

# Habitare Homes: Resident Involvement and Empowerment Policy

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<b>Policy Owner:</b>	Board
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<b>Approved by:</b>	Board

## 1 | Introduction

- 1.1. Resident involvement is the process which enables landlords to work in partnership with their residents. The policy sets out the framework to enable residents to influence the decisions of Habitare Homes Limited (“**Habitare Homes**”). This enhances accountability and builds better relationships.
- 1.2. Habitare Homes is committed to involving residents to help us improve the quality of the services we deliver. In order to do this, Habitare Homes have developed opportunities working with our property managers to enable resident involvement and empowerment.
- 1.3. The purpose of this policy is to set out what to expect from resident involvement in Habitare Homes and how we will involve and consult with residents in the governance and scrutiny of our services.

## 2 | Legal and Regulatory Requirement

- 2.1. The regulator for social housing’s (RSH) requirements for Resident Involvement and Empowerment is set out within the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard. This requires that residents are given opportunities to influence and be involved in:
  - The formulation of Habitare Homes housing-related policies and strategic priorities
  - The making of decisions about how housing-related services are delivered, including the setting of service standards
  - The scrutiny of Habitare Homes performance and the making of recommendations to Habitare Homes about how their performance might be improved
  - The management and maintenance of their homes, where applicable

- The management of repair and maintenance
- A fair and transparent complaints process.

2.2. Residents will be invited to join a local resident panel or equivalent group during the sign-up process. In addition, Habitare Homes will seek their feedback through our annual social impact survey.

### 3 | Supporting Resident Involvement

3.1. To support resident involvement and empowerment activities, Habitare Homes will:

- Support the formation and activities of resident panels with our property managers
- Provide timely and relevant performance information to support effective scrutiny by customers of Habitare Homes performance in a form which will be agreed with residents. This will include the publication of an annual report which will include information on housing services performance, repair and maintenance budgets, information on how residents have influenced services and information on any changes to services provided
- Provide clear information on how residents can access services and the responsibilities of residents and Habitare Homes regarding the service and maintenance of properties

3.2. We shall consult with residents on the scope of local offers for service delivery, particularly regarding service management and opportunities for resident involvement. This shall include how performance will be monitored, reported on and scrutinised by customers with arrangements to review methods every two years.

3.3. Where we are proposing a change in landlord or property manager for one or more of our customers or a significant change in their management arrangements, we shall consult with affected customers in a fair, timely, appropriate and effective manner. We shall set out the proposals clearly and in an appropriate amount of detail and shall set out any actual or potential advantages and disadvantages (including costs) to customers in the immediate and longer term.

### 4 | Current Involvement Activities

4.1. Residents can be involved in influencing our work via:

- Being a member of a resident panel or equivalent group with their property manager
- Making a complaint via the complaints process
- Completing the annual feedback survey

4.2. Further Information on resident involvement options and how to get involved in available on our website.

## 5 | Support

- 5.1. Habitare Homes understands that its residents have a range of needs and will provide support options to enable all residents to get involved, including:
- The use of an interpreter/signer where required
  - Providing communications in a range of formats
  - Assisting with travel costs and out of pocket expenses for those involved in panels
  - Accommodation, stationery and IT equipment where appropriate to support activity

## 6 | Policy Management

- 6.1. The board have overall responsibility for this policy.
- 6.2. This policy will be reviewed every two years – unless legislation, business or sector developments require otherwise – to ensure that it continues to meet the stated objectives and to take account of good practice developments.
- 6.3. This policy will be reviewed with our property managers annually to review the effectiveness of our approach to resident involvement and any learning identified.

## 7 | Background Documents

- 7.1. This policy should be read in conjunction with the legal and regulatory documents listed below:
- The Regulator of Social Housing Consumer Standard April 2024:
    - Safety and Quality Standard
    - Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard
    - Neighbourhood and Community Standard
    - Tenancy Standard
  - and the following strategies and policies:
    - Complaints Policy
    - Equality and Diversity Policy.
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