Get involved in our Sheltered Schemes

Residents in our Sheltered Housing schemes can get involved in a number of ways, for example via a Silver Service Forum, a Social Organisers Committee and our Silver Service Matters group who between them produce a quarterly newsletter to all residents in Sheltered accommodation, arrange fun days out and scheme activities and provide a vital link between sheltered tenants and the council.

How we will support you to get involved

What’s in it for me? You can gain new skills and experience by working with us as well as having fun, helping others and meeting new people.

Training opportunities and conferences Tenants who get involved may be invited to various training courses. Initially there will be a one hour induction to tenant involvement at Kettering, then on-going training will be given as required to enable to you fully participate and make informed decisions.

Also from time to time we attend networking events, conferences and away days in other parts of the UK to which you will be invited. Out of pocket expenses such as travel and lunch will be provided.

Support and Out of Pocket Expenses You will receive support to get involved including reimbursement of any out of pocket expenses you incur.

Get on Board!
The above list is just a few of the ways you can become involved and have your say or just get and pass on information to your neighbours. You may have your own ideas, if so we are happy to explore these with you. You can become involved formally or informally - the choice is yours.

Of course, you will also be able to get involved in projects in your area. We will keep you informed as they occur. Or why not consider setting up a local tenants and residents group for your area?

Thank you for your interest in Tenant Involvement. We look forward to working with you!

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Get involved!

To find out more about tenant involvement in any of these areas, contact our Tenant Engagement Officer, Tracey Copeland on 01536 535 649 or traceycopeland@kettering.gov.uk

Options for getting involved in

Kettering Borough Council’s Housing Service
At Kettering, we want you to have a say on how we deliver our services, and how we can improve your neighbourhood.

It is important to us that you get involved and have your say in ways that suit you and with a time commitment that fits in with your life. You can spend as much time or as little time as you want. You can ‘dip in and out’ as you want; we want you to decide how much time you can spare.

In this booklet we have covered some of the ways we can work together, however, we realise that you may want to have your say in other ways.

Some of the ways you may like to have your say or get involved are:

Consultation – give us your views and help us improve

Surveys
From time to time we send out surveys to particular areas or groups in areas that we are working in to find out the views of tenants. Our surveys are usually designed to be completed in under 5 minutes and you should receive a free envelope to return it to us.

Completing surveys is the quickest and easiest way to get involved without it taking up too much time. If we do not get the response from surveys we were hoping for or we need more in-depth views we may follow up a survey with a focus group, consultation event or some door knocking.

Focus groups
These last around an hour and are friendly and informal groups of 6-10 participants who usually meet once or twice. You can also help us run focus groups or conduct community research.

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.

Help us improve your neighbourhood

Estate Walkabouts
Our Neighbourhood Managers carry out quarterly estate walkabouts on their patches and tenants, leaseholders and sometimes local councillors are welcome to join them.

Estate walkabouts are your opportunity to point out areas of concern such as fly tipping, graffiti, litter or repairs. They work well as you as tenants are the experts in your area and know best any issues you live with on a day to day basis. Your contribution to addressing these via making us aware is therefore very valuable.

Estate walkabouts usually last a couple of hours but you do not need to attend the whole session.

Environment Improvement Panel
Each year there is a £10k funding pot available for small estate based improvements. The panel consisting of tenants, leaseholders and officers meets annually, usually each May and looks at bids for a share prepared by the Neighbourhood Managers and agrees which will be taken forward.

The panel meet over a full day and the work includes site visits as required to assess the bids. Lunch is provided and also transport to any site visits. The panel then meets again in October for an update of the works funded and progress reports of completed works. This meeting is usually only for an hour or two.

Estate Improvement Activities
Tenants may work with the housing service to improve their areas. This might be via a community litter pick, community action day or community clean-up day, for example. These are usually great fun and can help make a real difference to the look of the area. It also helps tenants foster pride in their area and a sense of community spirit.

Help us communicate

Connect Editorial Panel
We are committed to involving tenants in the development and production of the councils’ quarterly newsletter to tenants’ and leaseholders.

The purpose of the Connect Editorial Panel is to put tenants’ views into the design, development and production of Connect.

You will be asked to attend a couple of meetings per quarter and to review draft copies of the newsletter via email/post. You will also suggest content for articles and features that will be useful or interesting for tenants to read about. If you wish, you can have a go at drafting content or editing the final copy.

Reading Panel
All general leaflets and publications we produce go to the Tenants’ Reading Panel for proofreading, the panel will read the document and comment on the layout and content of the document to ensure it is clear, easy to read and understand. You will receive documents by post and/or email and will be asked to complete a simple form and return it to us in a pre-paid envelope. This can usually be done in your own time and from your own home.

Digital Inclusion Group
All we ask is that you spend 15 minutes a month looking at housing pages on our website, making sure you can find all the information you need, and making suggestions for changes and improvements.

Help us monitor performance, shape our services and make decisions

Tenants Forum
Tenants Forum is a formal meeting comprising tenants, leaseholders, councillors and housing staff, and is part of the councils’ committee structure.

The aim of the Tenants Forum is to ensure there is consultation and discussion on issues concerning housing in the borough on any matters that affect tenants. This will typically include rent increases, housing finance, service delivery and any major changes to tenancy agreements or how we manage your homes.

Tenants Forum is an open meeting and anyone can attend. It meets on the second Thursday of each month (except August) from 6.30pm – 8pm in the Council Chamber of the Council Offices in Bowling Green Road, Kettering.

Tenants Forum also run an annual Housing Tour in July of each year to visit key housing initiatives and developments across the borough.

Tenant Overview and Scrutiny Panel (TOSP)
Scrutiny has a ‘watchdog’ role, as it concentrates on improving the council’s performance by monitoring, questioning, observing and making recommendations on the way services are provided, decisions taken and policies implemented. At the heart of the overview and scrutiny process is consideration of what impact services have on the Council’s tenants.

The TOSP is a formal group and membership is by application only. However those with an interest in TOSP may attend 2 meetings as an observer before deciding whether to apply.

Meetings are held monthly, usually on the fourth Thursday of the month between 4.30-6pm in the council offices.