

# Customer Access Review – Full Assessment

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| <b>Assessment details</b>  |  |
| <b>Assessment area</b>   | Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy   |
| <b>Date of assessment</b>  | September 2022   |
| <b>Directorate and Service</b>   | Housing & Public Protection, Housing Services  |
| <b>Manager</b>   | Tenancy Services Manager   |
| <b>Officer conducting assessment</b>   | Resident Involvement Officer   |
| <b>Step 1: Scoping the assessment</b>  |  |
| <b>1. What are the aims and objectives of the activity or proposal?</b>  | The Resident Engagement Strategy outlines Dartford Borough Council's commitments to its residents with regards to involving residents in monitoring and shaping the services they receive.<br>The aim is to ensure that all Council tenants and leaseholders are aware of what they can expect in terms of getting their views and voices heard, and what opportunities available for them to do so.   |
| <b>2. Who will be affected by the activity or proposal?</b>  | Tenants and leaseholders of Dartford Borough Council. Local communities around Dartford Borough Council Housing Estates.   |
| <b>3. How does the activity or proposal contribute to:<br/>a) any key performance indicators?<br/>b) policies, values or objectives of Dartford Borough Council?</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) No KPI related to this activity.</li> <li>2) To support the strategic aim to facilities quality, choice and diversity in the housing market, assist in meeting the housing need in Dartford and deliver high quality services to service users'. (Dartford Borough Council Corporate Plan 2021-2023)</li> </ol>  |
| <b>4. Which aspects of the activity or proposal are dictated by legislation/regulation and where do we have discretion in how they are delivered?</b>                | <p>Social housing providers are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. The 'Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard 2017' sets out three required outcomes that the Council must meet.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Customer Service, Choice and Complaints</li> <li>• Involvement and Empowerment</li> <li>• Understanding and responding to the diverse needs of tenants</li> </ul> <p><b><u>The Charter for Social Housing Residents 2020</u></b><br/>The Charter for Social Housing Residents (Social Housing White Paper) sets out what every tenant and leaseholder should expect from their social housing landlord. It requires every social housing landlord to be transparent about their</p> |

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|  | <p>performance and decision-making, so that tenants, leaseholders and the Regulator can hold them to account, put things right when they go wrong and listen to residents through effective engagement. To ensure that landlords meet these expectations the Charter sets out seven key themes for tenants, leaseholders and landlords. The Charter set out seven key expectations for tenants, leaseholders and landlords, these are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To be safe in your home – the regulator will work with industry and landlords to ensure every home is safe and secure.</li> <li>• To know how your landlord is performing, including on repairs, complaints and safety, and how it spends its money, so that residents can hold it to account.</li> <li>• To have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly, with access to a strong Ombudsman who will give residents swift and fair redress when needed.</li> <li>• To be treated with respect, backed by a strong consumer regulator and improved consumer standards for tenants.</li> <li>• To have your voice heard by your landlord, for example through regular meetings, scrutiny panels or being on its Board. The Government will provide help, if you want it, to give you the tools to ensure your landlord listens.</li> <li>• To have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in, with your landlord keeping your home in good repair.</li> <li>• To be supported to take your first step to ownership, so it is a ladder to other opportunities, should your circumstances allow.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Step 2: Information collection</b>  |  |
| <p><b>5. What do you know about the groups of people who will be affected?</b> (i.e. demographic information in relation to the protected characteristic groups of age, disability, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, race, sex, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership)</p> | <p>The Council currently owns 4,230 homes in the Borough. Information in relation to the protected characteristics of Council tenants is captured by the service, as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gender – 65% tenants are female and 35% tenants are male.</li> </ul>  |

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| Step 2: Information collection   |  |
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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age – 6.45% of tenants are aged up to 35 years; 35.44% are aged 35 to 55 years; 34.40% are aged 55 to 75 years; and 13.71% are aged 75 years plus.</li> <li>• Ethnicity – 61% of tenants are from a White ethnic group and 19% are from a Black Minority Ethnic (BME) group. The ethnic group of 20% of tenants is unknown. The Other ethnic group is the largest BME group with 11.89% tenants, the majority of which are within the European Non Irish group.</li> <li>• Disability – 19.95% of tenants have a disability and 80.05% do not have a disability.</li> </ul> |
| 6. What consultation has taken place with affected groups? Please describe who was consulted and the key findings  | <p>The Resident Engagement Survey that took place in March/April 2022 has helped to inform the Resident Engagement Strategy. The results offered some insight into preferred communication methods of our residents, how they would like to be engaged with, and highlight that some residents would benefit from improved digital inclusion to increase accessibility.</p> <p>The draft Resident Engagement Strategy was made available to all tenants or leaseholders for comment, and the Dartford Tenants' and Leaseholders' Forum have been invited for comment.</p>  |
| 7. Are there any gaps in information? If so, what additional research and/or consultation is needed to ensure that affected groups needs and views are taken into account? | <p>Profiling information for tenants and leaseholders could be improved, especially communication preferences and digital inclusion.</p>   |

## Step 3: Assessing the equality impact

8. Consider whether the activity or proposal has or will have any positive or negative equality impacts on the protected characteristic groups in relation to the following aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty:

- tackling unlawful discrimination
- promoting equality of opportunity
- promoting good relations

NOTES:

- The Initial Screening will have identified which aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty are relevant to the activity or proposal for consideration
- For existing activities, consider how they are working in practice for each relevant protected group
- For new proposals, consider whether there is anything that could give rise to positive and negative equality impacts for each relevant protected group

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## Step 3: Assessing the equality impact

- If there is no identified equality impact, please tick the 'No Impact' box and explain why in question 9
- If the equality impact is unclear, please tick the 'Unknown' box and explain why in question 9

| PROTECTED CHARACTERISTIC        | POSITIVE IMPACTS | NEGATIVE IMPACTS | NO IMPACT                           | UNKNOWN                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Age                             |                  |                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Disability                      |                  |                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sex                             |                  |                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Gender reassignment             |                  |                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Race                            |                  |                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Religion/Belief                 |                  |                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Sexual Orientation              |                  |                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Pregnancy/Maternity             |                  |                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Marriage and Civil Partnership* |                  |                  | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

\* Regarding the protected characteristic of Marriage and Civil Partnership – public bodies need to comply with the first aim of the Public Sector Equality Duty and only in the context of employment.

## Step 3: Assessing the equality impact

9. If 'no impact' or 'unknown' was selected, please explain

In accordance with the Council's Equality & Diversity Framework, the Resident Engagement Strategy, and any resident activities that arise from it, including information about services provided by the Housing Service can be provided in alternative formats, including Braille, audiotape and large print versions of documents, and documents translated into other languages.

Telephone and face-to face language interpreting and British Sign Language interpreting services can also be provided upon request. Calls can also be received by Relay UK.

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| Step 3: Assessing the equality impact   |  |
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|   | <p>For anyone wishing to take part in resident engagement activities and need transport providing due to age, disability or other need will be provided transport appropriate to the individual by the Council.</p> <p>All meetings or activities venues will be accessible for anyone with mobility needs, e.g. electric wheel chair, accessible lifts, and toilets. Resident Engagement activities are planned with residents in mind including when deciding on the timings and location of activities.</p> |
| <p><b>10. If Dartford Borough Council works with partners to deliver the activity or proposal, please describe any circumstances that could give rise to positive or negative equality impacts between different groups</b></p> | <p>The Council sometimes works with other local organisations in the area in order to deliver activities such as community events.</p> <p>The Council will be working with external organisation to deliver customer satisfaction surveys. There are no known circumstances where these partnership working arrangements will have a negative impact on the delivery of the Resident Engagement Strategy.</p>  |
| <p><b>11. Any other comments</b></p>  | <p>None.</p>   |

## Step 4: Action plan

- 12. Based on the information in Steps 1 to 3, please list the actions that will be taken to address:**
- any gaps in information and consultation
  - how any negative impacts on equality will be mitigated or eradicated

- a) If additional information and/or consultation is required or the impact is still unclear, what actions will you put in place to gather the information you need?**

| Information needs                                       | Action  | Intended outcome  | Date for completion                     | How this will be monitored  | Responsible officer          |
|---|---|---|---|---|------------------------------|
| Information on tenants and leaseholders internet access | Include a question within any consultations to gather information | Improved information on tenants' access to the internet. Improved support for groups who may need support getting online. | 2024 (Action in Year 2 of the Strategy) | Progress will be monitored when reviewing the Strategy as this is a point within the Action Plan. | Resident Involvement Officer |

- b) If any negative impacts on equality were found, what actions will you put in place to mitigate or eradicate these impacts?**

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| Identified impacts (and who is affected) | Action | Intended outcome | Date for completion | How this will be monitored | Responsible officer |
|--|--------|------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|
| N/A                                      |        |                  |                     |                            |                     |

| Step 5: Decision making and future monitoring  |  |
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| <b>13. Which decision making process does this Customer Access Review need to go through? i.e. who does this need to be approved by?</b>                                   | Director of Housing & Public Protection  |
| <b>14. Is the subject of the Customer Access Review going to committee? If yes, include your findings in the committee report and attach this assessment to the report</b> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No  |
| <b>15. How will you continue to monitor the activity or proposal on protected characteristic groups?</b>   | The Council will review progress of the Resident Engagement Strategy Action Plan every year, and a full review every three years or earlier to address legislative, regulatory, best practice or operational issues. |
| <b>16. When will you review this Customer Access Review?</b>   | The Customer Access Review will be undertaken at the same time as the full review of the Resident Engagement Strategy.   |

| Step 6: Final steps  |  |
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| <b>17. Once this Customer Access Review has been approved, send this assessment to the Policy &amp; Projects Officer</b>   |  |
| <b>18. Implement the actions identified from this Customer Access Review and ensure progress is monitored and recorded</b> |  |

Agreed by Legal Services – 3 October 2022

Agreed by Director of Housing and public Protection – 3 October 2022