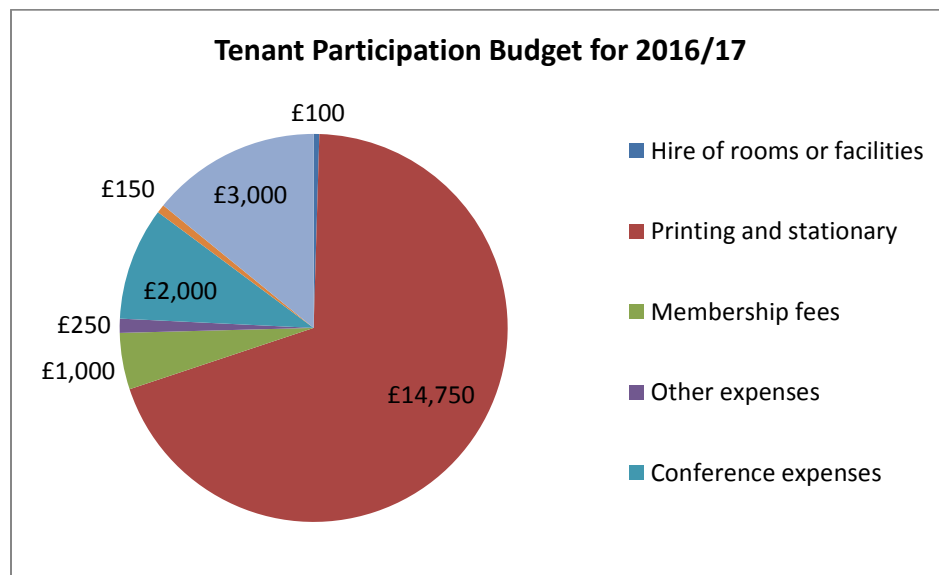
- ✧ TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service)
- ✧ TIS (Tenants Information Service)
- ✧ CIH (Chartered Institute of Housing)

Appendix III – Resources

It is a requirement of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 that the Tenant Participation Strategy details the resources required to support tenant participation. These resources are set out below. In addition to this, we also devote other funding to tenant participation. This is difficult to quantify as many of the costs are met out of mainstream budgets. Examples of this are the cost of tenants attending the Communities Committee and office administrative costs. We also have a separate budget for identified environmental improvement works, currently £50k, which tenant representatives are able to influence and prioritise. We will continue to fund this over the course of the strategy.

To reflect its importance, tenant participation is integrated into the duties of all housing staff, rather than something done by specific tenant participation officers. As a result however, time devoted by staff to tenant participation is not easily quantifiable. Tenants also use offices for meetings and other services.

The tenant participation budget, for 2016/17 is £21,250. This pays for the main costs of tenant participation including those associated with the publication of the Tenants' Voice newsletter and annual performance report.

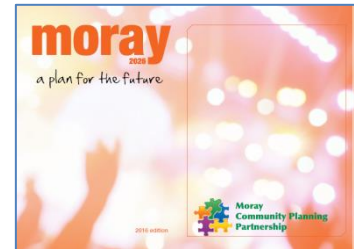


Appendix IV – Links to Other Strategies

It is important that the Tenant Participation Strategy links and compliments other strategies of Moray Council and partner agencies. The most important links are detailed below.

Moray 2026 – A Plan for the Future

This is the plan of all community planning partners which sets out the priorities and target outcomes for Moray.



The community engagement and participation section looks at the importance of engaging with our communities and recognises the need to coordinate our engagement activities to better enable communities to influence how services are shaped and, where appropriate, participate in the development and delivery of services.

The local outcomes focus on the wide range of issues which need to be addressed to meet the overarching aim and purpose “to improve life for those living and working in Moray”.

The relevant community engagement outcomes are:

- More engaged, better informed, more resilient, sustainable communities.
- Coordinated, effective, sustainable community engagement and participation.

The Plan recognises that community engagement and participation is an essential element in producing plans that properly reflect the needs and aspirations of our communities.

Corporate Plan 2015-2017

Moray Council's three year plan identifies what we are doing or going to do to contribute towards the delivery of Moray 2023. It identifies any additional targets, why they are needed and what is to be done to deliver them. It also recognises the importance of a community engagement strategy.



Service Plan 2016-2019

Sets out how resources will be applied to deliver the Corporate Plan. This informs the strategic direction as well as identifying improvements and outcomes. It details the challenges facing the Housing and Property Service and how the service is organised and resourced.

Local Housing Strategy 2013-2018

The Local Housing Strategy (LHS) sets out what the Council and its partners will do to alleviate housing need and demand in Moray. The LHS is based on a Housing Need and Demand Assessment (HNDA) and forms the basis for future investment and policy decisions in housing and related services. The LHS covers all types and tenures of housing, publicly and privately owned – not just Council housing.

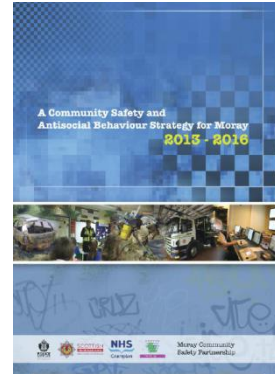
The overall aim of the Local Housing Strategy is:

“To ensure that sufficient good quality, affordable housing is available to meet the needs of people living in or requiring housing in Moray”.

Priority 6 of the LHS is to “promote successful, safe, sustainable communities and social inclusion”. This includes tenant participation and customer engagement activity within the Council.

Community Safety Strategy 2013-2016

The Community Safety Strategy sets out the Community Safety Partnership's priorities under the community planning theme of "achieving a safer community". Moray Council and our community planning partners including Police Scotland are committed to improving the quality of life for everyone in Moray and recognise that improving community safety contributes greatly to that aim.



To make sure that Moray continues to be a safe place to live, work and visit the Strategy focuses on three priorities. These are:

- ❖ Tackling antisocial behaviour
- ❖ Reducing crime and the fear of crime; and
- ❖ Reducing accidents in the community

Mechanisms are in place, to enable tenants and tenant groups to contact the Anti-Social Behaviour Team and its staff directly to raise any concerns.

This strategy is under review and an update is expected in spring 2017.

Appendix V – National Standards for Community Engagement

The national standards are good-practice principles designed to support and inform the process of community engagement, and improve what happens as a result.

1. Support

We will identify and overcome any barriers to participation

2. Planning

There is a clear purpose for the engagement, which is based on a shared understanding of community needs and ambitions.

3. Working together

We will work effectively together to achieve the aims of the engagement.

4. Methods

We will use methods of engagement that are fit for purpose.

5. Communication

We will communicate clearly and regularly with the people, organisations and communities affected by the engagement.

6. Inclusion

We will identify and involve the people and organisations that are affected by the focus of the engagement.

7. Impact

We will assess the impact of the engagement and use what we have learned to improve our future community engagement.

Appendix VI - Equalities

Moray Council is fully committed to fulfilling its duty to promote equality and treat people respectfully, fairly and equally across all areas of its operation. We are committed to tackling discrimination and harassment within all our services and to make sure all our services are accessible to everyone irrespective of their race, religious belief, disability, gender, age or sexual orientation. In addition, we seek to promote equal opportunities irrespective of language, literacy and numeracy, social origin, employment status, political belief and responsibility for dependants.

The Moray Tenants' Forum has an equalities statement in their constitution, opposing discrimination and encouraging engagement with minority groups. We recognise the value of all members of the community and equalities training will form part of the ongoing training for staff and tenant representatives.

Our documents are available in a range of different formats and can be translated into other languages. Information is also given on Moray's interpreting service "Language Line". We also maintain a register of tenants who require information in alternative formats, such as large print.

We will actively make sure that all groups and individuals have equal access and opportunity to engage in tenant participation activities. All venues used for tenant participation activities are checked in advance for their accessibility for people with mobility difficulties, including people in wheelchairs.

Under the Equality Act 2010, we have a duty to consider and address the impact of all policies or activities on the different groups protected under the Act. We must demonstrate that we have considered and addressed potential impacts in decision making. Moray Council does this through Equality Impact Assessments.