



# Williamsburgh

## HOUSING ASSOCIATION

• Limited •

### Tenant Participation Strategy

This strategy can be made available in different languages and other formats such as Braille or tape, on request.

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## 1. Introduction

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 introduced a statutory right to participate for all tenants of social landlords. This Act also required all social landlords to develop a Tenant Participation Strategy by 31<sup>st</sup> March 2003.

Our first strategy was evolved with the assistance of the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (T.P.A.S.) and we acknowledge their input into the original document.

This strategy covering 2010-2013 takes cognisance of the original work carried out by TPAS, further guidance issued by The Scottish Government and the Scottish Housing Regulator, and our residents.

Our mission statement is as follows:

*“Williamsburgh Housing Association’s fundamental purpose and focus of our strategy, is the effective provision of a quality service and good quality housing at affordable rents, for people in housing need.*

*Working with our partners and the local community, we aim, not only to regenerate the physical and environmental aspects of the areas in which we operate, but to enhance the quality of life, social well being and economic competitiveness of the residents”.*

We are fully committed to encouraging local residents to take part in decisions relating to all our activity. We view participation as a basic right which can bring real benefits to everyone directly involved and to the community as a whole.

We recognise that this strategy is an evolving document which has been produced after consultation with tenants and service users.

1. Introduction Contd.

We accept that tenants may want to have a variety of different mechanisms for tenant participation and that the motivation to become involved in our work may vary over time.

We acknowledge that the needs of the organisation must not dictate the structure and the function of tenant participation.

## 2. Aims and Objectives

We have adopted the definition of tenant participation set out in "Partners in Participation" (1999):

*"Tenant participation is about tenants taking part in decision making processes and influencing decisions about: housing policies; housing conditions; and housing (and related) services. It is a two way process which involves the sharing of information, ideas and power. Its aim is to improve the standard of housing conditions and service".*

The organisation itself was established on the basis that, people who feel involved, can identify with what is being done, and are more likely to be willing to help the process along or even to play a full part in progressing projects or services which affect them. In evolving this strategy we aim to achieve the following:

- To develop a culture of mutual trust, respect and partnership between tenants, committee members and officers at all levels, working together towards a common goal of better housing conditions, service provision and continuous improvement.
- To ensure that our statutory obligations relating to tenant participation, as defined in the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, are fully met.
- To involve our tenants in decisions about our priorities and the way services are delivered.
- To establish from our tenants what issues are most important to them.
- To ensure our performance and services are monitored regularly, and feedback on their outcomes provided to tenants and Committees.

## 2. Aims and Objectives Contd.

- To identify areas of improvement and take appropriate action where necessary.
- To ensure that our decision making processes are open, clear and accountable.
- To make all information relating to our policies and procedures accessible to tenants and service users.
- To ensure that such information is made available in different formats such as braille and tape and in other languages, on request.
- To promote equal opportunities to all our tenants and service users.
- To establish local neighbourhood groups made up of local tenants.
- To provide training and support to tenants actively involved in our neighbourhood groups.
- To establish a register of tenants' organisations within our areas of operation.
- To offer 'set up' grant funding to any new groups which meet the registration criteria.
- To offer ongoing financial resources to such groups as required.

### 3. Equal Opportunities

The Association is committed to the principles of equal opportunities and good practice. In this regard, we acknowledge Performance Standards for Social Landlords and Homelessness Functions (November 2006) : GS2.1, which states in respect of equal opportunities that:

"We embrace diversity, promote equal opportunities for all and eliminate unlawful discrimination in all areas of our work".

Accordingly, we shall ensure that specifically in regard to tenant consultation and participation all tenants are treated equally, irrespective of their sex or marital status, race, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or other social attributes, including beliefs or opinions such as religious beliefs or political opinions.

#### 4. Performance Standards, Good Practice and Legal Framework

The Association, in preparing this policy and the related procedures has given consideration to and sought compliance with, the following:

Performance Standards, as defined by The Scottish Housing Regulator – the regulatory body for housing associations. The relevant Guidance and Activity Standards GS2.2, GS3.1, GS3.5 and GS4.1 state:

##### GS1.3 Commitment to continuous improvement

We actively strive for continuous improvement in all we do.

##### GS1.4 Resource management

We make the best use of our people and our physical resources to achieve efficiency, best value, continuous improvement and to deliver high-quality services that meet the needs of our service users.

##### GS2.1 Equal opportunities

We embrace diversity, promote equal opportunities for all and eliminate unlawful discrimination in all areas of our work.

##### GS2.2 Tenant participation

We have published and are implementing a sound strategy for encouraging and supporting tenants, residents and service users to participate actively in all areas of our work. We support tenants to take an active interest in managing their homes.

##### GS3.1 Responsiveness to service users

We place the people who want to use our services at the heart of our work. We treat people with respect and are responsive to their views and priorities.

## 4. Performance Standards, Good Practice and Legal Framework Contd.

### GS3.5 Openness and confidentiality

We are open about what we do and publish information about our activities. We provide information that people ask for, unless there are justifiable reasons for withholding it.

### GS4.1 Independence and accountability

We focus on our purpose and outcomes for tenants and service users. We are independent from other bodies and operate in line with an appropriate constitution. We engage with stakeholders and make accountability real.

### Good Practice Guidance

- The Scottish Government – Code of Practice for Tenant Participation in Best Value.
- Communities Scotland’s A Good Practice Framework for Tenant Participation in Scotland.
- The Scottish Housing Regulator : Shaping up for Improvement July 2009.
- SFHA’s Raising Standards in Housing.

### Legal Framework

The legislative framework which affects tenant participation includes:

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 (Section 23, subsection 6, f)

**“where the landlord is a local authority landlord or a registered social landlord, the landlord’s tenant participation strategy”.**

## 5. Current Tenant Participation Activity

We are committed to the provision of good quality information and currently inform and consult our tenants and service users using the undernoted methods:

Newsletters	A quarterly newsletter is circulated to all residents within our properties.
Annual Report	Our annual report is issued to all residents.
Residents Handbook	A residents handbook has been created covering all aspects of our service provision and is regularly reviewed and updated. This is issued to all current and new tenants and owners.
Leaflets	We have standard leaflets available covering issues such as shareholding membership and will create new leaflets to highlight changes in legislation and other such matters.
Public Meetings	Meetings are arranged to enable us to consult with our residents on various matters such as streetscaping, new developments, stock transfers and so on.
Close Meetings	Close meetings are convened immediately after a development has been completed. The purpose of these meetings is to outline our obligations as a landlord and the residents' obligations in respect of their home and the common areas.

5. Current Tenant Participation Activity Contd.

Surveys	<p>We seek to establish our residents' views of our service provision in various ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Comprehensive Resident Surveys every 3 years.</li> <li>- Allocations process and information provided.</li> <li>- Complaint handling.</li> <li>- Front line customer service evaluation.</li> <li>- Development Satisfaction Surveys.</li> <li>- Repairs Satisfaction Surveys.</li> <li>- Suggestion box in the reception area of the office.</li> </ul>
Membership	<p>Shareholding membership is actively encouraged via the quarterly newsletters, during the 'sign up' process for each new tenant, settling in visit, neighbourhood group, close and public meetings.</p>
Web Site	<p>Committed to ensure that it is regularly updated to keep residents and service users informed of our ongoing work.</p>
Letters	<p>Information is regularly given to tenants on various issues by using letters.</p>

5. Current Tenant Participation Activity Contd.

Individual Contact	We acknowledge that many residents prefer to make their views known on a one-to-one basis with staff. We are committed to ensuring that this opportunity is afforded to all our service users.
Settling In Visits	All new tenants are offered a 'settling in' visit which allows them to discuss in more detail the various issues raised during the 'sign up' process.
Mobile Phone Text Messaging	Reminders of forthcoming events are notified where mobile phone numbers are held.
Calendar of Events	On an annual basis, we will issue all residents with a calendar highlighting events that we will be conducting throughout the year.
Poster Displays	Posters highlighting various information for service users are displayed in the reception and interview areas of our office.
Reception Television	Information is updated and presented on the TV screen in our reception area.
Complaints Procedure	We have a comprehensive complaints procedure which provides service users, dissatisfied with our service delivery, policies or us in general, with the opportunity to express their concerns.

5. Current Tenant Participation Activity Contd.

Open Days	These are used to highlight specific issues, such as legislative changes.
Residents Conference	We will run every two years a conference which seeks to provide information to our residents on the major issues of importance concerning the Association and which offers those, to whom we provide services, the opportunity to influence, comment on and question the Association's direction and performance.
Local Area Conference	We will run on an annual basis, local area conferences. Not only do these conferences seek to provide residents with information, but to promote membership of the neighbourhood groups by the resident members providing an information workshop highlighting the role of this group and the benefit of being involved.

As well as the above, we have a number of residents who have expressed their wish to participate on various issues relating to policy development and review by mail only.

## 6. Strategy Development

Our first Tenant Participation Strategy was developed with the assistance of the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (T.P.A.S.). The basic principles of which have continued with this strategy.

The steps for developing this Strategy will be as follows:

- Draft document presented to Housing Management Sub Committee for consideration and discussion.
- Any necessary amendments made to draft.
- Draft policy, together with feedback form will be issued to our Register of Interested Parties.
- Draft policy, together with feedback form will be issued to our neighbourhood groups.
- Letter of explanation and summarised details of strategy put to residents for comment.

The Resident Satisfaction Survey, undertaken in 2007, indicated that 96% of tenants, and 89% of factored owners, felt we were good at keeping them informed of our activities and services. In addition to this, 89% of residents felt that we were good at taking their views into account.

## 6. Strategy Development Contd.

Newsletters were the most used and preferred communication source for residents, with 93% confirming that they use newsletters to obtain information about us and our services.

The table below is an extract from the Residents' Satisfaction Survey providing details of the Used and Preferred communication methods.

Williamsburgh Housing Association Communication Sources				
	Used communications		Preferred communications	
	No.	%	No.	%
Letters	168	46%	59	16%
Staff visits	18	5%	8	2%
Newsletters	337	93%	320	88%
Office notice boards	13	4%	3	1%
Area committee meetings (now known as Neighbourhood Groups)	14	4%	3	1%
Area surgeries	17	5%	3	1%
General meetings	26	7%	7	2%
Surveys	21	6%	-	-
Register of interested parties	13	4%	1	0%
Website	21	6%	11	3%
Email	14	4%	7	2%
Text messages	9	2%	-	-
Other	-	-	-	-
Don't know	6	2%	8	2%
Phone	3	1%	2	1%
Magazine	1	0%	-	-
Can't read/ newsletter is read out to me	1	0%	-	-
None/ don't receive any	2	1%	1	0%

It would appear, from this, that our tenants are happy with the methods of consultation used to date. We will continue to utilise these methods as well as developing new initiatives in this area.

## 7. Consultation

### (a) (i) Duty to Consult

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 obliges us to provide the following:

- a written Tenancy Agreement,
- (before a tenancy begins) details about the tenant's entitlement to Right to Buy, and the obligations likely to be incurred should they exercise that right, and
- information about our complaints procedure.

At the request of the tenant we must also provide information relating to:

- the terms of their tenancy,
- our policy on setting rent and service charges,
- our policy and rules about:
  - ◆ applying to the housing list,
  - ◆ allocations,
  - ◆ transfer of tenancies,
  - ◆ exchanges of houses between tenants (including where one party is the tenant of another landlord), and
  - ◆ repairs and maintenance.
- whether there is a Right to Buy and if so, on what terms,
- the consequences of exercising Right to Buy,
- our Tenant Participation Strategy, and
- our arrangements for taking decisions about housing management and services.

## 7. Consultation Contd.

### (a) (ii) Consultation Requirements

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001, Part 2, Section 25 states that:

“where the landlord under a Scottish Secure Tenancy proposes to increase the rents or any other charges payable by all, or any class of, its tenants it must, before giving notice under subsection (1):

- (a) consult those of its tenants who would be affected by the proposal, and
- (b) have regard to the views expressed by those consulted”.

Section 54 places further responsibilities in terms of consultation. We must involve tenants and Registered Tenants’ organisations in policy proposals relating to:

- Housing Management,
- Repairs and Maintenance,
- Tenant Participation,
- Service Standards, and
- Change of Landlord.

We must clearly explain the likely effects and consequences of any proposals and have due regard to any representations made.

## 7. Consultation Contd.

### (a) (ii) Consultation Requirements Contd.

We will, therefore, attempt to involve all tenants, residents and service users in all aspects of service delivery affecting them. The following list is not exhaustive but sets out some of the most commonly occurring areas of the Association's work where participation will routinely occur.

- Allocations, transfers and exchanges
- Tenant Participation
- Homelessness
- Rent setting and collection
- Annual rent and service charge review
- Day to day maintenance
- Planned maintenance
- Rent arrears
- Dealing with crime and anti-social behaviour
- Estate management issues
- Capital investment programmes
- Amendments to tenancy agreements
- Performance – standards of services
- Proposed policy changes
- New developments and regeneration initiatives
- Wider role activity
- What would you like to be consulted on? (Appendix 3)

## 7. Consultation Contd.

### (b) Consultation Methods

#### (i) Timescales

We recognise that, it is crucial to the tenant participation process, for time to be built into these processes, to allow meaningful information to be provided, analysed by tenants, a common view reached and representations to be made to us.

We will make information available in plain language. We will publicise (in newsletters, the website, the residents handbook and information leaflets) that information can be made available in alternative formats required to enable tenants to access and understand the information e.g. on tape, in Braille or in ethnic minority languages.

We will, before the start of any review process, provide details to our tenants of the forthcoming review, indicate how we will be undertaking the review process, the timescales and the mechanisms for tenant participation. We will publicise each year the anticipated review schedule for the forthcoming year in order to provide tenants/neighbourhood groups with advance notice.

We will set minimum timescales – (30 working days) for issuing information, receiving and considering representations and providing feedback.

## 7. Consultation Contd.

### (i) Timescales Contd.

Timescales for policy reviews will be as follows:

- Paper outlining existing policy and recommended changes issued to tenants from register of interested parties/neighbourhood groups.
- Consideration of taking the policy to focus groups for wider consultation if major policy review e.g. allocations/repairs/ rents and service charges and so on.
- 2 weeks allowed for tenants to read, familiarise themselves with document.
- Week 3 : meetings/discussions held between neighbourhood groups and their Housing Officer.
- Week 4 : representations received and considered.
- Weeks 5 and 6 : necessary changes incorporated.
- Policy to Committee.
- Feedback to those tenants from the register of interested parties/neighbourhood groups and any others who took part.
- General feedback to all tenants on website, and via the next scheduled newsletter.

## 7. Consultation Contd.

### (ii) Information

We will continue to give information to tenants and service users utilising the following methods:

- Newsletters (4 each year)
- Website
- Letters
- Handbooks
- Meetings
- Leaflets
- Surveys/Questionnaires
- Posters
- Local Press/Radio
- Annual Report

### (iii) Consultation and Participation

In addition, we will encourage participation using the undernoted mechanisms:

- Comments/Complaints/Suggestions
- Satisfaction Slips for Reactive Maintenance
- Surveys/Questionnaires
- Face to Face Contact with Tenants
- Close/Open Meetings
- Open Days
- Area Surgeries
- Tenant Satisfaction Surveys
- Register of Interested Parties
- Annual Meetings such as the A.G.M.
- Neighbourhood Groups
- Technical Focus Groups

## 7. Consultation Contd.

### (iv) Individual Tenants

We will provide information to individual tenants both at the start of the tenancy and on a regular basis. This will be done by using the most suitable methods from the aforementioned list. As a minimum we will provide the handbook, 4 newsletters each year (there may be special editions of the newsletter on specific issues from time to time) and the annual report. Comments/feedback will be requested by both tear-off slips and regular surveys as well as the use of an interactive web site.

Regular opportunities will be provided for all tenants to attend; close meetings; other meetings; surgeries, neighbourhood groups and open days as well as all tenants being invited to the A.G.M. and Annual Conference.

### (v) Register of Interested Parties

We understand that tenants often want to be involved on a one-to-one basis and will use this approach where it is feasible and appropriate. We recognise, however, that in terms of policy review and strategy formulation, it will be necessary to have more interactive mechanisms for meaningful participation.

We will, therefore, promote appropriate methods from the aforementioned list in order to ensure meaningful participation takes place in the most effective ways. We will, for example, promote and make use of the register of interested parties as appropriate.

We will actively encourage, promote and support the setting up of tenants organisations – whether set up informally or registered and will promote the registration of tenants groups.

## 7. Consultation Contd.

### (vi) Neighbourhood Groups

We recognise that as we grow and expand, it is important to provide opportunities for tenants in the newer areas of operation to be involved in both our activity within the local communities as well as participating in the overall running of the organisation.

The role of the neighbourhood groups will be to:

- Represent the tenants within these communities.
- Encourage fellow residents to take part in events and feedback on issues and ideas to the Association.
- Be involved in discussions about capital and revenue investment programmes.
- Be involved in discussions about service delivery, policy and local issues.
- Agree service standards, targets and indicators.
- Contribute to and be involved in wider role activities in their local area.

There will be the opportunity for individual members of neighbourhood groups to serve on the Management Committee.

Training and support will also be offered to members of Neighbourhood Groups to gain experience and enable informed decision making.

## 7. Consultation Contd.

### (vii) Planned Maintenance and Major Repairs

We issue satisfaction slips for reactive maintenance to gauge tenant satisfaction with the quality of the work; timing of the appointment; the attitude of the contractor and whether the contractor cleared up after them. We also do follow up telephone calls and visits on a sample of repairs completed to check tenant satisfaction.

We will inform tenants of cyclical and future maintenance programmes by newsletters and individual letters. We will inform tenants in each development of their cyclical maintenance programme for the following year and will provide opportunities for discussion using the appropriate methods listed in this strategy. Tenants will be kept informed of changes and alterations to maintenance programmes and feedback will be provided on how consultation with tenants has influenced these programmes.

Tenants will be consulted on choices for maintenance painterwork programmes.

In carrying out major works (e.g. the replacement of bathrooms and kitchens), we will consult with tenants on design and layouts and will provide choices of units. During the course of the contracts, there will be ongoing meetings to ensure that the contract is closely monitored and that tenants are satisfied with the outcomes.

We will hold a minimum of 4 Technical Focus Groups each year, and will actively seek to encourage membership of this group.

## 7. Consultation Contd.

### (viii) New Build

We will consult tenants on the redevelopment of areas. We will undertake surveys to gauge satisfaction with their new homes when tenants move in. We will use this feedback and consultation with tenants wherever possible to inform the development of new properties. We will, by means of project team working, ensure that the Housing Management, Development and Maintenance Sections have, along with tenants, a combined role to play in successful development activity.

### (ix) Rents/Service Charges

We are obliged by law to consult tenants about annual rent and service charge increases. We recognise this as a significant challenge and recognise that, in order for meaningful consultation to take place, there will be the need for tenants to develop a greater awareness and understanding of how registered social landlords are financed as well as understanding in greater detail the Association's finances. Tenants have stated that they want to be consulted about rent increase by means of letters and questionnaires, as well as by means of neighbourhood groups. We will promote the use of these different mechanisms and evaluate their effectiveness.

## 7. Consultation Contd.

### (x) Shareholding Membership and Committee

We want to promote share membership and will do so by:

- discussion at tenancy commencement,
- settling in visits to new tenants,
- regular membership drives, and
- distributing widely the leaflets on membership and committee membership.

We recognise the need to attract new members onto the Management Committee and to have representation which reflects the diversity of the communities which we serve. We will aim to attract new committee members by:

- mentoring,
- "buddying",
- one to one support,
- induction training,
- training and development, and
- encouraging observers to attend committee meetings.

## 7. Consultation Contd.

### (xi) Wider Role Activity

In addition to the statutory duties that we have regarding consultation, we are also committed to our wider role activities. These are activities that are outwith the strict remit of a landlord's functions. Essentially, wider role activities should serve to enhance the quality of life of our tenant's and their communities.

As part of our Tenant Participation Strategy, we will also undertake activities that will:

- Build confidence and skills.
- Promote healthier living.
- Tackle financial and social exclusion.
- Embrace diversity.

## 8. Registration of Tenants' Organisations

The concept of Registered Tenants Organisations (RTOs) is central to the entire Tenant Participation process. The aim is to give Tenants Organisations a recognised role in the Tenant Participation process.

We are obliged to hold a register of all RTOs which must be a public document and available for inspection at reasonable times. As a minimum the document will contain:

- the name of the group,
- the area of operation,
- a contact address (this may be a box number if the group wishes), and
- other information such as meeting timetable, web site address etc.

RTOs must be made aware that this information will be publicly available.

We will publish these details on our website and hold a hard copy in the office. We will advertise their existence in our reception and endeavour to promote such groups in our newsletters.

## 8. Registration of Tenants' Organisations Contd.

### (a) Criteria for Registration

The Scottish Ministers have set out the criteria for registration of an RTO. These criteria aim to balance the interests of the RTO with those of the landlord and to ensure that RTOs are accountable to members.

- The organisation must have a publicly available written constitution, which sets out:
  - ◆ its objectives and area of operation,
  - ◆ how people can become members,
  - ◆ the way the committee will operate,
  - ◆ how the business of the organisation will be conducted,
  - ◆ how decisions will be reached democratically,
  - ◆ how funds will be managed,
  - ◆ arrangements for public meetings,
  - ◆ arrangement for an A.G.M., and
  - ◆ how changes can be made to the constitution.
  
- The organisation must have a committee that:
  - ◆ (after the first year) is elected at an A.G.M.,
  - ◆ has at least 5 members,
  - ◆ can co-opt others onto the committee during the course of the year,
  - ◆ has elected office bearers,
  - ◆ holds meetings that are open to any member of the organisation,
  - ◆ can demonstrate that decisions are reached democratically, and
  - ◆ promotes equal opportunities.
  
- The organisation must operate within:
  - ◆ a defined geographical area,
  - ◆ an area which includes housing stock owned by the landlord, and
  - ◆ a local community (or at a national level if the landlord operates across Scotland).

## 8. Registration of Tenants' Organisations Contd.

### (a) Criteria for Registration Contd.

- For mixed groups, there should be a mechanism in place within the Registered Tenant Organisation for the views of the tenant to be sought, for example, through tenant only surveys or tenant sub-committees.
- Membership of the organisation and participation in its activities must be open to all eligible tenants within its defined area of operation.
- The organisation must have appropriate accounting records and present an annual financial statement to the A.G.M.
- The organisation must demonstrate that it is committed to representing the interests of its members and that, when consulted by the landlord, it can represent the views of the landlord's tenants in its defined area of operation.

### (b) Mechanism for Registration

To register with Williamsburgh as an Registered Tenant Organisation, the group will require to provide:

- a written constitution,
- names and contact addresses of committee members,
- identity of committee office bearers,
- a map and description of the area of operation, and
- a statement setting out how the organisation plans to engage with its members and how it will represent their views.

## 8. Registration of Tenants' Organisations Contd.

### (b) Mechanism for Registration Contd.

Initially, groups who are interested in registration should contact their Housing Officer for advice and an application form.

We will provide a copy of the 'Mechanism for the Registration of Tenants Organisations' document which covers the criteria for registration together with a model constitution covering the basic requirements (should this be required). We will also assist with membership policies and advice on equalities.

The group will be given details of a named staff member who will provide advice, assistance and support in relation to all parts of the registration process.

On receipt of an application for registration and the necessary supporting documentation, the request will be presented to the Housing Management Sub Committee for approval.

If successful, registration will apply for a period of up to 3 years with a re-registration at or around 1<sup>st</sup> April. Re-registration may also be required outwith this, should there be significant change in constitution, membership or area of operation.

## 8. Registration of Tenants' Organisations Contd.

### (c) Appeals

A tenant organisation may appeal against our decision:

- not to register the organisation, or
- to remove the organisation from the Register, or
- not to remove the organisation from the Register.

Initially, the request to reconsider any decision will be dealt with in line with our complaints procedure i.e. to Housing Manager, then Director then full Committee.

Should the group still feel dissatisfied, there is an ultimate right of appeal to the Regulation and Inspection Division of Communities Scotland who are operating on behalf of Scottish Ministers.

### (d) Removal from the Register

Removal from the RTO can be instigated by either us or the group themselves.

Clearly the procedure will vary depending on the reasons or circumstances surrounding removal being considered. For instance, if the group is disbanding, the procedure and timescales will be different from a situation where we require removal due to non-compliance with constitution. In the latter case, we will give guidance and assistance to help the group avoid removal, if possible, together with timescales for implementing any necessary change. At the time of registration, we will clarify with the group the various circumstances under which they or we can seek removal from the register.

## 8. Registration of Tenants' Organisations Contd.

### (d) Removal from the Register Contd.

An organisation can be removed from the Register for the following reasons:

- the organisation no longer fulfils the registration criteria, or
- the organisation ceases to exist, or
- there is a mutual agreement between ourselves and the organisation.

We will notify an organisation 28 days in advance of them being removed from the Register of Tenants' Organisations.

### (e) Amendments to the Register

If the organisation's constitution, office bearers, membership or area of operation changes, they are required to inform us. Providing that these changes do not affect the organisation meeting their registration criteria, the Register of Tenants Organisations will be amended accordingly.

## 8. Registration of Tenants' Organisations Contd.

### (f) Neighbourhood Groups

It is possible that existing neighbourhood groups may choose not to register as an RTO – preferring a more informal approach.

We will, however, ensure that each of our current groups are aware of how to register. This will be done in two main ways:

- (i) A copy of the leaflet covering the Tenant Participation rights under the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 will be sent to each group.
- (ii) A staff member will attend either a public or group meeting of each group to explain the registration process and timescales.

Where groups choose not to proceed, individual tenant members will still have their right to be consulted. We may also decide, where appropriate, to consult with non-registered groups. This would be outwith the statutory provisions of the Act.

We will continue to consult with existing tenants' and residents' groups who do not wish to become Registered Tenants Organisations. For funding purposes, if a non-registered group meets the registration criteria, but declines to be registered, we will provide the same financial support and assistance that registered groups receive.

## 8. Registration of Tenants' Organisations Contd.

### (f) Neighbourhood Groups Contd.

Any non-registered groups who do not meet the registration criteria will be offered support and assistance from staff to allow them to participate, although no financial grants will be provided unless there is a valid one-off reason agreed at the discretion of the Director. We will continue to encourage any existing groups to participate with a view to becoming a Registered Tenants Organisation at a later date.

### (g) Tenancy Management Agreements

Section 55 of the Housing (Scotland) Act sets out arrangements for a Tenant Management Co-operative to enter into agreement with their landlord to manage their housing stock. Either all or some of our housing functions can be subject to a Tenancy Management Agreement and transferred to the Tenant Management Co-operative.

Scottish Ministers must approve Tenant Management Co-operatives (as well as terms of agreement between a landlord and co-operative) before it can proceed. Where a landlord refuses to make such agreement, the Tenant Management Co-operative has a right of appeal to Ministers.

## 9. Resources for Tenant Participation

### (a) Budget

It is difficult to assess what resource requirements may be required to provide effective participation. We have, however, estimated the main costs for the financial year 2010/2011.

This is an evolving process and, as such, the costs relating to participation are likely to change. We will amend and develop aspects of this strategy on an ongoing basis.

We have included the undernoted elements for tenant participation in our budget for the forthcoming year.

Tenant Participation
Newsletters
Mailings and Leaflets
Web Site Costs
Postage
Annual Report
Residents' Conference
Public Meetings

## 9. Resources for Tenant Participation Contd.

### (b) Staff Responsible for Tenant Participation

We acknowledge that participation is an important issue for all staff and that it is important that they take account of tenants' and service users' views in undertaking their daily tasks.

Each section head is responsible for ensuring that the principles of tenant participation are adhered to by their own staff. The overall responsibility for tenant participation lies with the Management Committee. This has been delegated to the Director and Housing Manager who will ensure that adequate measures are in place relating to monitoring and review in order to meet the Scottish Housing Regulator's requirements in Performance Standards and our own set objectives.

## 10. Tenant Participation Events

Included in the Strategy at Appendix 2, is our Action Plan of tenant consultation and participation events for the year 2010/2011. The plan is not exhaustive as further events may occur dependant on the needs of the Association or our tenants. Tenants will receive details of planned activities and events via our Events Calendar.

For each event contained within the Action Plan, a separate plan, timetable and relevant papers will be created and held.

## 11. Review

The contents of this Strategy and the attached Action Plan will be reviewed on an annual basis by the Housing Manager, and presented for comments using the methods contained within.

Appendix No.1

Pro-forma for Application to become registered as a Registered Tenants Organisation (R.T.O.)

Organisation's name:

Contact address:

Organisation's area of operation and purpose:

Membership (provide brief details of how tenants/residents can become members):

What will be the arrangements for providing information and taking account of members' views? (provide brief details)

How will funds be managed?

How will the organisation ensure equal opportunities requirements are met?

Please send the completed application form to:

Housing Manager,  
Williamsburgh Housing Association Ltd.,  
Ralston House, Cyril Street,  
PAISLEY,  
PA1 1RW.

<b>Action Plan</b>					
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<b>Month</b>	<b>Method</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
Publicise Neighbourhood Groups	Strategic, Operational and Wider Role	March 2010	Website, Newsletters, Rent increase letter February 2010	All tenants	Housing Management Team
Tenant Participation Policy and Strategy	Strategic	March 2010	Website, letters, TV, Neighbourhood Group Meeting	Neighbourhood Group, Register of Interested Parties	Housing Management Team
Summary	Strategic, Operational		Website, summary letter	All tenants	Housing Management Team

### Action Plan

Activity	Objective	Month	Method	Who	Responsibility
Allocations Policy	Strategic	March 2010	Website, letters, TV, Neighbourhood Group Meeting	Neighbourhood Group, Register of Interested Parties	Housing Management Team
Summary	Strategic, Operational		Website, summary letter	All tenants	Housing Management Team
Estate Management Walkabouts	Strategic, Operational	May 2010	Letter, TV, Website	Neighbourhood Groups	Housing Officers
Welfare Rights Officer at Area Surgeries	Wider Role	March, June, September 2010	Poster, TV, Website, Newsletter	All tenants	Housing Officers
Local Area Conferences	Strategic, Operational, Wider Role	June 2010	Poster, TV, Website, Newsletter, Letters	All tenants	Housing Management Team

### Action Plan

Activity	Objective	Month	Method	Who	Responsibility
Litter Pick Up Days	Wider Role	July and August 2010	Poster, TV, Website, Newsletter, Letters	All tenants	Housing Management Team
Technical Focus Group Meetings	Strategic, Operational				Maintenance and Development Teams
Neighbourhood Group Meetings	Strategic, Operational	March, June, August, November 2010	Newsletter, TV, Website, Neighbourhood Groups, Letters	All tenants	Housing Management Team
Youth Activity Days	Wider Role	July 2010	Poster, TV, Website, Newsletter	All tenants	Housing Management and Maintenance Teams

### Action Plan

Activity	Objective	Month	Method	Who	Responsibility
Parent and Child Sports Day	Wider Role	October 2010	Poster, TV, Website, Newsletter	All tenants	Housing Management and Maintenance Teams
Gardening Project	Wider Role	May 2010	Poster, TV, Website, Newsletter, Neighbourhood Groups	All tenants	Housing Officers
Good Garden Competition	Wider Role	July 2010	Newsletter, TV, Website, Neighbourhood Groups	All tenants	Housing Officers
Best Close Competition	Wider Role	July 2010	Newsletter, TV, Website, Neighbourhood Groups	All tenants	Housing Officers

### Action Plan

Activity	Objective	Month	Method	Who	Responsibility
Open Day (drop in)	Strategic, Wider Role	September 2010	Newsletter, TV, Website, Neighbourhood Groups	All tenants	Staff Team
Design a Christmas card competition	Wider Role	October – December 2010	Poster, TV, Website, Neighbourhood Groups	All tenants	Housing Manager
Rent and Service Charge Review	Strategic	December 2010 – January 2011	TV, Website, Neighbourhood Groups, Letters	All tenants	Housing Manager
Children's Christmas Party	Wider Role	December 2010	Poster, TV, Website, Neighbourhood Groups	All tenants	Housing Manager

Allocations Process Questionnaire

Name Ref No

Address Date

Date of Commencement

- When you requested your application, was the information contained within the application pack helpful?
- After receiving it, did you have a clear understanding of where our houses are situated?
- After submitting your housing application, how long was it before you received your award letter?
- Was the information in the letter clear and self explanatory?  
Y/N
- If you requested or received a prospects interview at any time during your application, was the information you were given clear and understandable?
- How would you rate our staff member's knowledge of the process? Poor/Good/Very Good

At your sign up interview:

- Please indicate how well each of the following was explained to you:

Tenancy Agreement – Your responsibilities.  
Not very well/good/very well

Tenancy Agreement – Our responsibilities

Your responsibility for paying your rent

Various methods by which you can pay rent

Respecting your neighbours

Noise enforcement service

Do you have any ideas or suggestions that would help us to improve either the allocations process or the sign up interview?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire – your views are important and help us make improvements to our service.

We will publish the outcomes from our questionnaires, but will not publish any personal details about you.

Appendix No.4

How well did we deal with your complaint questionnaire?

Name

Ref No

Address

Date

Eman/Neigh

Category

Regarding the recent complaint that you submitted to the Association, we would be grateful of your feedback in order that we can review and improve the service that we provide.

Please indicate how your complaint was submitted:  
letter/email/telephone/in person

Please indicate how easy it was to have your complaint received:

Not easy      Easy      Very Easy

Did you receive an acknowledgement quickly? Y/N

Thinking of your complaint, how long did it take from submitting your complaint until you received confirmation of the complaint closure?

Less than 2 weeks, 2- 4 weeks, more than 4 weeks

If your complaint fell into the more than 4 weeks timescale, did we keep you up to date and let you know that we were still dealing with it? Y/N

How satisfied were you with the outcome of your complaint?

Not satisfied

Satisfied

If you were not satisfied, please tell us what action you would have liked us to take to help us improve the way that we deal with complaints

---

We may publish the outcomes of questionnaires, but will not publish any person details relating to you, the person you complained about, or the nature of your complaint.

Customer Services Questionnaire

Name

Address

Date

Ref No

Please indicate how you contacted our customer services team:  
telephone/email/visit to the office

Please advise the nature of your enquiry

Did our customer services assistant deal with your enquiry  
personally?

How would you describe the level of knowledge our customer  
services assistant displayed:

Poor

Good

Very Good

Please advise us of any ways we can improve our customer service.

We may publish the outcomes of questionnaires, but will not  
publish any personal details relating to you.



**Williamsburgh**  
**HOUSING ASSOCIATION**  
• Limited •

**QUALITY SATISFACTION QUESTIONNAIRE**

REPAIR ORDER NUMBER..... DATE .....

Dear Tenant,

A contractor has been instructed to carry out works as per the order number above.

Williamsburgh Housing Association wants to ensure that the quality of our service meets with your satisfaction. It will help us to achieve this objective if you would complete this questionnaire after the work has been carried out.

Repair Request Date ..... Work Completed Date .....

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>		
1. Contractors arrived on the date agreed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>		
			<u>Very Good</u>	<u>Good</u>
2. Williamsburgh handling of your request	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Quality of the work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Completed to your satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Clearance of mess or rubble	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Conduct of the contractor's workforce	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you are unhappy with the work, would you like a site inspection?

Yes  or No

Resident's Signature .....

If you have any further comments or suggestions to make, please indicate in the space below or overleaf.

Thank you for your co-operation.



# Williamsburgh

## HOUSING ASSOCIATION

• Limited •

QUALITY OF PRODUCT AND DESIGN SATISFACTION SURVEY

# QUALITY OF PRODUCT AND DESIGN SATISFACTION SURVEY

## Introduction

Williamsburgh Housing Association is committed to continually seeking to improve the quality of the houses that we provide through our development programme.

To assist us in this aim, we need your assistance by telling us what you think of your new home. The answers you give to the questions in this survey should help us to know where improvement is required in future developments.

It is, therefore, important to us that you let us know what you think of your new home by taking a few minutes to complete this questionnaire and returning it to us in the pre-paid envelope provided.

Thank you.

**1. Household information**

Name: .....

Address: .....

.....

Tel. No.: .....

E-mail: .....

**2. Housing tenure**

(Please Tick)

Owner-Occupier

W.H.A. Tenant

Privately Renting

Other (Please State) .....

**3. House size**

(Please write in Numbers i.e. 2 Bedrooms)

Bedrooms (Double) .....

Bedrooms (Single) .....

Living Room (Inc. Dining) .....

Living Room (Exc. Dining) .....

Kitchen (Exc. Dining) .....

Kitchen/Dining .....

Dining/Flexible Room .....

Bathroom (With Bath) .....

Shower Room (With Shower Tray) .....

**4. Who stays in the house**

Please enter the number of residents in each of the age groups listed below.

- 0-4 Years (Staying with you) .....
- 0-4 Years (Not Staying With You, But You Have Access Rights) .....
- 5-15 (Staying With You) .....
- 5-15 Years (Not Staying With You, But You Have Access Rights) .....
- 16-24 .....
- 25-40 .....
- 41-54 .....
- 55-65 .....
- 66-75 .....
- 75+ .....

**5. Quality of Product and Service**

This section of the questionnaire seeks to find out how well Williamsburgh Housing Association has performed in relation to the quality of your new home and your experience of the service that we have provided.

A. What is your overall impression of your new home?

Better than expected     As expected     Worse than expected

If you ticked the 'Worse than expected' box, what are the main reasons for this?

.....  
.....

B. What is your overall impression of the quality of the equipment, fixtures and fittings provided in your new home?

Better than expected     As expected     Worse than expected

If you ticked the 'Worse than expected' box, what are the main reasons for this?

.....  
.....

C. What is your overall impression of the quality of the standard of finish in your new home?

Better than expected     As expected     Worse than expected

If you ticked the 'Worse than expected' box, what are the main reasons for this?

.....  
.....

D. What is your overall impression of the repairs and defects reporting service that you have received from the Association? Please note – we are trying to assess the Association’s performance here, not the contractor’s performance (see section 9, questions D, E and F for the contractor’s performance)

Better than expected     As expected     Worse than expected

If you ticked the ‘Worse than expected’ box, what are the main reasons for this?

.....  
.....

E. What is your overall impression of the Housing Management service that you have received from the Association?

Better than expected     As expected     Worse than expected

If you ticked the ‘Worse than expected’ box, what are the main reasons for this?

.....  
.....

**6. Quality of design**

This section of the questionnaire seeks to find out how good the layout, appearance and environment in and around your home is.

**A. How do you feel about your new home?**

- Proud                       Satisfied                       Unhappy

If you ticked the 'Unhappy' box, what are the main reasons for this?

.....  
.....

**B. Safety and security is an important issue. In and around your new home, do you feel:**

- Safe and secure             Occasionally vulnerable             Vulnerable

If you ticked the 'Occasionally vulnerable' or the 'Vulnerable' boxes, please explain why:

.....  
.....

**C. Are the room sizes and layout of your house:**

- Good                       Good in some parts, poor in others                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Good in some parts, poor in others' or 'Poor' boxes, please tell us what is not good about the room sizes and layout:

.....  
.....

D. The overall size of the houses we provide is limited by the amount of money available to us, but we always try to make the best use of space. However, lack of storage space is a concern highlighted in our most recent residents' survey. So, we need to know if we have made the best use of space.

D.1 Is the level of storage space for large items (prams, bikes etc) :

Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, please tell us which room(s) could be smaller than they are to allow us to provide more storage space for large items and where this should be.

.....  
.....

D.2 Is the amount of space for general storage:

Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, please tell us which room(s) could be smaller than they are to allow us to provide more general storage space and where this should be.

.....  
.....

D.3 Are the sizes of the rooms in your house (livingroom/dining area, kitchen, bedroom, bathroom):

Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, please tell us which rooms are too small.

.....  
.....

**E. Is the means of getting to your house (gates, paths, closes, parking, steps/ramps):**

Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, please tell us what the problem is.

.....  
.....

**F. Inside your house, is the space to move around (hall/corridor widths, door widths, door swings, space around doors to cupboards and rooms):**

Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, please tell us what it is that is causing you a problem.

.....  
.....

**G. Are the garden ground and facilities (space, paths, drying area, bin stores) provided:**

Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, what could have been better.

.....  
.....

**H. Are the car parking facilities (access, security visibility) provided:**

Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, what could have been better.

.....  
.....

**I. Are the electrical sockets, lights and switches:**

- More than enough     Sufficient     Not enough

**and are they:**

- In the best places     Generally well placed     In the wrong place

If you ticked the 'Not enough' or 'In the wrong place' boxes, please let us know what is wrong.

.....  
.....

**J. Communications (television - terrestrial/satellite, cable, telephones, internet) are an important part of life today. Is your house:**

- Well provided for     Adequately provided for     Lacking provision

If you ticked the 'Lacking provision' box, please tell us what you think is missing.

.....  
.....

**K. It is important to us that your are assisted in dealing with any emergency situation that might arise. We try to ensure that all our houses have sufficient and well positioned smoke and carbon monoxide detectors, services that can easily be isolated and electricity/gas meters that are accessible. Are these aspects of your house:**

- Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, please tell us where the problem lies.

.....  
.....

## 7. QUALITY OF PRODUCT

This section of the questionnaire is intended to find out if the 'components' within your house work well and in the way intended.

A. Several aspects of windows and doors are important.

A.1 Windows and doors should work well (not sticky, no leaks, no draughts, reduce outside noise).

Bearing this in mind, are the windows and doors in your new home:

Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, please let us know what is wrong.

.....  
.....

A.2 Windows should be easy to use (how they open/close, size and position, ventilation, easy (and safe) to clean, fitting of blinds and curtains)?

Bearing this in mind, are the windows and doors in your new home:

Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, please let us know what is wrong.

.....  
.....

B. It is important that noise levels (whether from outside or from other houses ) do not cause a problem in the house.

Is noise from outside or from other parts of the building:

- Not A Problem       Acceptable       Disturbing

If you ticked the 'Disturbing' box, please tell us about the particular problem you experience, and where it is coming from.

.....  
.....

C. Providing 'healthy homes' and good air quality within our houses is important to us. Is the air quality (dust, odours, comfort levels, humidity) in your home:

- Good       Reasonable       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, please tell us what concerns you.

.....  
.....

D. Effective heating systems and good water supplies are essential in a new home, particularly with the need to reduce energy consumption/co2 emissions and reduce water consumption.

D.1 To keep your home warm enough, do you find it:

- Easy and cost effective       Easy but costly  
 Cost effective but hard       Hard and costly

D.2 Do you find the heating controls:

- Easy to understand and use       Hard to understand and use

Please use the space below to tell us of any concerns you have about the heating system in your home.

.....  
.....  
.....

D.3 Do you find your water supplies (quantity, quality, pressure):

- Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, please tell us about the problem.

.....  
.....

E. Do you find your bathroom fittings (toilet, wash hand basin, bath/shower):

- Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, please explain why.

.....  
.....

F. The layout and amount of suitable storage space in a kitchen is important to make the best use of the space available.

F.1 Is the kitchen layout (position of sink, worktops, cooker, fridge) in your house:

Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, please tell us what could be better.

.....  
.....

F.2 Is the number and position of kitchen units in your house:

Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, please tell us what could be better.

.....  
.....

F.3 Is the access to wall mounted kitchen units in your house:

Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, please tell us what could be better.

.....  
.....

G. There are many appliances used in kitchens today, from washing machines to toasted sandwich makers. In your house, is the provision for these, in terms of space and power points:

Good                       Adequate                       Poor

If you ticked the 'Poor' box, please tell us which appliance you have that has been hard to accommodate, and explain why.

.....  
.....  
.....

**8. Other points**

**A. Have you any suggestions as to how we could improve the design and layout of the houses we build?**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**B. Please tell us about any matters not covered by the questions in this survey, that cause you concern:**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**C. We would also be pleased if you could tell us about any aspects of your home, or the development as a whole, that you are particularly pleased about:**

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

**D. If you have reported any repairs or defects to us, has the response from us and our contractors been:**

- Better than expected     As expected     Worse than expected

If you ticked the 'Worse than expected' box, please tell us what is wrong.

.....  
.....  
.....

E. It is important to us that our contractors explain things clearly to you and treat you properly.

Has our contractor's approach been;

Better than expected     As expected     Worse than expected

If you ticked the 'Worse than expected' box, please tell us what was wrong.

.....  
.....  
.....

F. Is the level of defects and repairs you have experienced so far been:

Less than expected     Much as expected     More than expected

If you ticked the 'More than expected' box, please tell us what, in particular, has caused you concern.

.....  
.....  
.....

**9. Housing Management issues**

A. Could you please tell us if you attended a residents' meeting?

YES                          NO   

Please comment.

.....  
.....

**B. Did you have a settling-in visit with your housing officer?**

YES  NO

Please comment.

.....  
.....

**C. Are there any problems with the use of the common areas around the houses?**

YES  NO

Please comment.

.....  
.....

**D. Are there any other issues which you would like to raise?**

YES  NO

Please comment.

.....  
.....

**PLEASE NOTE, ALL THE INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE WILL BE TREATED AS STRICTLY CONFIDENTIAL AND WILL ONLY BE USED FOR THE PURPOSE OF IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF HOUSING PROVIDED BY THE ASSOCIATION.**

## 11. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES INFORMATION

To help us monitor our Equal Opportunities Policy and the effectiveness of our consultation practices, we would like you to answer the following questions. The information requested is for monitoring purposes only and will be treated as strictly confidential.

1. Are you: Female  Male

2. Age:

Please indicate your age group

16-30	<input type="checkbox"/>	31-45	<input type="checkbox"/>
46-65	<input type="checkbox"/>	Over 65	<input type="checkbox"/>

3. Do you consider yourself to have a disability? By this, we mean a condition which has a long term and substantial effect on your ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

If yes, is it:

Condition		Brief Description
Physical		
Mental Ill Health		
Learning Disability		
Visual Impairment		
Hearing Impairment		
Other: Please Specify		

4. How would you describe your ethnic origin?

A White

- Scottish  Other British
- Irish
- Any other White background (please write in):

.....

B Mixed

- Mixed background (please write in):

.....

C Asian, Asian Scottish or Asian British

- Indian  Pakistani
- Bangladeshi  Chinese
- Any other Asian background (please write in):

.....

D Black, Black Scottish or Black British

- Caribbean  African
- Any other Black background (please write in):

.....

E Other ethnic background

- Any other background (please write in):

5. Sexual Orientation

Heterosexual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bisexual	<input type="checkbox"/>
Gay	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lesbian	<input type="checkbox"/>
Decline to Respond	<input type="checkbox"/>

