

Title: **Resident  
Involvement**

Date of issue: May 2009 / May 2010

Date of next review: May 2011

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Service area applies to: Corporate

Approved by: Operations Committee

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Web: Yes

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1.	<p>Purpose</p> <p>To establish the aims, principles and values which will determine the way the Association is accountable to its customers and encourages involvement by residents in its operation, management and governance.</p>	2
2.	<p>Scope</p> <p>The Operations Director is responsible for overseeing reviews of resident involvement with input from staff directly responsible for implementing the policy.</p> <p>All staff have a responsibility to ensure the policy is implemented corporately.</p> <p>The policy applies to all St Vincent’s residents.</p>	2
3.	<p>References</p> <p>Impact Assessment for 2010</p> <p>KLOE 5</p> <p>Events Diary 2010</p> <p>Social Investment Strategy</p> <p>Involvement Statement</p> <p>Single Equality Scheme</p>	
4.	<p>Key Objectives</p> <p>The main objectives of the resident involvement policy are to:</p> <p>Provide and develop with residents a range of ways for residents to be involved in influencing decision making about housing and related services at all levels of the organisation. This will include but not limited to opportunities to be involved in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage and support Tenants in involvement up to being a Board member</li> <li>• Customer panel meetings</li> <li>• BME forums twice a year</li> <li>• Service specific customer forums e.g. adaptations service</li> <li>• Residents’ Associations</li> <li>• Residents meetings</li> <li>• Customer Satisfaction Surveys to monitor the quality of service from a residents perspective</li> <li>• Mystery Shopping</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing and scheme surgeries</li> <li>• Virtual Young Voice – which enables younger tenants to get involved by way of web/ text/ blogs etc.</li> </ul> <p>Inform and promote to residents and staff the variety of mechanisms for involvement</p> <p>A key mechanism for feedback and continuous improvement for service delivery ensuring accountability in all areas.</p> <p>To continually challenge what we do and ensure we meet expectations of our customers.</p>	
5.	Customer Involvement	
6.	<p>Monitoring against the Customer Top 10 and the TSA national standards</p> <p>Impact Assessment</p> <p>Events Diary</p> <p>Managers 121's</p> <p>1/4ly Performance Review Meetings</p> <p>Managers Forum</p> <p>Departmental Plan</p>	
7.	<p>The Policy</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT POLICY STATEMENT FOR 2010</b></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><b><u>Version 4 May 2010</u></b></p> <p><b>1 Background to regulatory Framework</b></p> <p>During 2009 the changes and expectations for resident involvement continued at a pace reinforced by the changes to the regulatory requirements:</p> <p><b>1.1 The Housing and Regeneration Act 2008</b> confirmed the changing stance of the Housing Corporation and the Audit Commission with regard to resident involvement and its role within the organisation.</p> <p>Our role is as champions for the needs and aspirations of our tenants providing greater choice. How we are to achieve this is set down in 10 fundamental objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage a supply of good quality social housing.</li> <li>2. Ensure choice and protection for tenants</li> <li>3. Provide opportunities for tenants to be involved in management</li> <li>4. Efficient, effective and economic provision by landlords</li> <li>5. Ensure social landlords and financially viable and well managed</li> <li>6. Encourage contribution to the broader well-being of localities</li> </ol>	

7. Encourage investment in social housing
8. Avoid the imposition of unreasonable burden on public funds
9. Guard against the misuse of public funds
10. Minimise the burden and apply principles of good regulation

**1.2** In 2009 **Tenants Services Authority (TSA)** the regulator of all social housing consulted widely on what and how Associations should be regulated.

After wide consultation through the “national conversation” and a consultation with landlords the TSA launched the 6 national standards in April 2010.

The six standards are:

- Tenant involvement and empowerment
- Home
- Tenancy
- Neighbourhood and community
- Value for money
- Governance and financial viability

These standards are the focus of the regulatory framework. They explain the outcomes that need to be achieved by all social housing providers.

As part of the TSA National Standards the Association will ensure there are opportunities for tenants to agree on “local offers”. Specifically those related to tenant involvement and empowerment, home and neighbourhood & Community standards.

**1.3** The **Audit Commission (AC)** retains its responsibility for undertaking the periodic inspections, their assessment criteria continues in the form of Key Lines of Enquiry (KLOE'S). The AC will work with the TSA to regulate using the 6 national standards and the relevant KLOE which impacts on the National Standards.

It is expected that the KLOE's will be reviewed by October 2010 to reflect the 6 National Standards.

The KLOE's detail very clearly the Audit Commissions expectations as to what constitutes a FAIR and EXCELLENT service. In all aspects of the Associations work the KLOE's are the tools with which we shape and deliver our service reviews and strategic plans.

The focus for Resident Involvement is:

- KLOE 5 Resident Involvement
- KLOE 6 Tenancy and Estate Management
- In addition to the cross-cutting KLOES – Access and Customer Care in Housing Services, Diversity and Value for Money.

## 2. OUR POLICY

The Association is committed to working with its tenants to provide a responsive, efficient, and caring customer service that is beneficial for residents and for the Association as a business. The TSA has set Associations the challenge of championing aspirations and needs of tenants, while providing much wider choice in all areas in a way that is affordable and economically viable.

The Association covers 17 local authority areas and we are committed in ensuring we consult with customers on local offers across this geographical spread.

We are committed to ensuring good **communication** with our customers, which mean providing clear, useful information in plain language on all policy issues. We will use our customer profile data to have documents and policies translated into other languages to meet the needs of our clients, in addition to bi-lingual staff, Language Line and upon request in Braille and audio.

We also deliver effective and extensive tenant involvement and consultation, beginning with taking customer's views into account in the decision making process, influencing policy reviews and helping shape the way services are delivered.

We encourage and support involvement from all sections of the community, as detailed within our *Single Equality Scheme*.

## 3. MONITORING AND INFORMATION PROVISION

Our regulatory requirements with regard to resident involvement include:

- **STATUS surveys** – a random sample questionnaire to customers consisting of 40 STATUS questions to allow year on year analysis and benchmarking with similar organisations.
- **Regulatory Statistical Returns (RSR) annually**
- This **Policy Statement**

In 2009 we based our work with the top 10 service standards ( Customer Service Statement, Our Offer to You) agreed by customers, after a review in December 2009 with the customer panel it was agreed to keep these standards. We have ensured these top 10 standards reflect what we need to achieve within the TSA national standards.

- **Scrutiny Panel**

The Association in 2010 will begin recruiting tenants to formalise a "scrutiny panel" which will consists wholly of tenants who are equipped with the right training, knowledge and support to monitor and inform

continuous service improvement.

- **Impact Assessment**

The Impact Assessment for 2010 is currently in draft format and details all aspects of resident involvement work planned corporately by the Association. Some of the work already carried out includes:

- Black Minority Ethnic (BME) forum set up to gauge involvement of hard to reach customers.
- Customer Conference which consulted on various services standards.
- Surgeries
- Scheme audit surgeries which are widely advertised each quarter through our newsletters.
- Estate walkabouts

We have ensured all resident involvement activities are advertised through our event diary which is accessible through the website.

We have developed a ¼ monitoring form for staff to complete to ensure we are achieving what we aimed for and are reporting back on a regular basis to our tenants.

- **Involvement Statement**

The Involvement Statement is being updated through consultation with the customer panel members. The document is designed to be an easy to follow guide on how tenants can get involved. This updated document will be launched this summer and all residents will be sent the updated document.

These 2 documents summarise the key areas of our work and works alongside other policies such as, Single Equality Scheme, Departmental Plan, Social Investment Strategy, Complaints and Governance policies and compliments the work of all departments.

#### **4. SUMMARY**

The expectation is for residents to work alongside staff in all aspects of service provision from the management and decision making processes to the provision of choice. This has been embraced across the Association and incorporated into the key documents for resident involvement for this year. To ensure we deliver on our promises we have introduced new monitoring mechanisms and committed to regular feedback to our customers.

Nothing is set in stone regarding our approach to getting customers and users involved, this last year has seen major changes to our regulatory requirements set against an uncertain economic future and the challenge of providing an improved service that is value for money. The association is committed to work in a planned approach that remains flexible and adaptable to changing needs and demands.

8.	Appendices	
8.1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Appendix 1 –Equality Impact Assessment</li> </ul>	
Policy/Procedure being assessed:		Resident Involvement Strategy
Section:		Operations
Date of assessment:		29 <sup>th</sup> April 2010
Person (S) Responsible for assessment:		Asif Iqbal / Maureen Wash
Is this a new or existing policy?		Existing

1. Briefly describe the function being assessed	How as an organisation we ensure that all aspects of our work is tenant led and customers are at the heart of what we do		
2. Who are the main stakeholders in relation to the function?	Customers, Staff and Partners		
3. Who will be consulted as part of this EIA? What types of consultation will be carried out?	Tenants, Staff and Board  Customer panel, operations committee.		
4. <u>Could</u> the function have a differential impact on <b>racial groups</b> ?	Yes  ✓	No	
What evidence exists to support your analysis?	Language and cultural barriers  As of April 2010 our tenant profile highlights that we have 17% BME tenants and further highlights people who want to be communicated in a different language.		
5. <u>Could</u> the function have a differential impact due to <b>gender</b> ?	Yes	No ✓	
What evidence exists to support your analysis?			

6. <u>Could</u> the function have a differential impact on <b>disabled people</b> ?	Yes ✓	No				
What evidence exists to support your analysis?	Access queries  As of April 2010 our tenant profile highlights that we have % disabled tenants and further highlights people who have particular access needs.					
7. <u>Could</u> the function have a differential impact due to <b>age</b> ?	Yes	No ✓				
What evidence exists to support your analysis?						
8. <u>Could</u> the function have a differential impact due to <b>sexuality</b> ?	Yes	No ✓				
What evidence exists to support your analysis?						
9. <u>Could</u> the function have a differential impact due to <b>religion or belief</b> ?	Yes ✓	No				
What evidence exists to support your analysis?	Language and cultural barriers					
<p>If the answer is NO to <u>all</u> questions 4-9 and no differential treatment has been found there is no requirement for a full Equality Impact Assessment. Please go back regularly and review the cycle.</p> <p>If the answer is YES to any of the questions 4-9 please continue to question 10</p>						
10. In what areas could the differential impact identified in 4-9 be considered to be an adverse impact in this function? (Please tick if yes)	Race ✓	Gender	Disability ✓	Age	Sexuality	Religion /belief ✓
11. What solutions will be introduced to overcome these	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use of customer profile data to plan meetings to address any issues.</li> </ul>					

<p>adverse impacts and /or create positive impacts?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Translations</li> <li>• BME forums</li> <li>• Bespoke events in BME areas, older persons events, younger persons events, events for all customers</li> <li>• Offer range of options for involvement eg phone, web, letter etc</li> <li>• Transport offered</li> <li>• DDA compliant venues</li> <li>• Literature and feedback ongoing to promote and encourage individuals needs met.</li> <li>• Dates, times, days etc culturally and religiously sensitive.</li> </ul>
<p>12. Which Action Plans have these solutions/strategies been transferred into?</p>	<p>Resident Involvement Strategy</p> <p>Resident Involvement Impact Assessment</p> <p>Customer Top 10</p> <p>KLOE 5</p> <p>Work feeds into corporate Equality and Diversity Strategy</p>

**Signed off by (Director):** .....

**Date:**.....