



Resident Participation and Consultation Strategy



Contents

	page
Introduction	3
Equality, diversity and inclusion	5
Resident Involvement Service Standard	6
National Context	7
Regional Context	9
Local Context	10
Communications	12
Role of the Resident Participation Officers	14
Overall participation structures	14
Formal Participation	16
Informal Participation	20
Engaging the Wider Community	23
Consultation Arrangements	29
Appendix 1 - Resident Participation and Consultation Strategy Action Plan	33
Appendix 2 - Statutory Powers and Responsibilities	35
Appendix 3 - Service Standards	37
Appendix 4 - BRF Constitution	38
Appendix 5 - AHP Constitution	41
Appendix 6 - RA Model Constitution	44
Appendix 7 - BRF Code of Conduct	50



Introduction

Residents are central to the work of the Housing and Regeneration Department and are best placed to tell us what works well and what could work better.

Resident participation empowers members of the community and gives a platform so their needs, priorities and aspirations are heard, listened to and actioned by those accountable. We are committed to ensuring that all residents can get involved at a level of their choosing by providing a range of participation opportunities.

Regular reviews of the housing participation structures mean that we can be confident that the range of opportunities available remain appropriate and that residents feel empowered to influence decisions about their housing and get involved with their local community.

The key priorities of Wandsworth Council are to be a fairer, compassionate and more sustainable organisation and following the Social Housing Regulation Act (SHRA) and Social Housing White Paper (SHWP) it is now an optimum time to undertake a review of the Resident Participation and Consultation Strategy. The Government has outlined the importance of the voice of the resident through the Act by strengthening the accountability of landlords to provide safe homes, quality services and treat residents with respect.

Residents are at the heart of the reforms which the Council fully supports, and it is therefore essential that the platforms for participation must be open, accessible and transparent for all residents. In response to a review of Consumer Regulation the Council has also undertaken a full-scale review of its service standards through a series of resident working groups and has consulted on the revised informal participation routes through the annual Residents' Conference. This Strategy would not be possible without the input of residents and the Council would like to take this opportunity to thank all those involved for their hard work and commitment throughout this process.

The minimum requirements for tenant involvement and empowerment are currently set out in the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing's Consumer Standards, currently out for consultation. This stipulates that social landlords must give tenants a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in matters including housing-related policies and strategic priorities, decision-making about service delivery, scrutiny



of their landlord's performance and the management of their homes. Support must be given to tenants to facilitate their participation through capacity-building, the provision of timely and relevant performance information and by ensuring that the implications of changes to services are clearly explained.

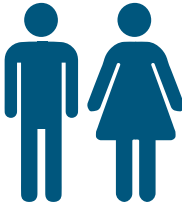
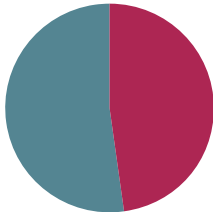
As well as through the Resident Conference and RWG review of service standards the views of the wider resident population will be sought through an online questionnaire available to the public for an 8-week period. The draft Strategy will be presented at the Area Housing Panels during winter 2023.

Equality, diversity and inclusion

The Council owns and manages over 32,000 homes, of which 52% are tenanted and 48% leasehold, with all tenants and leaseholders able to participate in the Council's participation structures.

Leaseholders are not required to provide their demographic equalities information however, equalities data on our tenants is captured when a tenant signs up to their first tenancy, and this includes the household's ethnicity, gender assigned at birth, age and disability. The Council understands the importance of obtaining equalities data so that officers understand their tenants to ensure the right support is offered to them, and work is underway to update and capture more demographic information from existing and new tenants to further improve our understanding. Wandsworth is a diverse borough, and this is reflected in our tenant profile:

48% of tenants from a Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic background

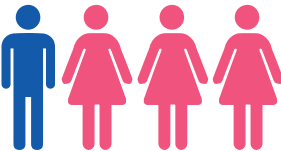


44% of tenants aged between 45-64

12% of tenants with a known disability



67% of tenants are female



The Department is keen to increase resident participation across all protected groups, and the current demographic data can help identify how resident involvement should reflect the demographics of our resident population. If a resident would like to become involved in the participation structures and requires extra support to do so, they should contact their local Resident Participation Officer so that help can be provided.



Resident Involvement Service Standard

In response to the SHWP and the SHRA, the Council embarked on a full-scale review of its service standards in partnership with a Resident Working Group.

The Council's service standards in relation to resident involvement build on those recently proposed by the Regulator of Social Housing. The Council also recognises the role leaseholders play in their community and in helping to shape services. As such, the Council's service standard applies to all residents of Council-managed housing, regardless of tenure, and sets out some specific targets for the Council to meet every year. Those standards reviewed by the Resident Working Group to reflect current priorities around resident engagement are:

- Support the development of accredited Residents' Associations (RA) and seek to increase the number of residents with access to an RA.
- Publish and deliver Homelife to all Council properties four times a year and promote the online version. This gives us the opportunity to tell residents what work the Department and community groups are doing.
- Provide a variety of ways for you to tell us what you think about our services.
- Provide support and funding for recognised Housing Community Champions who work for the benefit of their local community.
- Work closely with residents on estates identified for improvement and regeneration to develop preferred options for the future of their homes and estates.
- Comply with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints code of conduct and work closely with the Housing Ombudsman where issues arise.
- Let you know who will deal with your issue and when you can expect a response if you report a problem to us.
- Regularly review the Resident Engagement Strategy setting out ways in which you can get involved at a level of your choosing.
- Offer options for residents to review our services, which may include mystery shopping.
- Develop accessible housing and make available occupational therapists to ensure residents with additional needs continue to live independently in their homes.
- Consider the impact to residents with protected characteristics when making major changes to our policies and strategies by completing Equalities, Impact and Needs Assessments.
- Train our staff and offer support to ensure that professional standards are maintained and that staff understand the different needs of our residents.

National Context

■ Social Housing White Paper (2020) and the Social Housing Regulation Act (2023)

In November 2020, the Government released its Social Housing White Paper (SHWP), which aimed to provide a new charter for social housing residents that would reform consumer standards and place greater responsibility on social housing landlords to improve conditions for residents. The Social Housing Regulation Act (SHRA) has brought a renewed focus on the importance of empowering and listening to social housing residents and will reshape consumer regulation via the following six themes:

- **Safety:** landlords' safety responsibilities including safety within the home and in communal areas.
- **Quality:** quality of the home, communal spaces and services to tenants.
- **Neighbourhood:** Landlords' role in working with other agencies to contribute to the wellbeing of neighbourhoods in which tenants live.
- **Transparency:** landlords' role in making information accessible to tenants including roles and responsibilities of landlords, so tenants know who is responsible for matters relating to consumer standards.
- **Engagement and accountability:** engagement between landlords and tenants, including how complaints are handled. Landlords' accountability to tenants and treating tenants with fairness and respect.
- **Tenancy:** requirements on landlords in respect of tenancies, including allocations policies and opportunities for tenants to move.

Landlords' performance and residents' ability to easily access information is crucial to their empowerment; a core part of the SHRA is that all social housing landlords will need to submit annual tenant satisfaction measures to the regulator with the results being made public. Residents will also be able to make quicker contact with the Housing Ombudsman during

a complaint or dispute and the expectation is for the landlord to actively work with the Housing Ombudsman and the resident during the dispute. The Government will be regulating all social housing landlords and will hold them to account when the standards are not met. The regulator will consider the outcome of the tenant satisfaction measures, reports from the Housing Ombudsman and feedback gathered from residents through an inspection process.

The SHRA expects landlords to have clear and accessible complaints processes, as well as swift and effective redress. In any cases where a serious dispute has arisen, such as disrepair, the landlord must endeavour to take all action to ensure the disrepair is resolved as soon as possible and contact the Housing Ombudsman dispute team if help is required. The Council's complaints process was reviewed and updated in 2022 to make the complaints process easier and more transparent for residents.

Safety is one of the most important themes within the SHRA, and residents must be given the opportunity to engage with the landlord on issues of fire and building safety. This will require the development of engagement strategies for residents of high-rise residential blocks, including the provision of details of a designated health and safety officer who residents can contact in relation to safety and compliance issues in their home, estate or block. The speed with which the regulator can intervene between a landlord and resident dispute has also been increased by the removal of the serious detriment test to try to enable a quicker resolution.

In response to proposals in the SHWP, the Council carried out an initial review of resident engagement in 2019 through a resident working group. Following further updates on the role of the Regulator a further review in 2023 has been undertaken.

■ Regulatory Framework¹

The regulatory framework governing social housing consists of regulatory requirements, codes of guidance and regulatory guidance, much of which is being consulted on through the SHRA. The regulatory requirements currently comprise standards including the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard 2017.² This states that social housing providers should ensure that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in the formation of their landlord's housing-related strategic priorities, decision-making about how services are delivered, performance, scrutiny and the management of their homes. There is the expectation that landlords will support their tenants to develop and implement opportunities for involvement and empowerment, including through exercising their Right to Manage, supporting the formation and activities of tenant groups and the provision of performance information to aid effective scrutiny of services.

■ Building Safety Act 2022

Section 91 of the Building Safety Act 2022 requires social housing landlords to have a resident engagement strategy that must promote the participation of tenants and leaseholders in building safety decisions. This must include how decisions on the management of buildings are made, how residents are involved in this process, and set out what consultative exercises are used. An accountable person must be assigned for each building and it is the responsibility of that person to ensure that up to date information and contact details are included in the strategy. All residents should be provided with access to the strategy and it must be reviewed at prescribed times.

■ Housing Act 1985

Section 105 of the Housing Act 1985 requires local authority landlords to maintain arrangements to inform and consult with secure tenants who are likely to be substantially affected by changes in housing management. The authority is obliged to consider any representations made before making a decision on such matters. A housing management matter is defined as including the maintenance, improvement or demolition of housing, the provision of services and amenities in connection to such housing and related policies and practices.

■ Housing Act 1996

Section 137 of the Housing Act 1996 extends the duty contained in section 105 of the Housing Act 1985, as outlined above, to include introductory tenants.

Full statutory responsibilities in relation to resident consultation are set out in Appendix 2 on page 35.

¹ Regulatory framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

² https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/914637/Tenant_Involvement_and_Empowerment_Standard.pdf

Regional Context

■ London Housing Strategy 2018

The Mayor's London Housing Strategy 2018³ preceded the SHWP and SHRA and emphasises the importance of listening to the views of social housing residents and ensuring these are at the heart of decision-making by social landlords. This needs to happen at three levels:

- individual tenants, leaseholders, and freeholders need to have effective recourse for their complaints and concerns that are not dealt with by their landlords;
- broader issues with specific landlords or estates need to be dealt with far more quickly and effectively; and
- the views, concerns and interests of social housing residents need a much stronger voice at a national level, so that their interests are taken into account in policymaking.

The Mayor believes it is essential that, as a minimum, the system for regulating social housing is genuinely responsive to the concerns of residents on social housing estates. The Strategy also highlights the importance of meaningful consultation with residents, both in relation to existing housing and in the planning and delivery of new housing.

■ The London Plan 2021

The London Plan 2021⁴ sets out the overarching framework as to how London will develop over the next 20-25 years. Policy commitments include the identification of opportunity areas to develop new and improved public transport infrastructure and to build 52,000 homes with a target of 50% of all new homes being affordable. The Plan states that good growth is inclusive growth and encourages early and inclusive engagement with local communities in the development of proposals, policies and area based strategies. To achieve this planners and developers must provide access to good quality community spaces, services, amenities and infrastructure that accommodate, encourage and strengthen communities that increases active participation.

³ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2018_lhs_london_housing_strategy.pdf

⁴ https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/the_london_plan_2021.pdf

Local Context

■ A New Direction for Housing in Wandsworth: Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2023-2028

The Council's Housing and Homelessness Strategy 2023-2028, A New Direction for Housing in Wandsworth, sets out its commitment to becoming a fairer, more compassionate, and sustainable borough with good quality and inclusive homes. The strategy is split into five themes:

- 1 Delivering for our Council tenants and leaseholders.
- 2 Building more homes.
- 3 Improving standards for private renters.
- 4 Tackling homelessness and rough sleeping.
- 5 Supporting residents with additional needs.

The Strategy sets out the Council's commitment to review resident engagement arrangements and ensure an annual resident conference takes place, providing residents with training and the opportunity to network with peers to help support their community.

■ Wandsworth Local Plan 2023

The Council's Local Plan outlines a vision and spatial strategy to guide the development of the Borough from 2023, when the Plan is anticipated to be adopted, to 2038.

The plan comprises several documents, the most important being the Core Strategy. This highlights the importance of continued public consultation with local residents and other stakeholders when devising the development plan for the Borough.

Evidence of the Council's commitment to meaningful consultation in regards to planning is demonstrated throughout the Core Strategy which, for example, outlines consultation arrangements in the Winstanley/York Road and

Alton regeneration schemes. The Local Plan also highlights the importance of factoring in community spaces when making planning decisions; these spaces can be used by a variety of community groups and the Council recognises the central role they play in meeting the health and wellbeing, social, educational, spiritual, recreational, leisure and cultural needs of the community. One of the policy objectives is therefore to resist the loss of social and community facilities and to seek to secure the provision of new such facilities.

■ Statement of Community Involvement

Statements of Community Involvement (SCI) provide a framework for consultation and community engagement in planning, to offer both transparency in planning communications and a flexible approach to all future consultations within this overall framework. It enables the Planning Service to continue to put into practice active, meaningful and continued involvement of local communities and stakeholders. SCIs are a legal requirement and form part of the evidence to support the process of producing a Local Plan.





■ Arts and Culture Strategy 2021-31

In December 2021 Wandsworth Council adopted a new ten-year strategy in recognition that arts and culture brings people together and provides a sense of vitality and belonging. Developed and delivered through collaboration with cultural and creative practitioners/organisations, the voluntary sector and community groups and other public services, the strategy's vision is to foster a strong sense of community ownership, raise aspirations, and support residents in leading healthy and happy lives. The golden thread throughout all of the seven goals (place-shaping, economic growth, communities and neighbourhoods, learning and education, health and wellbeing, access for all and tackling the climate emergency) is ensuring that creative engagement and employment opportunities are provided for our residents in social housing, and that the Council and its partners pro-actively dismantle barriers to participation.

Additional focused attention is provided to both of the Council's two regeneration projects - the Alton Estate in Roehampton and the Winstanley and York Road estates in Battersea, which each have their own Cultural Strategies to focus on what their residents' want to see happening where they live and an allocated Council officer to support them in developing and delivering these projects.

■ Annual Residents' Conference

An annual Residents' Conference was established in 2022, aimed at residents who are involved in the work of the Department through membership of a Residents Association, being a Housing Community Champion or those involved in the Borough's resident management organisations. The conference offers residents the chance to undertake professionally led training to support them in the work they do in their community and is a means to conduct consultation exercises which capture the views of a large number of residents.

Communications

Good communication with residents is key to resident participation and is threaded throughout this Strategy. The Department communicates with its residents in various ways, including use of the corporate Council-wide channels (such as Brightside the Council's newsletter, social media campaigns and the website).

■ Housing Webpages

Whilst the Corporate Web Team manage the overall design of the Council's webpages, the Housing and Regeneration Department are responsible for housing specific content. The Department undertakes reviews of webpages at regular intervals following changes in regulations or legislation. Whilst the Council is generally moving towards a digital-first approach and moving content onto the webpages, there are certain publications that are still required in print form - for example the Tenancy Conditions and Homesafe booklet for new tenants. A full review of the Housing webpages is due to take place over the life of this Strategy.

■ Homelife

The Council publishes Homelife, its housing newsletter, four times a year. This is delivered to all Council managed properties in the Borough and is the main channel through which the Department communicates with its residents. It publishes the work of the Council and ensures residents are informed about the Council's strategic direction, priorities and policies. Homelife is also used to keep residents up to date with issues affecting their housing, for example Council led development on estates, major works and Small Improvement Budget (SIBs) projects. Each issue includes pages on 'Community News' which promotes the work of RAs, HCCs and activities in the wider community, with a dedicated section for news from the Council's sheltered schemes. Residents are able to submit news stories for these pages to show the positive community work that is happening in their area. This may include street parties, day trips, inclusion projects and community gardens.

The Council is committed to the production of Homelife as both a hard copy delivered to residents and an online version on the Council's website.

In the Autumn edition of Homelife, the Council publishes its Annual Report to Residents. The report is split into sections to reflect the standards set out in the Regulatory Framework for Social Housing. The annual report is the most far-reaching performance report, containing information on a range of housing matters, providing an overview of the year's performance and is produced in partnership with a residents' focus group. Performance measures in the report generally stay the same year on year to allow easy comparison, but these are updated as priorities change or when new areas of work arise. The report provides benchmarking with the year before by placing the previous year's figures in brackets and performance is rated via a red, amber and green traffic light rating to show where the Council is meeting its standards





or needs to make improvements. The report also sets out what the key priorities will be for the following year which are informed by on-going conversations with residents involved via the formal resident's participation structures, trends identified through the Housing Link satisfaction surveys and the Departments strategic priorities. Over the life of this Strategy the headings of the Annual Report will be reviewed to reflect any changes to the Regulatory Framework.

■ Social Media

The use of digital communication and social media is essential in capturing the attention of residents across all demographics. The Council have a communications team who manage all social media accounts, these accounts are a useful tool to provide residents with important updates on local/Council-led events, service delivery, consultations, including general updates. Where appropriate the Department will use social media to promote local campaigns or issues.

Role of the Resident Participation Officers

As part of the Council's commitment to encouraging participation, there is a designated Resident Participation Officer (RPO) in each of the four area housing teams (Central, Eastern, Western, Southern).

Their role is to help and encourage residents to get involved with the Housing and Regeneration Department. They provide support and advice about all resident participation matters and help to build a close relationship between residents and the Department.

Their work includes:

- Providing information and advice on all participation and consultation opportunities
- Helping to set up and maintain RAs
- Delivering training courses
- Advising on funding opportunities and assisting with SIBs applications
- Supporting community activities
- Liaising with and monitoring resident management organisations (RMOs)
- Supporting Housing Community Champions

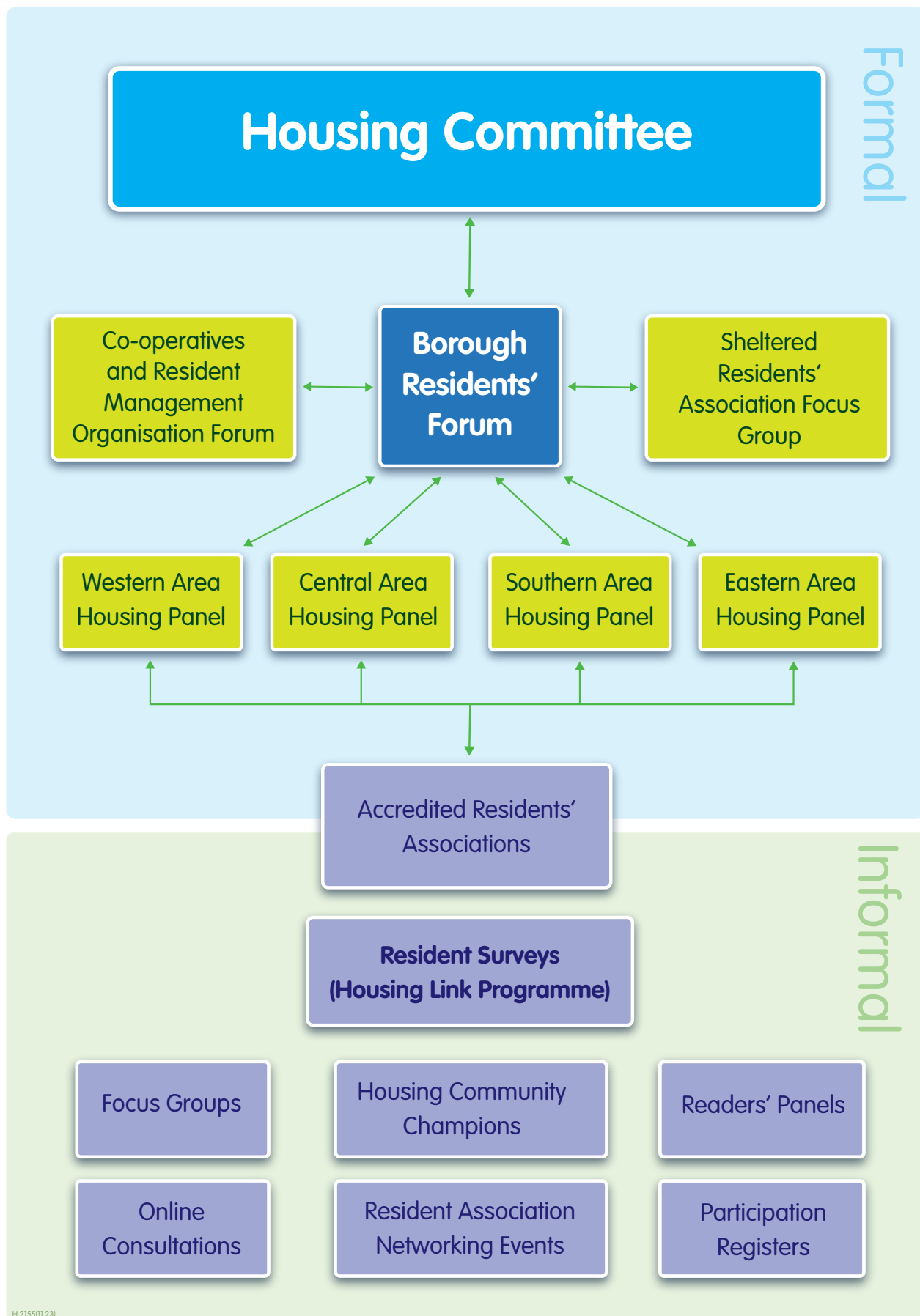
Overall participation structures

The Council has well-established resident participation structures that were first approved by committee in 1999 and were reviewed in 2006, 2009, 2015 and 2019 with the help of residents.

The structure sets out the Council's formal and informal routes of participation, and how these feed into one another. During the 2023 review, it was concluded that the formal routes are robust and therefore no changes to the formal structures were recommended, however there is still a need to further enhance informal routes to engagement. Therefore, the most significant change to the structure following this review is to increase the informal routes available.

The Council's participation structure aims to:

- Provide a role for everybody, with a focus on putting residents at the heart of the structure.
- Allow residents to get involved at the level of their choosing by offering a range of engagement opportunities.
- Encourage residents to get involved and maintain involvement.



H.2155(11.23)

Figure 1: Council's participation structure

Formal Participation

This is how the Council formally consults with its residents and is a key element of the Council's participation structure. Formal participation enables residents to scrutinise decisions affecting their housing and the Department's performance.

Each element of the formal structures has a specific remit which allows for matters to be addressed at the relevant level and these feed into one another to ensure communication and feedback throughout. The Department monitors its performance in key areas and reports this to residents through the formal structures.

■ Residents Associations

RAs are the first level of the Council's formal structures. An RA can be formed in any Council managed block or estate where there is an appetite from residents and are open to all residents aged 16 or over in the block/estate.

RAs are a way for residents to come together to formally work with the Council to resolve local issues, make decisions about the management of their block or estate and influence the housing services provided. RAs must meet formal standards to ensure they are fair, transparent and representative of their area which are measured through an accreditation process every two years. These standards include holding an annual general meeting (AGM), meeting appropriate membership quotas and following a code of conduct and approved constitution. RAs are expected to follow the Council's model constitution which sets out the aims and objectives of the association and how it will be run. Rules on membership, the committee and finance must not vary from those included in the model constitution.

RAs who do not meet the criteria may be given associate status for an intermediate period of nine months while they grow and acquire relevant skills with the support of the RPO. Accredited RAs benefit from an annual grant towards running costs and may invite two representatives to sit on the Area Housing Panel.

RAs must elect a committee who are responsible for running the association and must include a chair, treasurer and secretary. RAs hold regular meetings which are an opportunity to discuss matters relating to their block or estate and relevant Council officers will attend as appropriate (e.g. Estate Manager or RPO).

■ Area Housing Panel

Above RAs on the formal structures are the four AHPs, Central, Eastern, Southern, and Western, which meet quarterly. The AHPs comprise two representatives from each accredited RA in the area and are chaired by a Council member.

As set out in the AHP constitution, the AHPs allow for formal consultation with residents on housing related papers and policies where there is an impact at a local level and provide an opportunity for liaising with the Borough Residents' Forum (BRF) on relevant papers. The AHP agenda is set by the Council and RAs are invited to submit agenda items in advance of each meeting. The AHPs are responsible for the allocation of the SIBs funding for improvement schemes on estates. See page 18 for further information on SIBs.

The AHPs receive quarterly and annual reports on performance which analyse the performance of the housing management service (including the four area housing teams, support services and estate services) and their contractors. These reports cover topics such as repairs, void turnaround times, tackling anti-social behaviour and budgetary performance. They are an opportunity for residents to scrutinise local performance and are available on the Council's website.



■ Sheltered Residents' Association Focus Group

All sheltered schemes with an accredited RA are invited to attend the Borough-wide Sheltered RA Focus Group which meets three times a year to discuss matters relating to sheltered schemes and communicate with officers from the Council's sheltered housing service. Representatives of Sheltered RAs may also sit on their respective AHP, but the Sheltered RA Focus Group provides an additional, specific route of involvement for sheltered residents.

■ Borough Residents' Forum

The BRF is the Council's most senior residents' body and allows the Council to meet its statutory duty to consult with tenants on matters of housing management.⁵ The BRF meets four times a year with a meeting taking place prior to each Housing Committee to allow residents to scrutinise relevant reports (i.e. those affecting Council managed housing). As the most formal route of resident consultation, the agenda is set by the Council and has a Borough-wide, strategic focus. Papers affecting a specific area would involve a more tailored approach, for example estate regeneration and the Homes

for Wandsworth programme undergo extensive consultation arrangements with Council residents living in the area and other local stakeholders. The BRF receive annual information on departmental performance from the Corporate Plan updates and Key Performance Indicators which are the highest level of performance monitoring in the Department and are available on the Council's website.

The BRF comprises resident members elected annually from their respective bodies, as follows:

- Four members and one deputy from each AHP (Central, Eastern, Southern and Western).
- Two members from the Co-op Forum.
- One member and one deputy from the Sheltered Residents' Association Focus Group.

Each year the BRF elect a resident member to hold the position of Vice-Chair who attends Housing Committee to report on residents' views and feedback. They may also represent the BRF at other meetings as appropriate.

■ Co-operatives / Resident Management Organisations

Council tenants and leaseholders have the legal right to take over the management of their homes by forming Resident Management Organisations (RMOs), also called Co-operatives. RMOs can take over the responsibility of services including repairs, maintenance, cleaning, dealing with anti-social behaviour and rent collection. To exercise this right, residents must set up a Residents' Group with membership of at least 20% of the block/estate. They must follow a set procedure showing that they can manage services properly, including a 15-month development period and an independent assessment. They must also prove that they have the support of the majority of residents through a ballot and through continuation ballots every 5 or 7 years thereafter.

The Council currently has 10 RMOs and they are subject to ongoing monitoring through quarterly and annual performance reports as well as independent audits. The Council works closely with RMOs to resolve risks that arise from monitoring and where necessary services may come back to Council management.

Representatives from each RMO in the Borough are invited to attend the Co-op Forum to monitor performance and discuss issues relating specifically to RMOs. Up to four nominated representatives from each RMO may attend the Forum (reps can be either officers or committee members). The Co-op Forum is responsible for allocating SIBs funding to RMOs and liaising with the BRF on relevant committee papers.

The Co-op Forum receives quarterly and annual performance reports to compare the performance of the individual RMOs and the Council's housing management service. These reports cover matters such as repairs, void turnaround time, anti-social behaviour, complaints and rent collection.

■ Small Improvements Budget

The Small Improvement Budget (SIB) is a grant that residents can apply for to make improvements to their estate or block which will benefit the community. These are considered and approved at the AHPs and Co-op Forum. SIB bids can include projects such as: community gardens or landscaping, railings, bike stores, bin enclosures or tables and benches for clubrooms and gardens.

To qualify for funding the improvement project must:

- Not exceed £20,000
- Be non-rechargeable to leaseholders
- Not incur any significant ongoing maintenance costs
- Not be part of an existing programme of works (e.g. door entry systems) or ordinarily met from other budgets.

Areas covered by an accredited RA or managed by an RMO are given priority for SIBs funding. The budget is 'ring-fenced' for RAs and RMOs for the first 6-months of the financial year. Thereafter, residents from any block/estate may apply for funding.

■ Residents' Conference and Training Opportunities

The Council values the hard work of residents who give up their time to get involved in the work of the Department, and it is therefore important they have the best resources and support to do this. The Council now holds an annual Residents' Conference to give residents the opportunity to network, meet local voluntary community groups and to participate in professional led training and workshops.

Offering more regular training is equally important and a programme of training opportunities for accredited RAs, RMO and Housing Community Champions (see page 20) will be developed and delivered through the RPOs and e-learning. Training will cover a range of topics, including:



The Council's participation structure.

- Committee roles and skills.
- Encouraging RAs.
- RA grants and bids.
- Organising community events.
- Running a clubroom.

- Writing newsletters.
- Behaviour management.

Residents who are involved in our participation structures are encouraged to contact their local RPO to advise what training opportunities they feel would be beneficial.

We will:

- Continue to support existing RAs and encourage the formation of new ones through the work of the RPOs.
- Continue the promotion and use of SIBs funding.
- Monitor and support the Borough's RMOs to ensure they continue to provide an effective housing management service to their residents.
- Establish a programme of training for accredited RAs, RMOs and Housing Community Champions.
- Hold an annual Residents' Conference and consider all feedback from residents' when holding subsequent conferences.
- Update performance reports in line with recommendations following legislative changes and feedback from residents involved in our formal participation structures.

Informal Participation

As well as its formal participation structures, the Council acknowledges the need for more informal and ad hoc ways to participate to ensure residents can engage at a level of their choosing.

Increasing the ways for residents to become involved, influence and scrutinise Council policies and strategies is vital, and the Department is determined to make involvement as diverse and accessible as possible.

Informal structures should also ensure residents can decide how and to what degree they get involved and for many this will be in the form of one-off events. These are important in reaching a wide number of residents, seeking the views of those who do not want to be involved on a long-term basis and getting a rounded picture of how services are being delivered. The opportunities available to residents were developed through previous RWGs, consultation with other local authorities and resident feedback via the Residents' Conference and are set out below.

■ Focus Groups/Resident Working Groups

These are one-off groups focusing on individual topics such as housing publications, the website and specific housing services. Residents who have registered their interest in being involved in such groups are invited to attend, and participant numbers are generally between 10-20 residents, facilitated by 2-3 Council officers. Focus groups have a clear and limited remit and meet for a one-off evening workshop focused on a specific topic, for example webpages or a new policy. There can also be a small one-off series of workshops focused on a particular area. The group will make recommendations in this specific area of work which may be taken through the formal participation structure e.g. the BRF as appropriate. The Council is committed to using focus/resident working groups as residents can provide insight into how the Department is delivering services and they are an opportunity for residents not involved in the formal structures to help shape decisions. The Council will further

develop these to consider forming resident working groups on specific issues such as repairs and cleaning.

■ Housing Community Champions (HCCs)

The HCC scheme is a way of recognising the valuable work of residents in their neighbourhood. The Council wants to ensure that those residents who demonstrate commitment to improving their local area are appreciated and encouraged to continue to do so. HCCs have access to a specific pot of money which can be used to support them to continue their work. As part of the Council's participation structure, HCCs are also invited to attend AHP as observers and are invited to the Residents' Conference.

HCCs may be involved in a range of community activities and volunteering including community gardening; involvement in local community groups; organising community events such as children's cookery classes, parties, community roast dinners; fundraising for community projects; and estate improvements. The Council will ensure the HCC scheme is well publicised through articles in Homelife, such as case studies of current and new HCCs.

■ Readers' Panels

Readers' panels provide feedback on housing documents and webpages before they are published widely. Like focus groups, participants can be recruited outside the formal participation structures in order to reach a wider resident group. Participants review documents and webpages individually and complete a questionnaire with their views. The focus is on ensuring publications are easy to understand, engaging and useful. Residents are provided with feedback from the Council regarding how their input helped shape the final version.



■ Participation Registers

The Council is committed to establishing a 'Get Involved Register' which will allow residents to sign up and choose topics they are interested in being consulted on.

This will create a pool of residents who are able to get involved outside the formal structures and at the level of their choosing. Residents will be notified of participation opportunities and Council consultations relating to topics they are interested in. The register will also allow the Council to seek resident feedback on services and consultations as well as providing a route to update residents based on their interests.

■ Estate Walkabouts

Staff visibility is essential in actively engaging with residents and ensuring all members of the community understand how they can become involved in our participation structures. The Council is therefore committed to completing regular estate walkabouts to engage with members of the community. Estate walkabouts will include RPOs, and other members of staff so updates on local initiatives can be provided to support residents. These walkabouts will also be an opportunity for residents to provide contact details to build up a participation register.

■ Resident Association Networking Events

An RA networking event will be held every six months for committee members of an accredited RA. This would be led by the RPOs and will offer the chance for RA members to discuss any topics that are important, and a chance to discuss how to further increase resident engagement and to share best practice. The agendas and venues will be flexible, informal and developed in partnership with residents.

■ Clubroom Management

A new clubroom manager post has been created to ensure we are making best use of our community assets and providing a useful space for local communities. The new role will support existing voluntary groups running the housing clubrooms, aim to increase youth engagement and directly manage those clubrooms currently managed by the RPOs. It is vital that as well providing the routes of engagement we provide excellent facilities for these to take place in. The new role will build relationships and engage with stakeholders in the local area, including voluntary agencies and community leaders, to promote clubroom activity and identify improvements to clubroom facilities to ensure that they effectively serve residents' needs.



We will:

- Carry out two focus groups per year with one designated for the review of the Annual Report. Other topics covered will include webpages, major works consultation mechanisms and RA accreditation procedures.
- Consider a series of RWGs to discuss issues such as repairs or cleaning.
- Create a participation register and encourage residents to join.
- Continue to promote and publicise the role of Housing Community Champions.
- Increase the use of our social media channels to raise awareness of the participation structures.
- Better engage with youth activities across the Borough to ensure our young people are involved in matters that are important to them.
- Host half yearly RA networking events.
- Re-establish regular estate walkabouts attended by local Councillors and Council staff.
- Ensure we make the best use of our community assets by undertaking an audit of our clubrooms.

Engaging the Wider Community

The Council is committed to ensuring that all residents have the opportunity to get involved should they wish and engaging the wider resident population. In addition to this Strategy, in order to encourage new voices to be heard, the Council's Arts and Culture Strategy focuses on delivering a range of activities across estates that encourage people to get involved through indirect routes.

Being able to consider the views of a wide range of residents is important in shaping services that meet a full range of needs. Encouraging participation, particularly amongst residents who are not currently engaged is therefore central to the Council's aims around resident involvement and barriers to this must be overcome. One way to do this is in partnership with the voluntary sector and we will work with the Voluntary Sector Development Manager to reach all local voluntary groups working on our estates. We will also work hard to bring additional local voluntary groups onto our estates to benefit residents.

■ Housing Perception Surveys

The Housing Perception survey programme is an important consultation mechanism that enables the Department to gather the views of large groups of residents on how well they think services are being delivered and where improvements might be made. An annual satisfaction survey is carried out with a representative sample of approximately 1,500 residents, including tenants and resident leaseholders, seeking views on the overall housing management service. These surveys now include the new tenant satisfaction measures set by the Regulator of Social Housing. Results are published on the Council's website and are used to inform service delivery design, make improvements as necessary and consolidate effective practice.

■ Community Gardens

The Council is committed to encouraging and supporting residents to set up community gardens on their estates. Community gardens are particularly effective in engaging residents who are not currently engaged and may not be interested in formal routes of participation but who are keen to get involved with local activities. Gardens allow residents to engage with the Council by coming together in an informal setting which can lead to ideas on making improvements to their estate. RPOs will work closely with residents who identify space on their estate for a community garden to ensure there is support from residents, to help design the layout, liaise with the horticultural team and apply for funding (through SIBs).





■ Chelsea Kicks

The Council works in partnership with Chelsea Football Club who deliver football sessions for children and young people on Council estates across the Borough. Chelsea Kicks is part of the nationwide Kicks scheme which gives children and young people access to professional club coaches to help learn new football skills and improve their fitness. It creates an environment where they can develop positive behaviours such as team building through sports and involvement in their community. The Kicks programme has also delivered workshops on health and wellbeing, self-defence and career planning.

■ Transactional Surveys

In addition to an annual perception survey transactional repairs surveys are sent via text message to tenants who have had a recent repair completed in their home. Results of these are presented to the AHPs and are used to inform service delivery. Transactional surveys can provide more representative results as they are timely and focused on a specific service

received. They will therefore continue to be used in conjunction with the annual survey to gain an insight into satisfaction levels across key service areas.

■ Inclusion activities for older residents

There are a range of inclusion activities for older residents, including those who live in our sheltered schemes. Each Sheltered Housing Scheme has a dedicated Sheltered Housing Officer who is responsible for the management of the scheme and offers support to residents. Sheltered schemes host regular activities, including exercise classes, bingo and film nights and organise day trips, including visits to the coast, theatre trips and shopping trips. These are open to all older residents in the Borough, with priority given to residents of the Council's sheltered schemes.



■ Rewarding Participation

Rewarding participation is vital so residents feel appreciated for the time and effort their input involves. The Council will continue to appropriately reward residents, usually in the form of a shopping voucher.

Effective promotion of participation opportunities is key to ensuring wider participation. The Council communicates with residents through a variety of routes including regular print publications (Homelife, Brightside), its webpages and social media and through face-to-face and telephone contact. The effectiveness of participation opportunities is always under review to ensure the Department is able to identify any areas where enhanced promotion could lead to increased involvement. This may be through more regular features in Homelife, for example advertising upcoming RA events and greater use of social media to highlight opportunities to get involved in consultations and one-off events. The Council will consider the needs of those who are not online when publicising participation and consultation opportunities by making sure opportunities are published both through paper and online channels.

■ Involvement in Local Community Events

As well as encouraging RAs to host events and providing support for this through the RPOs, the Department considers how and when it can get involved in local community events, in particular those taking place on its estates. Events on estates provide residents with the opportunity to meet Council officers face-to-face, provide feedback and find out more about services in an informal setting.

■ Regeneration engagement

The Department's Regeneration Team has two regeneration projects - the Alton Estate in Roehampton and the Winstanley and York Road estates in Battersea. The engagement approach is tailored to respond to the needs of the communities and the nature of the regeneration schemes. What is consistent however is that resident engagement is a central plank of both schemes.



■ Alton Estate

The Alton regeneration team introduced a new community engagement strategy to increase resident involvement via a series of different approaches, including round table events, surveys/questionnaires and drop-in sessions. The new strategy also places a greater importance on ensuring that there are local community events throughout the year so that all residents across the estate have the chance to participate; this includes establishing the Local Arts Hub, local seasonal events (e.g. Christmas Market and Easter Egg hunts), community running to encourage exercise and healthy living, gardening and planting activities, and residents holding stalls to showcase local art.

■ Winstanley and York Road

The Council is working in partnership with Taylor Wimpey on this area of regeneration via a Joint Venture (JV). The JV has developed an engagement strategy that recognises that there are opportunities to make better use of underutilised spaces across the estates, and local residents and stakeholders will be actively involved in how best to develop interim uses for these spaces as part of a wider engagement strategy. Consultations are regularly held with residents, and the community will be supported by local community events, including the popular free bicycle health checks and security marking by Dr Bike. Through working with local partners such as Battersea Arts Centre, Providence House,

Royal Academy of Dance, there are ongoing free creative programmes targeted at engaging residents, as well as new co-working and business support programme at York Garden's Library to support creative freelancers/micro-businesses on the estates.

■ Partnership Working

The Department works in partnership with a range of voluntary organisations, local agencies and other Council teams to encourage events in the community and on its estates, from arts festivals to sports sessions. Making sure that residents living in Council properties benefit from the range of activities and cultural programmes taking place across Wandsworth is vital. Help is provided to facilitate events on estates, for example by offering space for them to take place on housing land and providing support publicising events to residents.

Below are some recent examples of the Department's partnership working:

- Help facilitate the Wandsworth Arts Fringe by working with local organisations, the voluntary sector and residents so that cultural events can be held in and around local estates. All of these events are free for residents to attend, and many of the projects include outreach programmes run over the preceding months so that residents are part of the creative process to discover/develop their skills.
- As part of the Wandsworth Arts Fringe, the annual Hazelfest is held on the Hazelhurst Estate in Tooting which brings together music, performance, arts and crafts to the community. The event is run by the Work and Play Scrapstore, a charitable organisation based on the estate which aims to reduce waste by reusing around 45 tonnes of waste each year through community projects, volunteering and arts.



- Throughout the year the Department worked with local organisations and community groups such as Jelly Fish Theatre and Women of Wandsworth to provide entertainment and support to members of the community. This included seasonal performances for residents to attend (e.g. Christmas Pantomimes) and periodic drop-in sessions in local clubrooms for residents to either socialise, receive help with food parcels, career support, use Wi-Fi or just to have some company. This creates a sense of community and wellbeing for our residents and reduces the risk of isolation.
- Promoting healthy living and supporting residents to get active is a regular theme. More outdoor gyms have been created and are being promoted by Council staff and residents involved in our participation structures to encourage residents to utilise these free outdoor facilities.
- Estates in the Borough have partnered with GoodGym, an organisation who combine getting fit with community projects. Goodgym volunteers hold regular events across the year to support local members of the community, such as the support they provided the residents

on the Doddington and Rollo estate to create a roof garden. Goodgym also promote healthy living by organising community runs, walks and cycles which promote exercise and socialisation.

- The Residents' Conference hosted various stalls from community groups including Wandsworth Arts, Chelsea Kicks, Thinking Works, BME London and the London Borough of Culture bid team.

- Working with leading resident engagement experts and training providers to deliver training to residents who are involved and interested in participating.

We will:

- Continue to encourage participation, particularly amongst resident groups who are not currently engaged or who do not wish to be involved in the formal participation structures.
- Work with Chelsea Football Club and where appropriate colleagues in Children's Social Services to continue and expand programmes for young people.
- Continue to support older residents by initiating community events in their local area and make the best use of our clubrooms to achieve this.
- Further promote the benefit of healthy living by continuing to help support activities that require light exercise and fitness and to utilise the Council's new outdoor gyms.
- Encourage and support residents to set up community gardens on estates and promote the benefits of a greener borough.
- Continue to work with partner organisations to facilitate events and activities on estates and ensure that residents get access to a range of events focused on culture and sports.
- Continue to reward participation to ensure residents feel appreciated for their input.
- Hold an annual resident gardening competition with prizes for the winners and runners up.
- Further working relationships with the Voluntary Sector Development Manager.

Consultation Arrangements

The Housing and Regeneration Department has various consultation and participation arrangements that are separate to its participation structure as they require bespoke approaches to meet best practice and statutory requirements.

■ Online consultation

The Council also undertakes online public consultations where appropriate, for example when implementing and reviewing policies and strategies. These are in addition to consultation through the formal participation structures (i.e. BRF). The Council uses a web-based consultation platform which enables residents to respond quickly and easily. Public consultations are also available in paper form on request for those who cannot access an online version.

Public consultations will be promoted through publications such as Homelife or Brightside and through the Council's social media channels or website. Where appropriate, partner agencies and key stakeholders will be emailed with a notification of the online consultation.

■ Major works consultation

The Council has a statutory duty to consult with leaseholders on major works schemes.⁶ In addition to leaseholder consultation, the Council believes it is important to consult with tenants and therefore carries out a similar process with tenants. When major works schemes are added to the Council's capital programme, consultation takes place with both tenants and leaseholders.

The consultation process is split into two stages and comments are invited at both stages: the Notice of Intention stage and the Section 20 stage. During the process, tenants and leaseholders are invited to a drop-in consultation meeting on the estate with Council officers. A team of Consultation Officers are responsible for running the consultation and reviewing feedback.

■ Consultation arrangements for regeneration and the Homes for Wandsworth Programme

Both the Regeneration and the Homes for Wandsworth Programme are subject to bespoke forms of consultation with local residents and other stakeholders. These arrangements are independent of the Council's overall resident participation structures for Council managed properties.

■ Regeneration

The Council is committed to ongoing and meaningful engagement with residents in relation to large-scale regeneration projects which last many years. The engagement processes for the regeneration on the Winstanley/York Road Estates and the Alton Estate are long term and each stage of engagement is comprehensive. The consultation process began by considering the various options with residents to ascertain the appetite for regeneration at different levels.

The Council is committed to giving residents a clear commitment of rehousing and compensation at the start of the process to ensure they have the confidence to consider the range of options fully.

Consultation is a continuous process over the years and includes open-days, public meetings, on site drop-in centres, regular newsletters, surveys and bespoke resident engagement strategies.

⁶ Section 20, Landlord and Tenant Act 1985.



■ Homes for Wandsworth Programme

As part of the Council's approach to designing new homes under the Homes for Wandsworth Programme, it is committed to ongoing consultation with local residents and other stakeholders in the area of proposed development sites. Consultation will take place throughout the design and development process, starting in the early design stages to maximise opportunities for local resident input. This predominantly takes the form of drop-in sessions where residents are invited to attend, or feedback in writing if

they cannot attend. As schemes progress, the Council, in its capacity as Planning Authority, will undertake a statutory planning consultation and this will include ongoing updates to stakeholders. Once a contractor is appointed, the Council will arrange 'meet the contractor' events and issue regular newsletter updates as works progress through to completion. Throughout the process, dedicated webpages are kept up to date with summary information as well as detailed plans, proposals, consultation material and frequently asked questions about development schemes.

■ Building and Fire Safety

The Building Safety Act 2022 has led to the creation of several new roles including the identification of an Accountable Person. The Accountable Person can be an individual or an organisation and is responsible for maintaining the safety of the building. Wandsworth Council is therefore deemed as the 'Accountable Person' as defined in the Building Safety Act 2022.

We are working on a bespoke resident engagement strategy for all high-rise buildings of 7 storeys and/or over 18 metres in height in line with the requirements of this Act. The strategy will include the methods the Council will use to inform residents of key building safety decisions and will outline how residents' opinions will be gathered and how the Council will use this feedback as part of its decision-making process.

Once the resident engagement strategy has been created, residents will be provided with a copy of the strategy and will have the opportunity to feedback via a consultation process. A review of the strategy will be completed at least every 2 years.

The recently appointed Building Safety Lead will work on behalf of the Council (Accountable Person) to ensure that residents have a point of contact to raise concerns and queries around Building Safety within their high rise building and will look to actively engage with residents to ensure any issues are addressed in a timely manner.

Full access to information on the safety of buildings for example preventative measures in place to mitigate risk will be available to residents. This may include, providing summaries of the most recent Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) for the building and plans for dealing with any recommendations raised. Information about the building will also be provided to residents when they move into a Council property through the Homesafe booklet, also available online. The Council will endeavour to make sure any information relevant to the building is accessible and presented in a clear and concise manner. This will include making arrangements for information to be translated into other languages for any residents for whom English is not their first language. Accessible digital versions of relevant information will also be available on request.





We will:

- Continue to put a regular piece in Homelife and update our webpages accordingly to notify residents when major work schemes are added to the schedule of works.
- Keep the literature in relation to major works consultations under review to ensure that the scope and purpose of the consultation is clear.
- Continue to ensure that affected residents are at the heart of planning decisions regarding the Homes for Wandsworth Programme and regeneration.
- Meet statutory obligations utilising a range of consultation mechanisms designed to engage all affected residents, including open days, public meetings, on-site officers and regular updates via newsletters and the Council's webpages.
- Develop resident engagement strategies in line with the Building Safety Act 2022 for all high-rise residential buildings.

Appendix 1

Resident Participation and Consultation Strategy Action Plan

Action	Target date for completion	Progress
Produce an easy read version of the Strategy.	June 2024	
Review the RA accreditation process to ensure an easier accreditation process for RA members.	April 2024	The Council is currently in the process of reviewing the RA accreditation process and is hoping to extend the re-accreditation to every two years as a starting point.
Increase publicity of the Council's participation structures, including how to set up an RA and the steps taken to becoming a HCC.		The participations structures, establishing an RA and the HCC scheme will continue to be included in some editions of Homelife, and there will be more social media posts to increase awareness throughout the year.
Hold an annual Residents' Conference and to increase resident participation to the conference.	On-going	The first Residents' Conference took place in October 2022, and the Department have committed for this to be an annual event. More will be done to promote the conference, and a Residents' Conference leaflet has been designed and has been distributed to all the borough RAs and RMOs. Social media will also be used as a tool to promote the conference.
Design a programme of periodic training for residents involved in the participation structures.	June 2024	The Department will work with resident engagement training providers to offer bespoke training to residents on a periodic basis. For example, training could include best practice when establishing and maintaining an RA, managing a resident-led group, and scrutinising the Council.

Action	Target date for completion	Progress
Setup a participation register and encourage residents to join.	April 2024	
Commence estate walkabouts which will include Council staff and occasionally Councillors.	April 2024	
Work with Chelsea Football Club to continue and expand the Chelsea Kicks programme.	On-going	
Introduce periodic RA networking events	June 2024	
Clubroom Managers will continue to maintain and fortify relationships with voluntary organisations and other Council departments on engaging and supporting younger residents via the Clubrooms to increase participation.	June 2024	
Consider the feasibility of alternative approaches for residents to review our services (e.g. mystery shopping type exercises).	June 2024	
Hold an annual gardening competition for residents	Annual - summer	

Appendix 2

Statutory Powers and Responsibilities

The table below details the various legislative responsibilities placed on local authorities in relation to resident participation and consultation.

Table 1: Statutory Responsibilities in Relation to Consultation and Participation

Legislation	Responsibility
Section 105, Housing Act 1985	Requires public sector landlords to have arrangements to inform and consult secure tenants who are likely to be “substantially affected” by certain matters of housing management . This includes a requirement to publish details of the consultation arrangements and make them available.
Section 137, Housing Act 1996	Local authorities which have introductory tenants have a statutory duty to consult them on certain matters of housing management.
Section 27, Housing Act 1985 (as amended by the Regulatory Reform (Housing Management Agreements) Order 2003);	Entering into a management agreement with another agency to manage all or some of the housing stock. Section 27BA (inserted by paragraph 3 of Schedule 18 of the Housing Act 1996) allows the Secretary of State to make regulations to impose requirements to consult tenants or to consider representations made by tenants regarding the exercise of their management functions.
Right to Manage Statutory Guidance (2013)	Local authority tenants have had a statutory Right to Manage since 1994. The regulations were introduced to make it easier for residents to exercise their Right to Manage by providing a clear process for aspiring Tenant Management Organisations.
Section 27AB, Housing Act 1985 (added by Section 132, Leasehold Reform Housing and Urban Development Act 1993)	Local authorities in England and Wales may enter into a management agreement with a tenant management organisation (TMO).

Legislation	Responsibility
Section 106A and Schedule 3A, Housing Act 1985, as added by Section 6 of the Housing and Planning Act 1986	Voluntary disposal of local authority stock - local authorities must consult secure tenants before disposing of their homes to a private landlord or a registered social landlord.
Section 21, Housing Act 1985 and Section 111, Local Government Act 1972	Local authorities have the power to fund tenants' groups on the basis that support to tenants' groups is provided to assist and enable authorities to manage their housing
Section 429A, Housing Act 1985 (as inserted by Section 16, Housing and Planning Act 1986)	Availability of grants from the Secretary of State to facilitate tenant participation.
Section 137, Local Government Act	Local authorities may also incur expenditure which in their opinion is in the interests of their area or any part of it for all or some of its inhabitants.
Section 101 and 102, Local Government Act 1972	Local authorities have powers under Section 101 to delegate functions to a committee, sub-committee officer or another local authority.. Section 102 provides that persons who are not elected members of the council may be members of such sub-committees. Tenant members on council committees and sub-committees are treated as non-voting members by Section 13, Local Government and Housing Act 1989.
Housing and Regeneration Act 2008	Section 193 gives the Regulator of Social Housing the power to set standards relating to consumer matters, including methods for consulting and informing tenants and enabling tenants to influence or control the management of their accommodation or environment. The Regulator has issued the Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard under this provision.

Appendix 3

Resident Involvement Housing Service Standards

We will:

- Support the development of accredited Resident Associations (RA) and seek to increase the number of residents with access to an RA.
- Publish and deliver Homelife to all Council properties four times a year and promote the online version. This gives us the opportunity to tell residents what work the Department and community groups are doing.
- Provide a variety of ways for you to tell us what you think about our services.
- Provide support and funding for recognised Housing Community Champions who work for the benefit of their local community.
- Work closely with residents on estates identified for improvement and regeneration to develop preferred options for the future of their homes and estates.
- Comply with the Housing Ombudsman's Complaints code of conduct and work closely with the Housing Ombudsman where issues arise.
- Let you know who will deal with your issue and when you can expect a response if you report a problem to us.
- Regularly review the Resident Engagement Strategy setting out ways in which you can get involved at a level of your choosing. Housing Service Standards (Paper No. 23-175).
- Offer options for residents to review our services, which may include mystery shopping.
- Develop accessible housing and make available occupational therapists to ensure residents with additional needs continue to live independently in their homes.
- Consider the impact to residents with protected characteristics when making major changes to our policies and strategies by completing Equalities, Impact and Needs Assessments.
- Train our staff and offer support to ensure that professional standards are maintained, and that staff understand the different needs of our residents.

Appendix 4

Borough Residents' Forum constitutions

1 Purpose

The purpose of the Borough Residents' Forum is to:

- (a) consider those matters upon which the Council is required to consult its residents under the provisions of Housing Legislation;
- (b) consider those matters of, or affecting, housing policy and management upon which the Council considers that it should consult its residents;
- (c) consider the results, findings and recommendations from surveys and activity/performance reports undertaken by the Housing and Regeneration Department including periodic reports from any Residents' Working Groups that are established;
- (d) provide a scrutiny role on behalf of Residents' Associations, Area Housing Panels and other forums on all reports with regard to performance, service standards and value for money matters;
- (e) ensure that the Housing and Regeneration Department meets current regulatory requirements;
- (f) act as a conduit between the various consultative groups within the resident involvement structure and the Housing and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Executive.

2 Meetings

The Borough Residents' Forum will meet four times a year at the Town Hall, Wandsworth High Street, London, SW18. Additional meetings may be called as appropriate with the agreement of the Chairman of the Forum.

An agenda for the meeting of the Forum will be circulated by the Chief Executive seven calendar days before the meeting. Minutes of each meeting of the Forum will subsequently be included in the agenda for the Forum's next ordinary meeting. The Council will set the agenda for the Forum, but members will be polled annually on a set of topics to be considered during the year.

The Forum is a public meeting therefore the agenda will be published online, and members of the public may attend as observers.

3 Membership

The Borough Residents' Forum shall comprise representatives elected from the four Area Housing Panels, the Sheltered Residents' Association Focus Group and the Co-op/Resident Management Organisation Forum (the number of representatives from each of these bodies is to be determined by the Housing and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee). Membership of the Borough Residents' Forum is restricted to tenants and resident leaseholders of Council owner properties living in the area of the Residents' Association they represent.

Resident membership currently stands at:

- Four members and one deputy form each Area Housing Panel (Central, Southern, Western and Eastern.)
- Two members from the Co-op Forum
- One member and one deputy from the Sheltered Residents' Association Focus Group

Deputy members may attend the Forum (as a full speaking and voting member) where it is known that an elected representative from that Panel is unable to attend a particular meeting of the Forum.

In addition, the Council shall nominate up to five Councillor representatives to serve on the Forum. This will include the Cabinet Member for Housing, Chairman and Deputy Chairman of the HROSC. It will also include either one or two minority party member/s depending on proportionality. AHP Chairmen may attend as observers.

Councillor membership currently stands at:

- Cabinet Member for Housing
- Chairman of HROSC
- Deputy Chairman of HROSC
- Two minority party members

4 Quorum

The Forum is not a decision-making body and therefore quorum does not need to be considered.

5 Chairman

The Cabinet Member for Housing shall serve as the Chairman of the Borough Residents' Forum.

Where the Cabinet Member is unable to attend a Forum meeting, the Chairman or Deputy Chairman of HROSC will chair that Forum meeting.

6 Vice-Chairman

The resident representatives shall elect a Vice-Chairman of the Forum from their members. This will take place annually by secret ballot (usually in September). The Council will ask members of the Forum to nominate themselves ahead of the September Forum meeting and members will be notified of the nominees via the agenda for the September Forum meeting.

Members are expected to attend the September Forum meeting to cast their vote in person. However, in exceptional circumstances members can put their vote in writing to the Resident Participation Officer for their area by 5pm the day before the Forum meeting.

In the case of a draw, those who have not drawn will be taken out and a new vote will be cast. If there is still a draw after a recast of votes, the Chair will draw a name at random from the drawing nominees.

The Vice-Chairman will attend meetings of the Housing and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee to present the report of the Borough Residents' Forum and comment on any relevant items on behalf of the Borough Resident's Forum.

7 Non-Attendance

Resident members are expected to attend meetings and report back to their electing body (AHP, Sheltered RA Focus Group or Co-op Forum) on the proceedings of the Forum. In the event of multiple non-attendances, a member may be removed, and a new nomination sought from their electing body.

7 Representation on other bodies

The Vice-Chairman may be nominated to attend other bodies on behalf of the Forum as agreed annually at the Forum and will provide feedback. The Vice-Chairman is expected to make every effort to attend such bodies and non-attendance will be reported to the Forum.

8 Code of Conduct

All Forum members are expected to abide by the code of conduct. Any breaches shall be addressed by the Forum and may, in serious cases, result in expulsion from the Forum and an alternative nomination sought from the electing body.

The Association Area Housing Panel will uphold equal opportunities and not discriminate on the grounds of race/ethnicity, gender, gender reassignment, age, sexuality, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, disability, religion or belief. Where necessary reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure the Panel is accessible to all.

Appendix 5

Area Housing Panel constitution

1 Purpose

- (a) address local issues concerning the management of Council owned properties raised by the membership of the Panel. Any issues so raised must have already been raised with the area teams but remain outstanding;
- (b) assess, scrutinise and comment upon the performance of the area teams against service standards of the Councils housing stock within the geographical boundaries of the Panel;
- (c) elect the Panel's representatives to the Borough Residents' Forum. The number of representatives to be elected will be as determined by the Housing and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
- (d) to receive from the Panel's Borough Residents' Forum representatives reports on matters discussed at the Forum and to identify any general matters of policy and practice which the Panel considers their representatives should raise at the Forum.
- (e) to consider and approve Small Improvement Grant applications from individual Residents' Associations.

Any items raised under paragraph (a) should not relate specifically to a Panel representative's own dwelling.

2 Meetings

The Area Housing Panel will meet four times a year at a location convenient to the geographical remit of the Panel's area. Additional meetings may be called as appropriate with the agreement of the Chairman of the Panel.

An agenda for the meeting of the Panel will be circulated by the Chief Executive seven calendar days before the meeting. Prior to circulation of the agenda, the Chief Executive will invite, in writing, each accredited association to submit items for the agenda. Minutes of each meeting of the Panel will subsequently form part of the agenda for the Panel's next ordinary meeting.

3 Membership

The Area Housing Panel shall comprise of two nominated representatives from each accredited Residents' Association from Council-owned property within the Panel's geographical boundaries.

Membership of the Area Housing Panel is restricted to tenants and resident leaseholders of Council owned properties living in the area of the Residents' Association they represent. Freeholders, absentee leaseholders, private sub tenants of leaseholders and Council tenants' or leaseholders' household members are not eligible to represent the Residents' Association at the Area Housing Panel but can attend as observers.

Representatives from each Associate Residents' Association (no more than two per association) and Housing Community Champions may also attend the panel as observers only.

In addition, the Council shall nominate three Councillor representatives to serve on the Panel.

Area Housing Panels are not public meetings, but representatives are expected to feedback to their respective Residents' Association.

4 Quorum

Quorum must be considered as the Area Housing Panel is a decision-making body (for example, the Small Improvement Budget approvals and Borough Residents' Forum nominations.) The meeting is considered quorate if 20% of the members are in attendance. If the meeting is not quorate, decisions will be deferred.

Where Small Improvement Budget applications are considered, it is expected that representatives from the Residents' Association making the application will be in attendance.

5 Chairman

A member of the Majority Party shall serve as the Chairman of the Area Housing Panel. In the absence of the Chairman from a Panel meeting, the Chairman shall appoint another Councillor to serve as Chairman of the Panel for that meeting.

6 Deputising Arrangements

In the event of any Council appointed member of the Area Housing Panel being unable to attend a Panel meeting, a replacement member of the Council may be appointed to be a member of the Panel for the duration of the meeting.

In the event of an appointed resident representative being unable to attend a Panel meeting, an eligible substitute from their Residents' Association may attend in their place for the duration of that meeting.

7 Borough Residents' Forum

Each Panel shall elect annually (where possible, in the June cycle of meetings) representatives to serve on the Borough Residents' Forum from amongst their resident members. Each Panel will elect four representatives and one deputy, as set out in the Borough Residents' Forum constitution. In the event of vacancies occurring during the year, the Panel shall carry out a special election to fill their vacancies on the Forum.

Voting will take place by secret ballot. In the case of a draw, those who have not drawn will be taken out and a new vote will be cast. If there is still a draw after a recast of votes, the Chair will draw a name at random from the drawing nominees.

The Chief Executive shall notify accredited Residents' Associations in advance of any elections to be held for Borough Residents' Forum representatives and invite nominations.

8 Accredited Residents' Associations

To qualify as an accredited Residents' Association, the Association is required to: -

- (a) show that they have a minimum level of 20% membership of the households of the block/estate/area they represent where the area consists of more than 20 properties by submitting their membership list. Where there are between 10 and 20 properties the association must have a membership of at least 51% of the households in the block/estate/area it represents.
- (b) have an approved constitution that incorporates the Council's basic requirements;
- (c) show that an Annual General Meeting has been held during the year;
- (d) have their accounts approved by the Council; and
- (e) have an approved code of conduct that incorporates the Council's basic requirements.

If the Director of Housing and Regeneration is not satisfied that an Association meets all these qualifications, he shall inform the Panel and the Association shall not be able to participate in any Panel proceedings until the Director of Housing and Regeneration has reported that the qualifications have been met.

9 Non-Attendance

As resident members will be expected to report back to their associations on the proceedings of the Panel. In the event of multiple non-attendances, a member may be removed, and an alternative nomination sought from the Association.

10 Code of Conduct

All panel members are expected to abide by the code of conduct. Any breaches shall be addressed by the panel and may, in serious cases, result in expulsion from the panel and an alternative nomination sought from the Association.

The Association Area Housing Panel will uphold equal opportunities and not discriminate on the grounds of race/ethnicity, gender, gender reassignment, age, sexuality, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, disability, religion or belief. Where necessary reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure the Panel is accessible to all.

Appendix 6

Residents' Association Model Constitution

Name and Area

- 1 The name of the Association is: XXXXXXXXX
and it will represent the residents of: XXXXXXXXXXXX Estate/Block

Aims

The aims of the Association are to:

- 2.1 Promote membership to all people eligible to join the Association.
- 2.2 Promote equal opportunities within the community.
- 2.3 Scrutinise performance and help in improving the housing and other services in the area of the Association.
- 2.4 Be non-party political.
- 2.5 Promote social, welfare, recreational and training activities for the benefit of members of the Association.
- 2.6 Represent the view of the majority of members affected by issues relating to their local environment.
- 2.7 Build a partnership and improve communication between Wandsworth Council and the membership.
- 2.8 Provide regular information to all members.
- 2.9 Regularly consult all members.
- 2.10 Monitor the Association, its work, finances and membership.

Equal Opportunities

- 3 The Association shall uphold equal opportunities and work for good relations among the community, specifically prohibiting any conduct that discriminates or harasses on the grounds of race/ethnicity, gender, gender reassignment, age, sexuality, marriage and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, disability, religion or belief. Where necessary reasonable adjustments will be made to ensure activities are accessible to all.

Membership

- 4.1 Membership is open to all persons 16 years or over living in the area of the Association including all, tenants, leaseholders (both resident in the area and who live elsewhere and own property in the area), sub-tenants of absentee leaseholders and freeholders, irrespective of race, colour, ethnic or national origins, nationality, gender, marital status, age, sexuality, religion, disability, political or religious beliefs. As far as possible the membership should reflect the local population.
- 4.2 Owners of more than one property may become members of more than one Residents' Association (RA) where they own properties covered by more than one RA.
- 4.3 A record of all members in the current year shall be kept by the Secretary of the Association. Every member shall sign an annual written consent to become a member.
- 4.4 Any membership fee shall be determined by the Annual General Meeting. All payments shall be recorded in an appropriate manner and a receipt given.

Ending Membership

- 5.1 Membership shall end when a member dies or resigns, a tenant member ceases to be a local authority tenant and moves away from the area covered by the Association or a leaseholder sells their property and moves away from the area covered by the Association.
- 5.2 In the event of a breach of the Association's Code of Conduct (clause 14.1) membership can be suspended or ended by a two-thirds majority vote of the Committee.
- 5.3 A member whose membership has been suspended in accordance with clause 5.2 shall be entitled to have that suspension reviewed at the next General Meeting.
- 5.4 In the event of membership being ended by the Committee under the provision of clause 5.2, membership can be re-instated by a two-thirds majority vote of those present at a quorate General Meeting providing notice has been given of this proposal at the time the General Meeting is called by the Secretary.

Annual General Meeting

- 6.1 The Association shall hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) once each calendar year, and not more than 15 months shall pass between the date of one AGM and the next.
- 6.2 The AGM shall: -
 - Receive an annual report from the Committee.
 - Present audited accounts to members.
 - Appoint an independent auditor.
 - Elect the Committee.
 - Elect up to two tenant or resident leaseholder representatives to attend the local Area Housing Panel. Freeholders, absentee leaseholders, private sub tenants of leaseholders and Council tenants' or leaseholders' household members are not eligible to represent the RA at the Area Housing Panel but can attend as observers. Elections should take place ahead of the June Area Housing Panel.

- Agree the annual rate of subscription.
- Consider any resolutions put forward by members.
- Vote on any amendments to the constitution.

6.3 All members shall be given XX calendar days written notice of the AGM.

6.4 Any proposed changes to the constitution or nominations to the Committee must notified and sent to the Secretary in writing at least 14 calendar days before the AGM.

6.5 The agenda, minutes of the last AGM, details of nominations to the Committee and any resolutions to be considered (which includes any proposed changes to the constitution) must be sent to all members at least XX calendar days prior to the AGM.

General Meetings

7.1 Each year the Association shall hold at least XX General Meetings (including the AGM) which shall be open to all members.

7.2 All members of the Association shall receive at least XX calendar days' notice of General Meetings.

7.3 The General Meetings shall be minuted.

7.4 The quorum for all General Meetings shall be XX members.

Special General Meetings

8.1 A Special General Meeting may be called by the Committee and must be called by the Committee if requested by at least 5 members. The Secretary must send to each member written notice of a Special General Meeting at least XX calendar days in advance of the meeting.

Voting

9.1 Each member as defined in 4.1 shall have one vote on any resolution put before an AGM, General Meeting or Special General Meeting. If a leaseholder owns more than one property in the area of the RA, s/he constitutes one member of the TA and therefore is only eligible to cast one vote.

9.2 All voting that takes place at an AGM, Special General Meeting, General Meeting and Committee Meeting, shall be counted and included in the minutes.

Minutes

10.1 All formal meetings such as Committee Meetings, General Meetings, Special General Meetings and AGMs must be minuted and the minutes formally approved by the next meeting of the Committee or General Meeting.

10.2 All minutes shall be sent to all residents in the area of the Association on request and be available for inspection by members of the Association

The Committee

- 11.1 All members over the age of 18 are entitled to stand for election to the committee, however Wandsworth Council tenants or resident leaseholders must make up a majority of the committee and must be in the majority at any Committee Meeting votes, as they have a legal and financial relationship with the Council.
- 11.2 Owners of more than one property must not sit on the committee of more than one RA.
- 11.3 The Committee shall stand down at each AGM and may be re-elected.
- 11.4 There shall be at least XX committee members.
- 11.5 There shall be no more than two committee members from the same household
- 11.6 There shall be at least XX Committee meetings each year. The quorum for Committee meetings is XX members.
- 11.7 All members shall be given not less than 7 calendar days' notice of each Committee Meeting, at which any member of the Association shall be entitled to attend (but not to vote).
- 11.8 The Committee may from time to time as necessary create any sub-committees and/or working parties on a permanent or temporary basis. The members of any such sub-committee or working party shall be selected by the Committee and shall include at least one Committee member. Any such sub-committees or working parties shall report to the Committee for decision making.
- 11.9 The Committee shall monitor the work, finances and membership of the Association.
- 11.10 The Committee shall report to each General Meeting on the work done by the Committee since the last General Meeting.

Officers of The Committee

- 12.1 The Association shall have a Chairperson, Secretary and Treasurer.
- 12.2 The Chairperson shall chair General Meetings and Committee Meetings. The duties of the officers shall be defined in the Standing Orders of the Association.
- 12.3 The officers shall report to each Committee Meeting and General Meeting on their work.
- 12.4 Wandsworth Council tenants and resident leaseholders are eligible to stand for all officer positions. Freeholders, absentee leaseholders, private sub-tenants of absentee leaseholders and Council tenants' or leaseholders' household members cannot hold the positions of Chairperson, Vice Chairperson or Treasurer.
- 12.5 Owners of more than one property must not hold an Officer position on more than one RA.

Co-optees

- 13.1 The Committee may co-opt members onto the Committee in order to fill vacancies that occur during the year to ensure appropriate representation of all people in the community.

Code of Conduct

- 14.1 All members shall agree to abide by the Association's Code of Conduct and failure to do so will result in that member being asked to resign their membership or action being taken under clause 5.2.

Finance

- 15.1 All money raised by or on behalf of the Association will be used only in accordance with the Aims of the Association detailed in clause 2.
- 15.2 The Treasurer shall open a bank or building society account in the name of the Association and keep records of the Association's income and expenditure. The Treasurer shall report the balance in the account to the Committee at each Committee Meeting.
- 15.3 The Committee shall appoint three authorised signatories for any cheques and cheques shall be signed by at least two signatories. The signatories should be from different households and not related to each other.
- 15.4 The Association's accounts shall be kept up to date and annual accounts for each year shall be independently audited and shall be presented to the AGM.
- 15.5 The accounts of the Association shall be made available for inspection by any member of the Association who requires to see them, within 14 calendar days. The request for inspection must be made in writing to the Treasurer. The accounts shall be made available to an officer of the Council, upon written request, within 48 hours or such other time as is deemed reasonable by both parties.
- 15.6 The Treasurer is authorised to pay from petty cash travel and other expenses to representatives of the Association undertaking the Association's work providing that each payment is supported by a receipt, ticket or voucher. A receipt for each such payment of petty cash shall be signed by the receiver. The Treasurer shall provide a list of petty cash payments to the Committee at each Committee Meeting.
- 15.7 If the Association is in receipt of a Residents Association Grant from Wandsworth Council, it will comply with the requirements set out in the Grant Application Form for the relevant year.

Standing Orders

- 16.1 The Committee of the Association has the power to adopt and issue Standing Orders and/or rules for the Association provided that they are:
- Subject to review at a General Meeting
 - Consistent with the terms of the constitution.

Information

- 17.1 The Association shall provide information to all its members on matters that effect the Association and its members.
- 17.2 Every member of the Association shall be given a copy of the constitution when they join. Members shall be given copies of any changes to the constitution.
- 17.3 Minutes of all General Meetings and Committee Meetings shall be available from the Secretary for all residents in the area of the Association.

Dissolution of the Association

- 18.1 The Association can only be dissolved by a Special General Meeting called specifically to consider a motion to dissolve the Association.
- 18.2 All members shall be given 21 calendar days written notice of such a meeting, which shall contain the wording of the resolution.
- 18.3 The Association can only be dissolved if two-thirds of members present at a Special General meeting vote for a motion to dissolve the Association.
- 18.4 The Special General Meeting shall decide on disposal of assets, funds and equipment.
- 18.5 Any assets that have been donated or loaned by the Council should be returned to the Council if the Council so wishes.

Local Arrangements

- 19.1 The Model Constitution and the Guidelines for Accreditation are designed to assist RAs in working to consistent, clear procedures. However, it is accepted that in rare situations there may be local circumstances where the guidance set out in the Model Constitution and Guidelines for Accreditation would be amended to better allow the RA to meet its objectives of providing inclusive participation opportunities and representing the views of its members and residents as widely as possible.
- 19.2 Should an RA wish to amend any points of the Model Constitution or Guidelines for Accreditation, they should enter into discussions with the Resident Participation Officer (RPO) and Area Housing Manager (AHM) setting out the case for how such amendments would be beneficial to their members and the area the RA represents. Any such proposed amendments must be reasonable, equitable and justifiable. All such amendments would need to be agreed in conjunction with the Area Team after careful consideration and consultation.
- 19.3 Rules around membership, the committee, officers of the committee and finance may not be amended from those set out in the Model Constitution. RAs must follow the Council's Guidelines for Accreditation in respect of these matters.
- 19.4 RA constitutions must incorporate the following information: name of association, aims and objectives, equal opportunities, membership, ending membership, committee and officers of the committee, code of conduct, AGM and general meetings (including procedure for meetings, quorum and minutes), voting rights, subscription levels (if subscription is charged), what funding will be used for, finances (including who will open the bank account, who can sign cheques, who will manage the accounts), the role of the secretary, amending the constitution and dissolution.

Appendix 7

Borough Residents Forum Code of Conduct

1 Purpose of the Code of Conduct

This Code of Conduct explains how Forum members (residents, councillors and officers) are expected to carry out their duties when attending the Borough Residents Forum (BRF). Resident members should be mindful at all times that they are representing the members of their Area Housing Panels (AHP). They should try to reflect and understand the views of the AHP. All members of the Forum are expected to abide by the following rules. If a member deliberately or frequently breaches them the Forum has the power to vote that member off the Forum (see paragraph 9).

2 Confidentiality

The business of the Forum may involve members dealing with issues that may be sensitive and controversial. Members must exercise discretion and care in performing their duties and responsibilities. If confidential information is provided, it may only be used for the business of the meeting and it must not be passed on to anyone who is not a member. Such information will not in any case include any personal information about individuals, except at that individual's written request.

3 Conduct of meetings

Members should at all times observe accepted practice while taking part in a meeting;

- to be courteous to each other and support and assist other members in seeking the best possible solution to problems being discussed;
- to allow each other the opportunity to speak and comment;
- to follow the guidance of the Chairman in the conduct of the meeting;
- to remember that you are representing the views and accountable to your Area Housing Panel;
- to remember that the purpose of the meeting is to benefit residents generally and not specific individuals;
- to bear in mind the rights of individual residents and the duties of Council employees when proposing solutions to problems;
- not to speak or write on behalf of the Forum without the prior agreement of the Forum. Any correspondence sent on behalf of the Forum should be made available to all members of the Forum;
- to operate within the rules laid down in the Constitution.

4 Conflicts of interest

Members must not expect favourable treatment by officers or the Forum itself, nor should they be treated any less favourably:

Members must notify the group if they have any personal, financial or material interest in any matter being considered. For example, if the Forum is considering a change in a policy, a member must inform the Forum if they have a close relative who might gain advantage from the change; or if they have an interest in a contractor whose work is being discussed. Members must also declare if they have a commercial interest in a Council managed property beyond their interest as a resident (e.g. leaseholders who privately let a property).

Individual members may be asked to abstain from discussions and decisions about an item in which they have a personal, financial or material interest.

5 Partnership

All Forum members should at all times show respect and courtesy in their dealings with each other, and seek to work in equal partnership to find ways of improving the housing service.

6 Discrimination

No member will discriminate on any ground against any other member of the Forum. Discriminatory language will not be used in discussions. All those who attend meetings have the right to be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their race, colour, ethnic or national origins, nationality, gender, gender reassignment, marital and civil partnership status, pregnancy and maternity, age, sexuality, religion, or any other matter which causes people to be treated with injustice.

7 Constitution

It is important for members to be aware of the Constitution of the Forum. This will help to prevent time being taken up with individual issues which it is not the job of the Forum to discuss. Members must remember to follow the agenda, and to help each other to reach effective decisions.

8 Agenda

Before each meeting, the agenda will be agreed by the Chairman of the Forum. Members may request that items of interest to those they represent be placed on the agenda. If an urgent item of business arises after the agenda for a meeting has been sent out, members may contact the Chairman to request that they be placed on the agenda.

9 Breach of Code of Conduct

Should there be a breach of this code by a resident, officer of the Council or elected member, the Chairman of the meeting has the power to give a verbal warning to the individual. In addition, any member of the group or panel can propose that another member be given a verbal or written warning. If, despite a warning, a member continues to breach this code, or in more serious breaches, a member can be expelled or suspended from meetings.

Resident Participation and Consultation Strategy

