

RESIDENT ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

2022 - 2025




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Introduction

This strategy sets out how Arches Housing will continue to put residents at the heart of everything we do building on our tradition of engaging with our residents with an emphasis on involving residents in the improvement and scrutiny of services which affect them.

This strategy demonstrates how Arches Housing will engage with its residents to set the strategic direction of the business as well as providing opportunities to influence and shape high quality services and value for money for residents.



Vision

The focus of this strategy is to demonstrate to all residents how they can become involved and influence and scrutinise the delivery of services and on issues which affect them. We have listened to what residents have told us about how they wish to engage and potential barriers and our vision is to showcase the range of opportunities to get involved and our commitment to removing barriers.

We will also ensure residents are provided with clear and honest communication about what matters to them, can hold Arches to account and there are ways to feedback and get involved to suit the diverse needs and preferences of the residents we serve.

Aims of the strategy

Involving Residents

To set out our approach to resident engagement.

Resident Influence

To demonstrate why meaningful resident engagement is important to Arches Housing and at the heart of strategic decision making, and set out the measures in place to ensure residents influence and shape service delivery and issues which affect them.

Exceed Requirements

To ensure Arches Housing meets the regulatory requirements as set out by the Regulator of Social Housing, and The charter for social housing residents: social housing white paper 2020.

Engagement Goals

To set out expected outcomes which we believe to be success factors for delivery of this strategy.

Monitor Management

To set out how delivery of the strategy will be governed.



Our approach

Our approach to resident engagement is built on five principles which will enable Arches to ensure meaningful resident engagement and achieve the aims of this strategy:

We define resident engagement as: “**Involving residents in order to influence the design, delivery and scrutiny of services as well as how the organisation is governed**”.

For the purpose of this strategy the term “resident” includes all Arches residents and customers, which at the time of writing is made up of: **Social Housing Tenants, Shared Ownership Leaseholders, Rent to Homebuy Tenants and Right to Buy Leaseholders.**

1. Ensuring residents can **influence and be involved** in decisions and services which affect them.
2. Arches will **provide opportunities** so that residents can hold Arches to account for decisions that affect their homes and services delivered.
3. The views and needs of our residents are at **the heart of strategic decision making**.
4. Ensuring that all residents are given equal opportunity to be involved and we strive for **representation from a diverse range of individuals and backgrounds**.
5. We **provide residents with information** which is relevant to issues that are important to them, and to hold us to account.

How we will deliver

To enable delivery of this strategy in line with the **four principles** we will strive to achieve:



Representation

We will proactively aim for fair representation of our residents and the communities we operate in to gain a variety of voices, backgrounds and lived experience which will influence how we communicate with as well as recruit and support residents who wish to be involved.

Inclusivity

In addition to engaging with residents from a wide range of backgrounds we need to be able to accommodate their differing needs and preferences. This is factored in to the menu of involvement opportunities as we believe choice and flexibility is key. We acknowledge that there will be residents who want to proactively engage with the policies of Arches, and others who simply want to know that we are thinking of them in the way we implement change and we are keeping them informed.

Resources and support

We will provide training opportunities and offer practical support for those residents where this will enable them to become involved in the opportunities available. This will include building on our relationship with Tpas, local training and voluntary organisations.

Partnership approach

We recognise that due to our size, capacity and footprint that at times we will need to work with partners. We will look to strengthen our links with established community groups and projects and look at how these can be utilised to involve and inform our residents.



Ways to get involved

Ensuring Impact

We support the development of any residents, or people with lived experience of living or working in our neighbourhoods who may wish to become a member of the board subject to vacancies being available and successful recruitment. This allows for the voice of lived experience at a strategic level for residents who have the necessary skills and experience to be a board member to play a direct part in setting the strategic direction of the association.

Board membership

Where there is a vacancy on the board of management we would welcome applications from Arches residents, subject to an appropriate skills match, as we recognise that this is one of many ways for residents' perspectives to be heard and considered when strategic decisions are made affecting residents' homes and neighbourhoods.

Neighbourhood Network

A group of residents, which sits outside the formal governance structure, with space for a representative from each neighbourhood who are asked to provide feedback on decisions that the board will consider that directly affect residents. The group will meet when required, but at least twice a year with staff and a board member.

Informing

Being informed of news of the association and issues which are relevant to and affect residents in a timely manner and accessible formats. Including, our responsibilities as a landlord, information on performance and value for money, and how to raise issues, provide feedback or make a complaint.

Resident Newsletter

We will continue to communicate to residents through the residents' newsletter which will be sent to our residents' homes and be available on our website so that it can be viewed in accessible formats.

Annual Report

We will inform residents of important information in the Customer Annual Report, which will include how we have performed against our Together with Tenants commitments.

Health and Safety Information

We will publish legally required information relating to fire, compliance and building safety.

Neighbourhood Plans

We will develop and publish neighbourhood plans for each neighbourhood which we will review on an annual basis based on data Arches holds and resident feedback and insight.

Website and Social Media

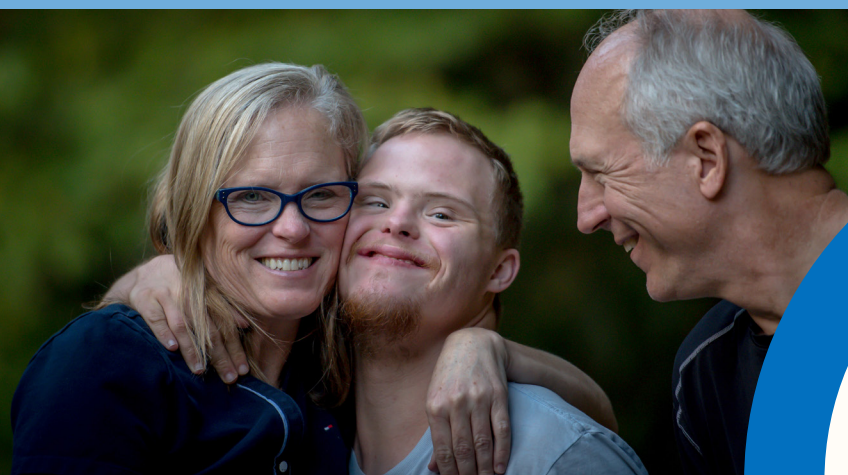
We will continue to utilise our website and social media to communicate with residents'.

Information in Office

We will continue to use our Office as a space to share relevant information for residents'.

Corporate Plan

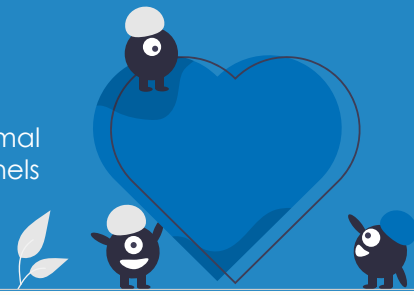
We will publish to ensure residents have access to the Arches Corporate Plan.



Ways to get involved

Engaging

Influencing, Improving and supporting service delivery through both formal and informal engagement opportunities. This ranges from formal complaints as well as scrutiny panels which report directly to the board of management to resident feedback and insight gained from engaging with residents on a daily basis.



Resident Scrutiny Groups

Arches will establish Resident Scrutiny Groups which will be directly linked to the governance framework of the business. A Resident Scrutiny Group can be directly commissioned by the Board and the Neighbourhood Network to undertake reviews of service areas and make recommendations for improvement by way of report.

Resident feedback and Insight

We engage with our residents on a daily basis and this provides essential feedback and insight which may be provided outside of a formal consultation or group. We recognise that this informal feedback provides valuable insight in to our residents lived experience and we are committed to improving how we capture and use this insight.

Community Fun Days and Community Action Days

We will hold and facilitate community days with a focus on community cohesion and to promote pride in communities. This will be led by the Housing Operations Team and informed by feedback from residents', Arches data and information from community partners such as the police, local authority and community groups.



Estate Walkabouts

We will conduct published quarterly neighbourhood walkabouts to offer residents the opportunity to speak to us about issues that affect their neighbourhoods to drive improvements and influence service delivery.

Supported Housing Forums

We will commit to engaging with our supported housing residents at least twice a year, to enable them to provide feedback on key issues and service delivery in their schemes.

Communal Living – Resident Safety Group

We will recruit for and conduct Quarterly meetings to discuss, address and provide feedback on building and fire safety in blocks with internal communal spaces.

Consulting

Being consulted and taking in to account the lived experience and diverse backgrounds of our residents as individuals and as a collective to influence and inform on services and decisions which significantly affect our residents'.

Customer Satisfaction

Arches will continue to monitor satisfaction with services on a monthly basis. We will include additional capacity in the monthly survey to enable us to target specific issues for residents to feedback on.

Surveys and Focus Groups

Residents will be invited to attend focus groups or take part in surveys on specific issues or areas. This recruitment will be targeted based on residents lived experience and interaction with services, for example where we are reviewing a particular service we may focus on residents who have recently received or interacted with the service area.

Service Testing

Arches will seek to recruit and train residents to undertake testing and mystery shopping of our services.

Targeted Feedback

We will use the customer satisfaction mechanism to enable us to consult with residents and obtain targeted feedback on specific issues. This will include feedback on how residents feel we have delivered on our Together with Tenants commitments, policy and strategy reviews and to inform and influence our Neighbourhood Plans.

E-Group

We will hold contact information on residents who have indicated that they are interested in being involved by way of electronic communication only. We will use this mechanism to consult on publications such as policy and strategy documents as well as newsletter content.

Together with tenants



Together with Tenants is a sector-wide initiative led by the National Housing Federation (NHF) focused on strengthening the relationship between residents and housing associations. The Charter is driving a culture change within the sector which aligns with Arches Housing's aims with a focus on improved relationships with our residents, transparency, respect and collaboration, and this Charter was developed with the Charter commitments at its core.

As an adopter of the Together with Tenants charter ("the Charter") Arches Housing has made six commitments:

Relationships

Housing associations will treat all residents with respect in all of their interactions. Relationships between residents and housing associations will be based on openness, honesty and transparency.

Communication

Residents will receive clear, accessible and timely information from their housing association on the issues that matter to them, including important information about their homes and local community, how the organisation is working to address problems, how the organisation is run, and information about performance on key issues.

Quality

Residents can expect their homes to be good quality, well maintained, safe and well managed.

Voice and influence

Housing associations will seek and value the views of residents, and will use this information to inform decisions. Every individual resident will feel listened to by their housing association on the issues that matter to them and can speak without fear.

Accountability

Collectively, residents will work in partnership with their housing association to independently scrutinise and hold their housing provider to account for the decisions that affect the quality of their homes and services.

When things go wrong

Housing associations will seek and value the views of residents, and will use this information to inform decisions. Every individual resident will feel listened to by their housing association on the issues that matter to them and can speak without fear.



Arches Housing



Health and Safety

The safety of our residents in their home is of critical importance to us and we understand that this is the most important concern for many residents. We recognise our responsibilities as a housing provider in relation to building and compliance safety and have existing measures in place to share information with residents which we will build on.

The opportunities to engage with and the information we share with residents about building and fire safety will be in line with the requirements set out in the new Building Safety and Fire Safety Bills and the spirit of the Housing White Paper which call for us to communicate with residents and ensure strong relationships when it comes to fire and building safety.

We are committed to keeping residents informed, ensuring there is clear and accessible information about fire and building safety available. We will also ensure that residents are given opportunities to share concerns and influence policies in this area, and that when concerns are raised they are listened to and followed up on.

Governance of the strategy

The outcome of this strategy will be monitored by Arches board, and this will include an annual self-assessment of compliance with the regulatory standard and an annual resident engagement report focussing on delivery. Residents will be informed of progress of this strategy in the Annual Report.

Arches board of management will consider this strategy to be successfully delivered when:

1. Annual customer satisfaction continues to be captured in real time on a monthly basis, and increased satisfaction with services provided by Arches as a housing provider.
2. Ongoing adherence to the Regulatory Standards are achieved.

Representation

Arches Housing celebrates diversity and appreciates the life experience, skills and insights of others. Recognising that not all residents' will want to engage with Arches Housing in the same way and on the same matters has fed in to the ways in which residents can be involved ensuring there are opportunities to suit various needs and interests. We will adopt a hybrid approach to resident engagement utilising technology whilst retaining the best from more traditional and in person forms of communication which we know many of our residents appreciate. We acknowledge that our residents have busy lives, pressures and commitments and will strive to be flexible around the times, format and locations engagement activities to ensure we able to obtain representation of views which reflects our resident base.

Barriers to entry

We strive to be responsive to the needs of the individuals and communities we serve and tailoring are services to give all residents fair and equal access to opportunities for involvement and using resources, where it is necessary and reasonable, to remove identified barriers. We will proactively seek to ensure that resident groups and feedback from consultations reflect our residents' and communities.

3. Adoption of the Together with Tenants Charter and adherence with commitments achieved annually.
4. Conduct scrutiny panel of a minimum of two service areas per year as commissioned by the board of management.
5. Social media and website is being actively used to consult and inform residents.
6. A newsletter is produced a minimum of 3 times each year.
7. Neighbourhood plans are in place for each neighbourhood informed by data and, resident feedback and insight.
8. We engage with a broad range of residents which is representative of our customer base who can influence how services are delivered, and this can be demonstrated and evidenced.
9. We have clear pathways and structures in place for how residents can be involved and engage with Arches.
10. We encourage the development of residents who wish to be involved and engage with Arches.



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This is a three-year strategy, and the effectiveness of this strategy will be measured and reviewed annually by the Director of Operations and progress against delivery will be reported to the Arches Board of Management annually and communicated with residents in our Annual Report.



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