



hebridean housing  
partnership

# TENANT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY 2024-2028



# INTRODUCTION

Our Board have asked that we put tenants at the heart of everything we do. That means, you, as a tenant. This Tenant Participation Strategy sets out our aims for engaging with you and listening to your views, and how we propose to achieve these goals.

## AIMS

Our overall aim is to enable you to have real and meaningful opportunities to become involved in the decision-making process of the organisation.

### COMMUNICATION

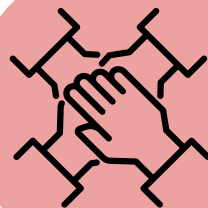
We will provide information that is clear and easy to understand, and is available in a variety of formats



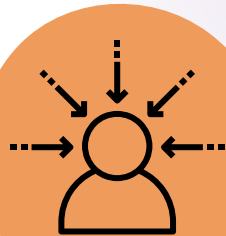
### WORKING TOGETHER

We will continue to build good working relationships with individual tenants, and tenant and resident groups.

These relationships require us to be flexible to meet local needs and circumstances



## TENANT ENGAGEMENT AIMS



We will regularly collect and use feedback from tenants and let them know how their views have been acted upon and listened to.

### TENANT FOCUSED



We will provide resources, support and training to assist tenants and residents groups to operate effectively, such as support to attend meetings and with digital access

### PROVIDE RESOURCES

# WHAT WE WILL DO

Over the period of this strategy, we will work with you to focus on these four aims to ensure that all engagement is meaningful.



## AIM 1

### COMMUNICATION

#### WHAT WE WILL DO

We will provide information to you in a way that best suits your needs. Doing this ensures that you have what you need to have a strong influence over service delivery.

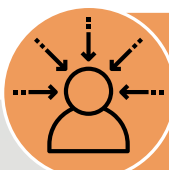
#### HOW WE WILL DO IT

Reviewing the way, we share information and using channels which are effective for you.

#### WHAT DO WE ALREADY DO?

We have listened to you when you have told us some of you prefer informal drop ins to communicate with us. Our Tenant Engagement Officer attends regular formal and informal resident and tenant groups that allows us to share information with you and listen to you. Our Housing Team also regularly attend drop-in partnership events.

Using our Tenant Report to make our performance as a landlord more visible to you



## **AIM 2**

### **TENANT FOCUSED**

#### **WHAT WE WILL DO**

We will ensure that the approaches we follow are developed in a way that is tenant focussed. We will provide feedback on a regular basis, demonstrating that we have heard you, and we understand you so we can continuously improve our services.

#### **HOW WE WILL DO IT**

Regularly collect and use feedback from you when have engaged with us.

Engage with you in a way that suits you and meets your individual needs.

Giving you time to absorb information and form views.

Using all the technology we have available to us to reach out to you to allow you to have direct contact with us.

#### **WHAT DO WE ALREADY DO?**

- We have worked with an inclusive outdoor adventure charity that has allowed us to target hard to reach tenants and engage with them on a level they find appropriate.
- We have used community drop ins and hubs such as the Community Fridge – Isle of Lewis to meet with tenants and gather feedback on various reports and consultations.



### **AIM 3**

## **WORKING TOGETHER**

### **WHAT WE WILL DO**

We will support you to develop confidence, abilities and skills and to encourage others to take part. We want to support local and community projects.

### **HOW WE WILL DO IT**

Ensuring our information is accessible and inclusive.

Developing and supporting a tenant-led scrutiny procedure to challenge our services and make recommendations for improvement.

### **WHAT DO WE ALREADY DO?**

We have developed our Online Tenant Portal, enabling you to view various details of your tenant, make requests and log repairs.



## **AIM 4**

### **PROVIDE RESOURCES**

#### **WHAT WE WILL DO**

We will provide opportunities for you to have an active and meaningful role in how we perform

#### **HOW WE WILL DO IT**

We will host informal groups, tenant panels, scrutiny groups and sounding boards.

Training events and information including joint training with staff and Board where appropriate.

Supporting local groups by making a Community Grant Fund available.

#### **WHAT DO WE ALREADY DO?**

We have funded various local projects that benefit tenants and the wider community. For example, we funded £3,303 towards Pals of Bayhead Playpark to install a mini golf course from the Community Grant Fund.

We have supported tenants with a community garden initiative, providing tools and seeds to tenants who wish to get involved.

# DEVELOPING THE STRATEGY

In reviewing this strategy we have gathered ideas from tenants and staff. Feedback showed that tenants were happy with the aims of the strategy and wanted us to build on our recent successes in tenant engagement.

Some of our consultations took place in informal beach and woodland settings during our trial of Equal Adventure. This project was a partnership with the Equal Adventure Team to train HHP staff to help tenants get outdoors in nature who otherwise would be unable to do so. This also helps us to engage with tenants in a more informal and inclusive environment.

## TENANT PRIORITIES AND ACTION PLAN

The Tenants we consulted with confirmed they are happy with our main aims and priorities.

Our aims at the start of this strategy have been used to develop an action plan for Tenant Participation in 2024-28, which can be found at Appendix 2 of this strategy.

The plan sets out the actions we will take, the aims that are being met with each action, the desired outcome of the action, the responsible HHP Officer and the target timeframe for the completion of the action.

## EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We will encourage equal opportunities and diversity, responding to the different needs and service requirements of people regardless of sex, race, colour, disability, age, nationality, marriage and civil partnership, ethnic origin, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity, sexual orientation or gender reassignment. We embrace the spirit of equalities legislation and regulatory frameworks, including the Equalities Act 2010 and the Housing (Scotland) Act 2014.

We embrace equal opportunities practice and are committed to:

- Removing barriers to participation.
- Proactively involving traditionally excluded groups.
- Ensuring registered tenant organisations (RTOs) promote equal opportunities and are open and accessible to all tenants through our criteria for registration.
- Ensuring through support and encouragement that equal opportunities are at the centre of all our activities.

We will examine whether a more targeted approach is required to involve 'hard to reach' groups.

We will collect information directly and seek feedback from tenant and community and representative groups on the need to establish specific mechanisms for these groups.

# RESOURCES AND SUPPORT

Tenant Participation has to be properly resourced and supported if it is to be successful. We will seek to provide resources including financial, physical and staff assistance. We now have a Tenant Engagement Officer in post, dedicated to Tenant Engagement and Participation.

The budget for tenant participation will be reviewed annually. A budget will be allocated for Tenant Participation to fund agreed activities such as:

|                        |                                   |                                                       |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| HOMeward<br>NEWSLETTER | ANNUAL GRANTS TO<br>TENANT GROUPS | TENANT-LED<br>INSPECTIONS                             |
| TENANT<br>EVENTS       | TENANT<br>SATISFACTION<br>SURVEY  | CONSULTATIONS<br>WITH RTO'S AND<br>INDIVIDUAL TENANTS |

To support and encourage the development of tenant participation, you have access to resources, which include:

|                                |                                                                 |                                                                                   |                                                                                           |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4 TENANT SEATS ON<br>OUR BOARD | TENANTS AND<br>RESIDENTS GROUP<br>GRANTS                        | OPPORTUNITIES TO<br>ATTEND JOINT<br>DEVELOPMENT EVENTS                            | OPPORTUNITIES TO<br>ATTEND LOCAL AND<br>NATIONAL<br>CONFERENCES                           |
| HHP MEMBERSHIP                 | SUPPORT OF HHP STAFF<br>INCLUDING<br>ATTENDANCE AT<br>MEETINGS* | GUIDANCE AND<br>SUPPORT FOR GROUPS<br>TO BECOME RTO'S IF<br>THEY WISH THIS OPTION | TRAINING EVENTS AND<br>INFORMATION<br>INCLUDING JOINT<br>TRAINING WITH STAFF<br>AND BOARD |

\* where appropriate

## TENANT AND RESIDENT GROUPS

Registered Tenants' Organisations, Tenants and Residents Associations are groups of people representing tenants and residents living in an area or street. Their aim is to put forward views and concerns about their housing, community and local areas to us, so they can take part in the decision-making processes.

Registered Tenant Organisations (RTOs) were introduced by the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and give important rights to groups who register with their landlord. RTOs are independent organisations set up primarily to represent tenants' housing and related interests. Registration gives groups a recognised role in the decision-making process, and we will help guide any groups through the registration process.

## We currently support two Registered Tenants' Organisations

### Cearns Community Association

Working within the Cearns area. They are a long standing, established association that have a number of community-based projects. They have developed a local improvement plan and are responsible for delivering a number of projects to support social, health, welfare and economic improvements for the local community.



### Western Isles Housing Association Community Forum

An umbrella group for tenant and resident groups in the Western Isles. We consult with them on an annual and ongoing basis on tenant participation issues. We financially support the Forum, which allows them to be independent, proactive and creative in the development of tenant participation and Tenant Groups.



Groups receiving financial support from us will be monitored for their effectiveness.

**You can also get involved, as an individual or a group, in other ways that do not require registration:**

**Village Voice** is where a tenant(s) volunteers to become a link between the tenants in a specific area, where there is no tenant/residents group and HHP. They will be able to raise any relevant concerns with HHP and/or the Tenants forum. We will provide Village Voices with up-to-date information, which may affect their community and receive feedback.

**Groups who do not wish to register** – Not all tenant groups will wish to register. If this is the case, individuals still have a right to be consulted. We will still support and encourage such groups and provide training, information and other help as appropriate.

## MEMBERSHIP & HHP BOARD

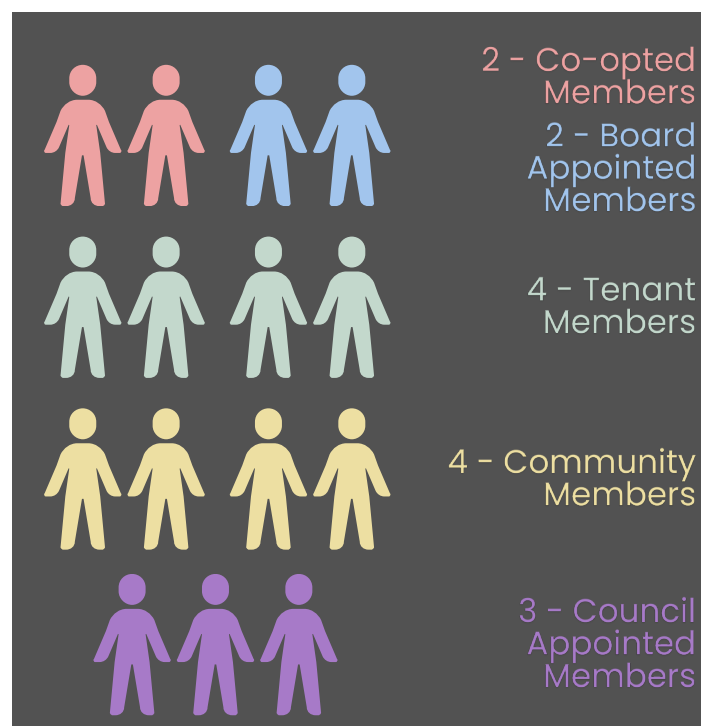
We encourage tenants and residents to become members of the Partnership. This entitles members to attend the Annual General Meeting, and any other meetings of a general interest, which could occur during the course of the year.

Our members have the opportunity to join the Board; and have the responsibility of appointing (or re-appointing) the Board of Management, a third of which retire annually as provided for by the Rules of the Partnership.

The Board is responsible for determining the strategies and policies of the Partnership and for monitoring their implementation and carrying out reviews. Day-to-day responsibility for implementing the policies and operating the Partnership will be delegated to the staff employed by the Board.

Board Members represent the best interests of Hebridean Housing Partnership and its tenants.

### HOW THE BOARD IS MADE UP



# OPPORTUNITIES TO GET INVOLVED

We recognise that not everyone wants to get involved through formal means. We will work to develop a menu of traditional and digitally inclusive options to enable you to get involved in ways that suit you.

These opportunities can include, but are not limited to:



Our Business Plan delivery Plan also includes a target to review our options for a Decision Making – Tenant Panel/Tenant Board. You could be involved in reviewing relevant items going to our Board ahead of time. This ensures that our Board would have a representation of your views when making decisions.

## TRAINING

We will support you to access information, training and development support, particularly where you have identified something you need to help you engage with tenant groups or to form a new group.

Training needs will be agreed with individual groups and tenants. Joint training sessions for staff and tenants and Board members and tenants will be held where appropriate to reinforce the message that tenants are equal partners. This will also help to strengthen relations between tenant representatives and staff.

Training can be delivered in different ways as appropriate. This may be 'in-house' or may involve external trainers as appropriate.

# CONSULTATION AND FEEDBACK

In carrying out consultation, we will ensure that we will use a variety of consultation approaches; for example:

- **Homeward**
- **Leaflets/Posters**
- **Public Meetings & Events**
- **Home Visits**
- **Focus Groups**
- **Questionnaires and Surveys**
- **Text & Whatsapp Messages**
- **HHP Webiste**



The method of consultation will depend on the scale and significance of the project, we will take into account the views of tenant organisations on the consultation methods used.

Detailed information will be provided to you and tenants groups on any proposals we are consulting on, including:

- How and when the final decision will be taken
- How the proposal will affect you
- How and within what timescales you can make your views known to us
- the contact staff member dealing with the consultation

We carry out large scale surveys to gain views on the services we provide e.g. our tenant satisfaction survey.

# MONITORING AND REVIEW OF STRATEGY

The Tenant Participation Strategy and annual action plan is a working document and will be subject to ongoing monitoring and review to ensure objectives and targets are met. Progress reports on the implementation of the strategy will be presented annually to our Board. Progress will also be reported to you and tenant groups at tenant meetings, the Homeward newsletter and on the website.

We will also ensure that when we are providing feedback on our progress we will do so in plain English that is easy to understand and free of jargon. Where possible we will present information using graphs, charts and other visual signposting techniques to make it more easily understood. We will provide feedback in other formats on request.

## OTHER FORMATS

We will make the strategy available in other formats/languages on request. Please contact us on 0300 123 0773 for further information or copies.

## GETTING IN TOUCH

If you are interested in any of the opportunities listed in this Strategy you can speak to your Housing Officer or our Tenant Engagement Officer

You can also get in touch with us at:

Hebridean Housing Partnership

Creed Court

Gleann Seileach Business Park

Willowglen Road

Stornoway

HS1 2QP

Or email us at [tenantengagement@hebrideanhousing.co.uk](mailto:tenantengagement@hebrideanhousing.co.uk)

# INTERPRETATIONS & ABBREVIATIONS

The following interpretation and abbreviations are used in this policy:

| WORD                                                                                                          | INTERPRETATION                                       |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| HHP or Partnership                                                                                            | Hebridean Housing Partnership                        |
| Board                                                                                                         | Means the Board of the Hebridean Housing Partnership |
| Board Members                                                                                                 | All Members of the Board including co-opted Members  |
| The Forum                                                                                                     | Western Isles Housing Association Community Forum    |
| All references to the masculine gender in this policy shall read as equally applicable to the feminine gender |                                                      |



HHP is a registered society under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, Registered Number: 2644R(S), Registered Office: Creed Court, Gleann Seileach Business Park, Willowglen Road, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis HS1 2QP. It is a charity registered in Scotland, Charity Number: SCO35767, registered as Registered Social Landlord with the Scottish Housing Regulator, Registration Number:359 and registered as a Property Factor, Registration Number PF000183

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