

WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



Tenant Engagement Strategy 2023 – 2026

www.bolsover.gov.uk

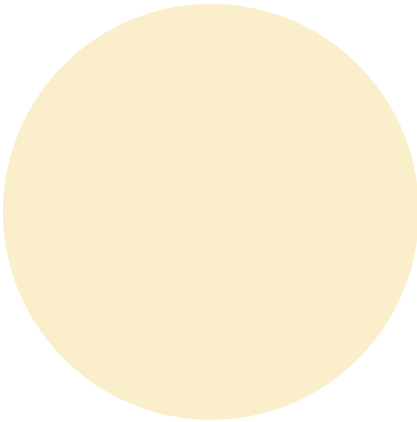
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Foreward



Victoria Dawson

This strategy sets out the Councils approach to Tenancy Engagement. We recognise that communication is key and by listening to tenant's we can ensure we are meeting their needs and we can improve our services as a result. We want to increase tenant involvement and ensure we offer a variety of opportunities that are interesting, accessible to all and takes into account different life styles and availability to participate. We are also looking at ways in which we can communicate with our tenants in a more meaningful and effective way.



Ian Barber

At Dragonfly as with housing repairs, our tenants remain at the heart of everything we do. We want to ensure they both inform and shape our service through their review and challenge. To ensure we support them to achieve this we aim to facilitate their involvement, education and knowlege.

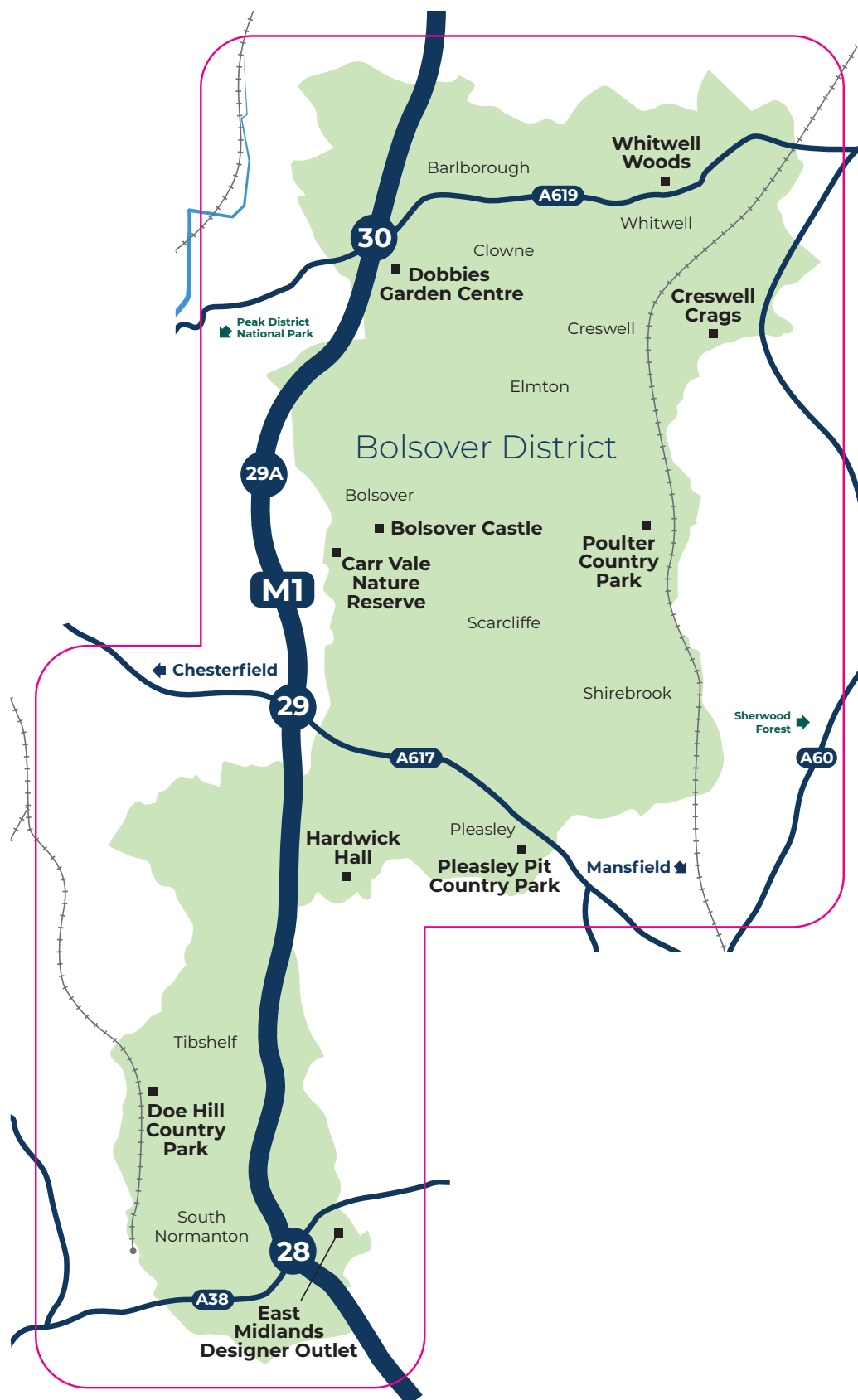


Councillor Sandra Peake

Bolsover District Council has approximately 5000 council properties and we strive to provide safe and secure homes to our tenants. we have worked with tenants for a number of years and made positive changes as a result of their feedback. This strategy is key to expanding tenant involvement. This has been devised with tenants, for tenants, and I am looking forward to working with tenants to deliver the objectives set out in this strategy.



Map of Bolsover District





Introduction

Our Vision – “making a difference to people’s lives by providing homes to be proud of ”

We recognise the benefit of involving tenants in the management of their homes and are committed to ensuring that they have the opportunity of becoming involved in housing management matters, to the extent that they choose.

To further this commitment and intent, we have produced this Tenant Engagement Strategy in partnership with tenants who have volunteered

already, councillors and officers, to promote and encourage the continuing, and further involvement of our tenants.

This Strategy sets out the Councils overall approach to tenant engagement outlining opportunities for tenants to be engaged in developing, shaping and monitoring our services and policies.

Our Vision is clear



Great Communities



Excellent Services



Inspiring People



District Profile

The Bolsover District Council area is predominately rural, with four market towns of South Normanton, Shirebrook, Clowne and Bolsover.

The Council owns 4,921 homes plus a further 125 that are occupied by leaseholders. ?? of the housing stock is designated for older persons.

FLATS

TOTAL 682

4 X studio
109 x 1 bed
569 x 2 bed

HOUSES

TOTAL 2,093

4 x 1 bed
489 x 2 bed
1,558 x 3 bed
42 x 4 bed

BUNGALOWS

TOTAL 1,948

321 x 1 bed
1,608 x 2 bed
19 x 3 bed

SHELTERED

TOTAL 198

75 x studio
113 x 1 bed
5 x 2 bed
5 x 3 bed



Why do we need a Tenant Engagement Strategy?

“The purpose of this Strategy is to set out the Council’s plans for increasing involvement and ensure our service meet the needs of our tenants”

We aim to create and promote a framework which encourages tenants and leaseholders to be actively involved in shaping, improving and scrutinising the housing service.

This strategy ensures that there are various involvement opportunities for all tenants and leaseholders, to become involved at the level they wish.

The Charter for Social Housing Residents
Social Housing White Paper

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

ing a new Affordable Homes
ee Scheme.

ing local authorities to take advantage of
val of the borrowing cap to build more
omes.

s in this White Paper apply to social
lords and residents in England. Separate
s apply in the devolved administrations of
les and Northern Ireland.

ed in this White Paper:

This White Paper considers the issues
ents of social housing, including those
holders and shared owners. We have
hout to “residents” to include all those
ousing, except where an issue is only
se who are renting from a social housing
ich case we refer to “tenants”.

enerally throughout this White Paper
1 “landlord” to cover anyone who rents
people. It also covers social landlords of
d shared owners.

Regulator of Social Housing and its
y to tenants.⁴

ssary of terms used at the end of this

provide safety,
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our Housing Residents – Social Housing White Paper 13



What is Tenant Engagement?

“Tenant engagement is about making sure tenants and leaseholders are at the heart of everything we do, it is a two way process of communication”

Tenant engagement is about tenants taking part in the decision making process, where possible and practicable, and influencing decisions about your homes, the services you receive and the areas where you live.

By working together, you are able to provide us with a valuable source of feedback which will help us continually improve our services and increase satisfaction levels.

“Engagement is an overall term used to describe tenant involvement, at any level”



Information – is the basis of good communication and strengthening council-tenant relationships. We will provide clear and accurate information relating to when and how decisions affecting services and future policies are made.



Consultation – is seeking tenants views and ideas, taking account of those views and providing feedback. We will provide opportunities for tenants to take part, and for your views to be heard and acted upon. We will make it clear, at the start of the process, what can and cannot be changed.

Participation is where tenants actively engage in decision making, from planning through to implementation. It is the most interactive form of engagement and allows tenants to have a greater influence over decision making and service delivery.



Our aims, objectives and priorities

The Vision

“To provide a range of ways for tenants to be involved in the work of the Councils Housing Department, to work in partnership to drive continuous improvement and ensuring the service meets the needs of our tenants.”



Customers at Heart



Homes for the Future



Places to be Proud of

Strategic Objectives

Bolsover District Council recognises that tenant engagement can lead to real positive outcomes for residents, communities and the council as landlord. We believe that tenant engagement should be at the heart of everything we do and this strategy seeks to offer a range of options to support and enhance tenants to be actively involved.

We will do this through a number of strategic objectives;

1. Make tenants and leaseholder engagement an integral part of our service, ensure our officers and contractors understand this is a shared responsibility.
2. Strengthen and develop communication methods ensuring tenants are offered a number of different ways to get involved and is accessible to all.
3. To be more accountable for the services we deliver by empowering our residents to challenge us and to get involved in setting priorities.
4. Use customer feedback to improve our housing services, and keep tenants informed about how their contributions have been used to drive continuous improvement.



Priorities

In order to meet these strategic objectives, the following priorities were agreed with the Tenant Participation Review and Development Group.

Objective 1 - Make tenants and leaseholder engagement an integral part of our service, ensure our officers and contractors understand this is a shared responsibility.

- Work alongside tenants to publish and promote the Tenant Engagement Strategy.
- Regularly monitor the strategy, to ensure it continues to meet its objectives.
- Introduce a framework which encourages tenants to have their say, offering greater levels of influence on services and policies.
- Ensure that internal procedures for involving tenants in decision making are fit for purpose, for example, any decisions taken demonstrate the level of tenant involvement in the process leading to the decision made.

Objective 2 - Strengthen and develop communication methods ensuring tenants are offered a number of different ways to get involved and is accessible to all

- Ensure our menu of involvement is inclusive and allows tenants with specific needs to take part and promote equality and diversity throughout the housing service .
- Offer a range of options for engagement both traditional and technology based.

Objective 3 - To be more accountable for the services we deliver by empowering our residents to challenge us and to get involved in setting priorities

- Produce an annual report providing an overview of the last 12 months.
- Empower tenants to hold us to account by providing appropriate information, training support and feedback.
- Publish and promote our service standards and ensure tenants know how to challenge them.
- Develop and support a resident led scrutiny process that will challenge the housing service and make recommendations for improvements.

Objective 4 - Use customer feedback to improve our housing services, and keep tenants informed about how their contributions have been used to drive for continuous improvement.

- Publish and promote our tenants newsletter and encourage tenants to become actively involved with its production.
- Produce a You said we did article highlighting where customer feedback has made a difference to how we deliver services.
- Develop a range of ways to gather feedback, surveys, mystery shoppers, consultations.



Why get involved?

“As a tenant or leaseholder of Bolsover District Council you have first-hand experience of our services”



“Ashbourne court has been refurbished to a very high standard, the new accommodation is very well integrated and will provide quality homes for additional residents, plus a lot of thought has gone into providing mobility scooter storage for those who are less mobile.”

“The Woodlands is a lovely development, the properties are finished to a very high standard with up to the minute building technology providing very efficient homes, also it was nice to see each property has dedicated parking and are futureproofed with the addition of electric car charging points.”

Steven Bramley, tenant from Bolsover

By getting involved and having your say about what you think works well, or where you think we can improve, we are able to improve our housing services for everyone.

Being involved will give you the chance to:

Be active in shaping our services

Make your area a better place to live

Give views on the services you receive

Help us better understand the needs of tenants and leaseholders

Be part of a group to review and improve services

Receive relevant training





How can you become involved?

“We recognise that people want to give their views or be involved in different ways”

We are committed to ensuring that tenants and leaseholders are at the heart of our service delivery. This is an opportunity for you to be able to take part in the decision making process and influencing decisions about your home, the services you receive and the area in which you live.

We want to encourage as many tenants and leaseholders as possible to have their say, become involved and participate in the housing service.

Below are a number of opportunities to become involved. It allows you decide to the extent of your involvement with us.



Register of Tenants

Respond to surveys or comment on a specific service area in which you are interested, from the comfort of your own home. We can contact you by text, post, email or telephone.



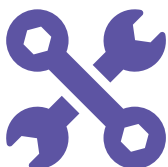
Tenant Groups

Represent your community on a wide range of issues by being part of a tenants group in your area.



Community Representative

A representative who lives in a village location or specific area, where there are insufficient tenants to form a group. You may be consulted on any potential changes to the housing service, that may affect your community.



Repairs Action Network Team (RANT)

A group whose main focus is on housing repairs service. The group is led by the Housing Repairs Managers including subjects such as day to day repairs, empty properties and future work planning.



Tenant Networking Event

An annual event that takes place in the district and provide opportunities for you to drop in, have a coffee and a chat with officers and managers from a variety of services about housing options, repairs, and many other services we provide.



Tenant Scrutiny Group

The aim of the group is to carry out a range of in-depth investigations of our housing-related services and use their finding to challenge and shape the housing service.



Housing Focused Challenge Days

A one off event that will focus on a particular topic. Previous challenge days have included - appointments for repairs, empty properties, welfare adaptations, choice based lettings, anti social behaviour, environmental works.



Senior Citizens Forums

These forums are held in the meeting rooms at each scheme. It is an opportunity to allow sheltered scheme tenants and housing services to work in partnership, to discuss services you receive and identify areas for improvement. (Need to check with HMO frequency etc).



Leaseholder Forum

This forum is for leaseholder only. It identifies what improvements can be made to services in increase satisfaction levels and enables us to inform members of any future planned works. These meetings take place (agree with Mark/Andy happy to included, could opt for surgeries?



Editorial Team

Being part of this team, you could suggest and/or review articles for our Tenants Newsletter (Bolsover Homes). You will meet with our Communications Officer and help with the production of the newsletter. You may even want to write an article of your own!!



Community Grant Fund

This fund is open to tenants to apply for financial help towards the cost of arranging an event, activity or initiative which can help to bring people together in your community. You can apply for up to £500. This scheme is run on an annual basis.



Neighbourhood Walkabouts

Tenants are invited to attend these estate inspections which take place xxxxx. It is an opportunity to meet officers from the Council and dates are published in advance in the tenants newsletter (Bolsover Homes) and on the councils website.



Communal Cleaning Inspections

We are planning to introduce a new communal cleaning programme for tenants living in flats that share communal areas. We are looking to recruit tenant inspectors, who can monitor the standard of cleaning, according to our contract specification.



Resources for Tenant Engagement

“We aim to ensure that tenants have support to develop and sustain involvement within their communities”

We believe it is important to provide sufficient resources to achieve the aims of the Tenant Engagement Strategy, and have allocated a specific annual budget

“Making it easy for you to get involved”

We recognise that tenant involvement requires commitment from tenants and that there are barriers which may prevent tenants from being involved including transport cost, family commitments and training

“We are committed to offer practical support to ensure tenant involvement is a viable option for as many as possible”.

The Council will reimburse all reasonable out of pocket expenses incurred by tenants when attending events and meetings relating to their involvement activities. We will also pay for tenants to attend conferences and training courses where it is relevant to their involvement and will benefit the wider tenant base.

How we will support our tenants to engage:



Provide suitable/accessible venue to hold meetings and provide refreshments.



Provide transport to attend training courses and sector conferences.



How tenants will be kept informed

“In March 2022 we carried out an independent tenant satisfaction survey and we found 81% of tenants felt Bolsover was either good or fairly good at keeping tenants informed about services and decisions that affect them.”

The survey also highlighted the preferred contact methods:

Letters

- 76% said letters are their preferred way of being kept informed
- Tenants 65* reported 71%

Phone calls

- 72% said phone calls are their preferred way of being kept informed
- Tenants 65* reported 74%

Emails

- 33% said emails are their preferred way of being kept informed
- Tenants 65* reported 25%

Text Message

- 38% said text message are their preferred way of being kept informed
- Tenants 65* reported 31%

Social Media

- 5% said social media is their preferred way of being kept informed
- Tenants 65* reported 4%





How we will provide tenants with information about services and decisions

“We aim to use a variety of communication methods to ensure our services and published information is fully accessible”

Tenancy Agreement – sets out the tenants’ rights to information about their terms of tenancy including our obligations as a landlord and access to housing related policies and procedures

Tenants Handbook – provides additional information about tenancies including, rents, repairs and maintenance, and further information about the rights and responsibilities of tenants

Tenants Annual Report – provides an overview on how we are performing and information relating to tenant satisfaction on all aspects of the housing service. It also includes financial information and allows tenants to see how we are spending the income for rents.

Bolsover Homes Newsletter – we will produce three editions annually in Spring, Summer and Winter giving tenants the options to have the copies sent via post or by email. A copy will also be made available on the Councils website.

Individual Letters –for important information affecting all tenants, such as the annual rent increase consultation or changes tenancy agreements, we will sent individual letters.

Council Website – we will continue to post local news stories and general Council information on our website and signpost tenants to it through social media

Social Media – we will continue to use our Twitter account to highlight important messages to our tenants

Menu of Opportunity – we will continue to promote our menu of opportunity for tenants who wish to get involved at a greater level in helping shaping the way we take decisions about housing services.

Bolsover Homes

Issue 3 March 2022 www.bolsover.gov.uk





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Monitoring and reviewing the strategy

The strategy will be monitored on a yearly basis by the Tenant Review and Development Group. This will ensure it remains current, relevant and achievable and continues to meet the aims and objectives of the Council and its tenants.



GREAT COMMUNITIES
EXCELLENT SERVICES
INSPIRING PEOPLE

Contact us and get involved

Have your say!

“Your Voice Matters – Get involved”

If you are a tenant or leaseholder of Bolsover District Council and would like to find out more about any of the involvement opportunities we offer, you can contact us by

Post	Tenant Participation and Liaison Officer, Bolsover District Council, The Arc, Clowne, Chesterfield S43 4JY
Email	enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk
Phone	01246 242424
Social Media	Facebook/Twitter
Face to Face	You can make an enquiry at one of our contact centres or ask any member of housing staff that may visit you.

We want to provide the best services we can, and in doing so we need your help.

I would like to take part in the tenants' participation venture. Please tick ✓ all that apply:

Come to an ad-hoc event - We hold events throughout the year and we take part in some community events.		
Meeting with other tenants - Work with us and other tenants to help develop the services we deliver. This could be about a specific topic on a challenge day or be part of a working group.		
Participate from home - Tell us what you think on housing related services that we provide, this could be a questionnaire or a policy to review.		
Formal Tenant Participation Review and Development Group - Be a tenant representative on this group with Council Members and Housing Manager team, which meets 6 times a year.		

If you would like to take part, please fill in the form and return it to us in the post.

Alternatively, you can complete the form online at **www.bolsover.gov.uk** or phone for more information **01246 593060**.

..... FOLD HERE



Catherine Ford,
Tenant Participation and Liaison Officer,
Bolsover District Council,
The Arc,
High Street,
Clowne S43 4JY

Please state your main areas of interest:

Customer Service and Communications <i>(including the website).</i>		
Anti-social behaviour and nuisance neighbours.		
Rent arrears and rechargeable charges.		
Repairs Working Group - improving the repairs service.		
Housing Management Working Group – improving estates, your environment and looking at housing allocations and homelessness.		
Sheltered Housing.		
Quality and Safety of Homes.		
Complaints.		
Equality and diversity.		
Leaseholder.		



Name:			
Address:			
		Postcode:	
Contact:			
Email:			

When you have filled in the form, detach it using scissors, fold in half, attach a postage stamp and return to us in the post.