The Tenants Forum

The Tenants Forum is a formal meeting held every month at the Municipal Offices, Bowling Green Road, Kettering. People who attend are tenants, leaseholders, councillors and housing staff.

A variety of issues are discussed at the meeting. They can be raised by tenant representatives or councillors. We provide updates on government legislation and staff often give presentations on new policies and procedures. Sometimes other organisations like the Police or Fire Service come along to answer questions. Additionally, more strategic issues may be discussed which gives tenants the opportunity to influence housing decisions.

Connect Reading Panel

Tenants work with the council to design, write, and edit Connect. This group also checks and approves all letters, leaflets, posters and flyers that we send to tenants to ensure the information is clear, concise and jargon free.

How to get involved

If you would like to become involved and:

- have your voice heard
- play a key role in shaping your housing service
- improve your neighbourhood or quality of life
- become a tenant representative
- be a member of the Tenant’s Forum
- be on the Editorial Panel
- attend the Tenant’s Monitoring Group
- monitor housing service standards
- join a Focus or Discussion Group

Please call the Housing Communication Officer or Customer Services.
We’re Listening

We devote a lot of time to involving tenants in shaping the services that we provide. We can only provide a service that suits your needs if you work with us.

How we will communicate with you

- We regularly review how satisfied you are with our services and find out what is important to you through surveys, questionnaires, visits, telephone calls and letters.
- An annual report is published telling you how we have performed in delivering our services to you.
- You are consulted on all changes that directly affect you. For example, major projects or improvements planned for your neighbourhood. We also work with you on identifying your local priorities. We then seek feedback from you and use it to improve our service.
- Tenants and leaseholders receive a copy of Connect, our housing newsletter.
- We will inspect your estate when we are in the area and each quarter undertake a full inspection with your tenant representative. Tenants are welcome to accompany us on the inspection. We also inspect the communal areas in and around blocks of flats and work with you to develop ideas for improvements.
- Please contact the Housing Communications Officer for contact details of your local tenant representative.
- We will send you a short questionnaire to fill in when a repair has been completed at your property. We will use your feedback and comments from it to improve the repairs service.
- All introductory tenants receive visits from us periodically throughout the first year of their tenancy to give them an opportunity to speak to us in their own home.
- Support and assistance is given to all tenants who want to get involved with any of our communication groups Free training is also offered. We encourage tenants from under represented groups to get involved with us and will tell you the outcome of your involvement.
- We are continuing to develop more ways for you to get involved in a way that suits you.

How you can communicate with us

Focus and Discussion Groups

Focus and Discussion groups are idea and information sharing groups. They can be on any subject and they are a tool for the Council to find out what tenants want and how they want a particular service to be run. These groups often get started when neighbours chat to each other. Most groups only meet once or twice and usually have between 5 and 10 tenants. Sometimes there might be a need for us to work more closely with the group and form what is called an Interest Group. Interest groups start life as a discussion or focus group but meet a few more times to work through a particular project, for instance, planned maintenance or improvement programmes in their area.

Local Consultations

Occasionally, we would like to consult you locally. We may visit your block of flats, your street or your local neighbourhood. When we do this, we will try several ways to contact as many tenants as we can. We may door knock, have a fun day, have a table in your block, write to you or hold a meeting in your area. We will tell you when there will be a local consultation event.

Neighbourhood Improvement Projects

Your Neighbourhood Manager has a small budget every year to spend on neighbourhood improvement projects. These improvements are identified and suggested by tenants. We will consult with all tenants who may be affected by improvement works.

Public Meetings

From time to time the Council will hold public meetings in your area. These could be on any subject that affects your quality of life, such as, problems relating to antisocial behaviour. If there are specific problems in your area we may invite other organisations like the Police or other sections of the Council to hear your views. If we can do what you want us to we will let you know. If we can not do what you want us to we will tell you why but continue to work with you to find a solution that is acceptable for everyone.

Monitoring Local Service Standards

Tenants have already told us many of the things that are important to them both personally and locally. Therefore we have developed a set of service standards, which set out clearly how we will provide our services.

The service standards tell you what we are going to do. For instance, quickly remove fly tipping or graffiti. To make sure we keep to the standards we need your help to monitor our performance.

The Tenants Overview and Scrutiny Panel

The Tenants Overview and Scrutiny Panel meets every month to scrutinise our performance. For instance, they look at how long it takes us to get an empty property ready for letting and how much rent is owed by tenants. We use what are called Performance Indicators (PI’s) to show how we are performing month by month.