

BUIDHEANN TIGHEADAS LOCH AILLSE AGUS AN
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LOCHALSH AND SKYE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Tenant Participation Policy

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| APPROVED BY: | Management Committee |
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TENANT PARTICIPATION POLICY

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TENANT PARTICIPATION POLICY

1. GENERAL

1.1 Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association (LSHA) is totally committed to tenant participation in its policy formulation and decision making processes.

1.2 Tenant participation is a two-way process which involves the sharing of information, ideas and power between tenants and the Association. In addition, where it is appropriate to do so, the Association will endeavour to include other groups, such as neighbouring residents, community councils or other partner organisations within the participation process to ensure that particular local circumstances are taken into account.

1.3 The expected benefits of active tenant participation include:

- Better service delivery and increased value for money.
- Help for the Management Committee and staff in decision making and priority setting.
- Personal development for tenants.
- Increased tenant satisfaction and better communication between staff and tenants.
- Better links between the Association and the community.

1.4 The Association will meet all legal requirements in respect of the statutory rights to tenant participation and will strive at all times to comply with best practice.

1.5 In the event that the Association is perceived to have failed in its duty to adhere to the requirements of this policy, such failures will be administered in terms of the Association's Complaints Policy and Procedures.

1.6 It is the responsibility of the Director to ensure that all Management Committee members, staff members and agents acting on behalf of the Association are fully aware of the policies and procedures relating to tenant participation and to arrange all necessary support to ensure the implementation of the policy.

2. AREAS FOR PARTICIPATION

2.1 In general, the Association will encourage participation in respect of all its functions and services which impact on our tenants, including:-

- Housing and Property Services Standards
- Policy issues
- Tenancy conditions and agreements
- Rent levels, increases and rent collection methods

- Planned maintenance and significant capital works
- Tenant Participation Policy

3. PARTICIPATION METHODS

3.1 In recognition of the challenges associated with establishing and maintaining effective contact with service users throughout our area of operations, the Association will adopt diverse and flexible methods of approach, ranging from the simple provision of information to more active types of participation. These methods will include:

- Office opening times tailored to the needs of tenants
- The temporary use of localised offices for particular events
- The publication of a comprehensive Tenants' Handbook
- The publication of regular newsletters and an Annual Report
- The publication of comprehensive information leaflets on all aspects of the Association's services
- The use of satisfaction surveys
- Attendance at public meetings, Community Council meetings and community planning events
- Use of press releases for local press/radio and inclusion of articles in partner organisation newsletters/publications
- Individual letters to tenants and home visits, as required
- The use of Information Technology to encourage contact by e-mail and interactive use of the Association's website
- The election or co-option of tenant members to the Association's Management Committee
- The encouragement, formation and support of Registered Tenants' Organisation or other tenant groupings.

4. PROMOTING EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION

- 4.1 The Association will actively encourage tenants to participate at the level which best suits their needs.
- 4.2 The Association will ensure that all participants receive the relevant information required to consider issues properly, ensuring that it is clear, concise and easy to understand and distributed in sufficient time to be considered timeously. Long documents will have a summary page included, as appropriate.
- 4.3 All consultations will involve named members of staff and, where appropriate, members of the Management Committee.

- 4.4 There will be equal access to information for all minority groups and those with disabilities and information will be made available in a variety of formats.
- 4.5 Where meetings are being held, they will be as local as possible to the participating group.
- 4.6 The Association will ensure that tenants or representatives receive relevant feedback on consultations, including an explanation if their views have not been accepted.

5. REGISTERED TENANTS ORGANISATIONS

- 5.1 The Association will actively encourage the formation of Registered Tenants Organisations and will provide assistance and resources as required.
- 5.2 The Association has published a Registered Tenants Organisation Policy and Procedures which clearly identifies the requirements that such organisations should meet.

6. RESOURCES AND TRAINING

- 6.1 The Association will ensure that sufficient funds to support its Tenant Participation Policy are set aside within its annual budget.
- 6.2 In support of Registered Tenants Organisations, funds will be set aside to ensure that such Organisations are able to work effectively and the Association will normally meet the following costs, where applicable:-
 - Set-up costs
 - Travel and subsistence expenses
 - Meeting costs
 - Stationery, photocopying, etc
 - Training costs
- 6.3 Training options for the Association's Management Committee, staff members and for tenants will be developed and may be held jointly with other community groups on common issues.

7. PERFORMANCE MONITORING

- 7.1 The complex nature of participation activities makes it difficult to evaluate and measure outcomes. It should be regarded as a continuous process which requires constant review to monitor its effectiveness.
- 7.2 However, the Association will monitor its effectiveness in implementing the policy by recording:-

- All consultation exercises with tenants and their outcomes
- The frequency of newsletters
- Attendance at external meetings by staff and committee members
- The outcome of satisfaction surveys
- Press features
- Usage of the Association's website
- Level of tenant representation on the Management Committee
- Number of tenant organisations and attendance at meetings

8. REVIEW

- 8.1 This policy was approved by the Management Committee on 9 July 2007 and will be reviewed by the Management Committee or Sub-Committee set up for that purpose no later than July 2010.
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