



# First Priority Housing Association Tenant Involvement Policy

Scope	The policy applies to all of First Priority Housing Association's tenants
Policy relates to	Tenancy Policy Allocations & Lettings Policy
Version	1.0
Release Date	2024
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer
Review Frequency	Annually
Review Date	1 April 2025

## **1. Purpose**

- 1.1. The Tenant Involvement Policy describes how First Priority Housing Association (FPHA) ensures residents have the appropriate level of influence over the services they receive from FPHA and how FPHA ensures they are provided with information about how FPHA is performing. The policy describes how FPHA does this in a clear, consistent and transparent manner.

## **2. Introductions and Aims**

- 2.1. First Priority Housing Association (FPHA) provides supported housing and intensive housing management services to residents with complex needs. FPHA recognises that many of its tenants are vulnerable and has developed this Tenant Involvement Policy specifically in that context.
- 2.2. Tenants of FPHA are amongst the most vulnerable in society and this policy recognises the central role advocates and care providers play in ensuring that tenants have access to information and options to enable them to influence the services they receive.
- 2.3. Due to the low-capacity levels of our tenant base, traditional means of tenant involvement such as committees or scrutiny panels can be difficult to deliver and receive sufficient levels of engagement on from tenants. FPHA is committed to embracing best practice on how to best engage with people who have low capacity or would struggle to engage as a result of their condition.
- 2.4. Communication will at all times be made clear, easily available and provided in written form where this is required and appropriate. FPHA will make reasonable efforts to provide information available in a form suitable for tenants with low literacy skills and those with limited familiarity with English.
- 2.5. The Tenant Involvement Policy aims to:
  - 2.5.1.1. Ensure FPHA is trusted by and accountable to its tenants;
  - 2.5.1.2. Follow best practice, regulatory and legislative requirements at all times;
  - 2.5.1.3. Ensure vulnerable residents have appropriate opportunities to be involved;
  - 2.5.1.4. Improve what FPHA does through listening and incorporating tenant views and influence.

## **3. Legislation and Regulation**

- 3.1. The Social Housing (Regulation) Act (2023) introduced a number of measures to ensure that the tenant voice is at the heart of the decision making and service delivery of registered providers. As a registered provider, FPHA must comply with the associated regulation stemming from this Act.
  - 3.1.1. FPHA fully applies the content of the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard as published by the Regulator of Social Housing to how it operates.

3.1.2. The provisions on complaints and redress are covered in FPHA's Complaint's Policy.

#### **4. Approach**

- 4.1. It is important to increase engagement levels, that FPHA has a consistent method for gathering key information on tenants. FPHA will collect this information as part of the referral process and will review on an annual basis as a minimum. This will identify the diverse needs of our tenants.
- 4.2. FPHA will communicate clearly and openly with tenants, making them aware of their rights and responsibilities for communication and consultation from the start of their tenancy onwards.
- 4.3. FPHA will use a wide range of methods to communicate including house meetings, face to face meetings, local panels where appropriate, telephone, email, social media and writing.
- 4.4. Tenants will be consulted about changes that affect the way services are delivered to them. Proposed changes will be clearly explained and FPHA will proactively seek out tenant views.
- 4.5. Tenant advocates and care providers will be involved directly in communication and consultation processes as FPHA recognises that many tenants require the help of other agencies to ensure they access their full suite of rights.
- 4.6. Where possible, tenants will be encouraged and supported to work together to make suggestions for changes and improvements to the way services are delivered. This is especially true where vulnerable residents share properties.
- 4.7. Tenants will be given regular information about the safety and condition of their home including evidence that all necessary safety checks are in place. Where practical, FPHA will involve tenants in the monitoring of these processes to provide greater transparency and accountability.
- 4.8. Tenants will be given up to date and unambiguous information about what to do in the event of a fire, a gas leak or a problem with water or electricity so that people have the information they need to stay safe.
- 4.9. Tenants will be asked for feedback on a regular basis. FPHA will act in the spirit of the Tenant Satisfaction Measures, as well as collecting other feedback from transactional activity, particularly on repairs.
- 4.10. Where practicable, tenants will be asked to review and scrutinise aspects of FPHA's delivery to tenants. For example, reviewing communications before they are sent or collaborating to produce content for FPHA marketing materials.
- 4.11. When engaging with tenants on specific projects or service reviews, this will be done so in a task and finish approach to maximise engagement, with those who may otherwise struggle to commit over long periods of time and by traditional means.

- 4.12. FPHA will publish an annual report for tenants providing information about FPHA's performance and identifying how residents have been involved in service delivery and providing feedback.

## 5. Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion

- 5.1. All requirements for tenancies are managed in accordance with this policy, which has been designed to provide assistance and support to vulnerable people. Any allegation that a resident has been treated unfairly on the basis that the tenant is a member of a protected group (defined by the Equalities Act 2010) will be investigated, with the board addressing any matters upheld from that investigation.
- 5.2. Due to the nature of the vulnerabilities of our tenants, it can be difficult for them to engage with FPHA by traditional or traditional means. Our referral process and thereafter, our Intensive Housing Management service allows us to understand the diverse needs of our tenants and what reasonable adjustments can be put in place to promote higher levels of involvement and engagement. Where this is not possible, FPHA is committed to understanding other data sets and wider performance that can provide valuable insight.
- 5.3. FPHA encourages the engagement of advocates who may also support the tenant, including family members/ friends, Care Providers and Social Workers. The FPHA Tenant Involvement Strategy details our approach further.
- 5.4. When tenants' views on service satisfaction are sought and measured, the outcome of the exercise will be segmented (so far as reasonable) to help determine whether protected groups are disenfranchised.
- 5.5. An Equality Impact Assessment has been undertaken for this Policy and can be found within Section 7.

## 6. Monitoring and Reporting

- 6.1. FPHA will publish an annual report for tenants that will be approved by the board.
- 6.2. The Board shall receive a report at least annually, reporting the methods that have been adopted to communicate with tenants and efforts to seek their involvement in FPHA services. The report shall address the positive impact this has had on services, and how tenant engagement might be improved in the future
- 6.3. Board reports that may have a significant impact on services delivered to tenants will summarise the views of residents in relation to the matter under consideration. Where there is a proposal to transfer tenants to another social landlord, there shall be a report to the board that addresses the outcome of a period of resident consultation.

## 7. Equality Impact Assessment

Protected characteristic		Explanation (if required)	Controls
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact on minority ethnic groups? What evidence (either	N		

presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact due to gender (including pregnancy and maternity)? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N		
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact due to disability? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	Y	<p>Tenants with learning disabilities and complex mental health conditions are less likely to be able to engage with traditional means of tenant involvement that are widely used across the social housing sector. The Regulator for Social Housing has also referenced these traditional activities such as scrutiny groups and panels as examples of tenant involvement.</p> <p>It is important that FPHA adapts and introduces activities that are suitable for our tenants' needs so as to drive engagement.</p>	<p>The Policy references that FPHA will embrace best practice when it comes to engagement with people with learning disabilities and other complex needs.</p> <p>FPHA will adapt all tenant involvement activities from communications to surveys and panels to be as inclusive as possible. This will include the production of communication in accessible formats including Easy Read.</p>
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact on people due to sexual orientation? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N		
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact on people due to their age? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N		
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact on people due to their religious belief (or none)? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N		
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact on people with dependants/caring responsibilities? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N		
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact on people	N		

due to them being transgender or transsexual? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?			
Is it likely that the policy could have a positive or negative impact on people due to their marital or civil partnership status? What evidence (either presumed or otherwise) do you have for this?	N		