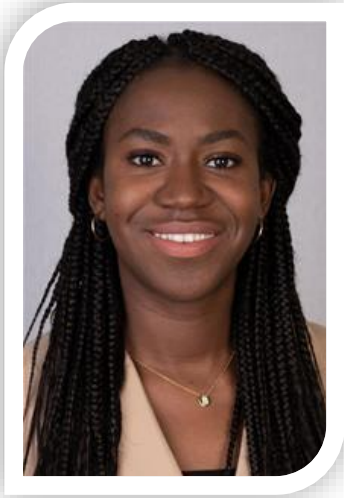




Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy

Housing Management Service 2024 – 2028

Foreword



I'm excited to share our new Tenant & Leaseholder Engagement Strategy. This plan has six promises about how we will listen to the people living in Council homes. Thank you to all the Tenants & Leaseholders who helped make this strategy.

Over the next four years, we will make sure to respect what Tenants & Leaseholders think and feel. In Brent, we support Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion, so this strategy also promises to fight against any unfair treatment of people living in Social Housing.

Listening to Tenants & Leaseholders is very important to help make our homes and communities great places to live.

Councillor Promise Knight
Cabinet Member for Housing, Homelessness & Renters Security

Introduction

Every person who rents or owns a home from the Council is important and should have a say in how their home is managed. This document explains how the Council will listen to what you think about living in your home and make changes based on your feedback.

By talking to you and others, the Council will improve services like fixing your home, keeping shared spaces clean, managing your lease, collecting rent, and making sure you are safe.

This document doesn't talk about every service the Council provides, but any useful feedback will always be shared with the right people.

Events like the fire at Grenfell Tower show that listening to you is the only way we can be a good landlord. Over the next four years, we will work to rebuild our relationship with you, so you feel heard. We will also show you how your feedback has been used to make decisions.

We will be honest and open with information and improve how we communicate with you. This document supports the Council's plan to help everyone in Brent move forward together.

Background Information

The Charter for Social Housing Residents

The government wrote '[The Charter for Social Housing Residents](#)' after the Grenfell Tower fire. It says how Councils and Housing Associations should:

- Make you feel safe in your home.
- Provide you with information about your landlord.
- Reply to complaints quickly and fairly.
- Treat you with respect and dignity.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures

The UK Government now measures how well Councils and Housing Associations are doing by asking for your feedback through surveys about:

- Repairs
- Maintenance
- Safety
- Anti-social behaviour
- Cleaning
- Respect
- Having a say
- Complaints

The government will compare these results to see who is doing well and who is not. Starting in June 2024, these surveys will be done every year.

The Social Housing Regulation Act (2023)

This new law aims to make big changes for people living in social housing by ensuring better regulation and improving the quality of homes and services. It includes:

- Making sure all social housing managers have proper qualifications.
- Allowing the Regulator to monitor landlords more closely.
- 'Awaab's Law' which requires landlords to fix reported health and safety issues quickly.
- Inspecting landlords to see if they are meeting standards.
- Removing limits on fines for landlords who don't meet standards.

The Building Safety Act (2022)

This law was made after the Grenfell Tower tragedy to fix problems in building safety. It includes:

- A new Building Safety Regulator (BSR) to work with residents in high-rise buildings.
- Landlords must create a safety engagement strategy for building safety.

- Landlords must provide safety information and respond to complaints about building safety.

The Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman Service helps with complaints about Registered Social Landlords. They provide support, investigate unresolved complaints, and offer insights to improve services. They also give advice on handling complaints well and create reports on common issues like noise and damp.

Addressing Stigma in Social Housing

There is often a stigma around social housing, worsened by negative media. This stigma can sometimes be found within housing organisations themselves. Reports have shown that this stigma can lead to serious issues, such as health and safety risks being ignored. This strategy commits to stopping this.

Our Vision for Housing Management in Brent Council

We want tenants and leaseholders to live in safe and well-maintained homes with high satisfaction.

A New Menu of Involvement

We want to hear from you more often through different activities, whether it's a quick survey or regular meetings. We aim to make it easy for you to give feedback, scrutinize our performance, and be involved in decision-making.

If you want to be involved, you or an advocate can contact us by:

- Email - HousingFeedback@brent.gov.uk
- Telephone – 020 8937 1234 (ask to speak with a Community Development and Engagement Officer)
- Through your housing officer

Accessible by Default

We commit to making our services accessible to everyone. Over the next four years, we will work with you to identify needed adjustments and ensure support is available.

If you need any adjustments so you can get involved in engagement activities, tell us.

Our Commitments

1. Commitment One: We have a culture that respects engagement & make changes using your feedback.

How we will do this:

- We will offer various ways for you to get involved and share feedback.
- Achieve the National Engagement Standard set by the tenant engagement support organisation, TPAS.
- Make sure our contractors (repairs) also offer ways you can get involved.
- We will train all new housing staff on engagement and refresh this training annually.
- We will establish a tenant and leaseholder committee to hold the Council accountable.

2. Commitment 2 – We will learn from your feedback.

How we will do this:

- We will regularly review feedback and complaints to spot areas for improvement.
- Share learning with housing staff and change our practice using this information.
- Host events each year so you can meet with housing staff and report any issues.
- We will use data to identify neighbourhood priorities and engage with specific estates to understand issues.

3. Commitment 3 – We will challenge stigma and make sure you feel included.

How we will do this:

- We will work with you to address any stigma and raise awareness among staff and contractors.
- We will ensure communication is respectful and inclusive.
- Offer training to all housing staff on challenging stigma and stereotypes about people who live in social housing.
- Make community spaces places you feel safe no matter your age, gender, sexuality, religion, ability, race & ethnicity.

4. Commitment 4 – We will make sure you influence decisions about the service we provide.

How we will do this:

- We will involve you in decision-making at both the neighbourhood and strategic levels.

- We will compensate you for your time and ensure you are part of assessing bidders and renewing contracts.
- We will work with you if you live in a high-rise block, so you feel safe and have a say on any work we need to carry out.
- Make sure your housing officer regularly inspects your block or estate and invites you and your neighbours to join them.
- Provide you with regular updates on changes to our service and how your feedback has been used.

5. Commitment 5 - We will be transparent with you and provide information so you can challenge us.

How we will do this:

- We will regularly share information with you using various channels about our performance.
- We will share the results of any consultation or engagement activity we carry out.
- We will meet with Resident Association representatives every two months (minimum) and present how we have delivered this strategy.
- We will support you in scrutinizing services and presenting findings to senior managers.

6. Commitment 6 – We will work with you to make a positive contribution to where you live.

How we will do this:

- We will promote opportunities for you to get involved in community activities.
- We will review community spaces to ensure they are used effectively and safely.
- Help you and your neighbours to apply for funding to run events and activities on your estate or in your community.
- Work with you and our partners like the Police on problems like anti-social behaviour and crime.

By working together, we aim to create a better living environment for everyone.