



# RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT STATEMENT

Revised version  
**November 2007**



*Estuary is a Housing Association with Charitable Status*

## **Introduction**

Estuary is committed to the provision of good quality housing, care and support services to meet local needs and to contribute to the development of sustainable communities. Our Vision is to provide quality services and to make a positive difference in our communities. Estuary provides housing, property service, support and community services throughout all areas of our stock. Our residents include people from all sections of society, including people with learning disabilities, mental health issues, physical and sensory issues, frail and elderly people.

We have an absolute aspiration to be totally customer focused, ensuring all our services are accessible, of the highest quality and meet customer priorities and changing needs. Involving residents is a core component of helping to ensure that we meet these aspirations.

## **Policy statement**

We believe that effective involvement leads to achieving positive outcomes for residents, communities and the association. The key outcomes we seek from resident involvement are

- The enhancement of skills, confidence and quality of life of our residents
- Improved services for our residents
- Enhancement of our accountability to residents and local communities
- To strengthen the governance of the organization

We will work with residents, both individually and through representative residents groups, to ensure the opportunity for involvement occurs.

## **Summary**

Residents have told us that they want to be involved in service areas that include estate management, anti-social behaviour, repairs and maintenance, planning and development, governance

Estuary Housing Association will take a structured proactive approach to dealing with resident involvement.

This document sets out Estuary Housing Association's intent in addressing involvement and the measures it will use in effectively implementing its approach.

The drive is to keep this document concise in order to demonstrate a clear and well targeted approach.

In order to deliver a successful strategy we will involve residents individually, through constituted residents associations and the Federation of Estuary Residents, as well as staff, community groups, other residents in mixed tenure estates, and local

authorities. Our commitment includes involving stakeholders in developing and reviewing this strategy.

## **Background**

We undertake regular satisfaction surveys to find out the views of our residents. In particular, the National Housing Federation carries out their STATUS survey on our behalf every three years, and Estuary undertakes Customer Satisfaction Monitoring on an annual basis. The following figures show resident satisfaction on involvement issues:

<u>STATUS Survey</u>	<u>2003</u>	<u>2006</u>
Being kept informed	81%	81%
Having your views taken into account	68%	69%
Involvement in management of homes	48%	52%

### Customer Satisfaction Monitoring 2007

Satisfaction with opportunities for involvement	88%
Taken part in involvement activity	61%

This strategy aims to provide a co-ordinated approach to improving resident involvement, drawing together existing procedures and established working practices and implementing new ways of working.

## **Aims of this strategy**

- Develop a consistent, co-ordinated and inclusive corporate approach to resident involvement.
- Effectively apply a range of opportunities to ensure consultation, information sharing and involvement.
- Implement a framework for monitoring and improving our approach and measuring our outcomes.

## **What we mean by involvement**

Involvement means Estuary working to:

- Know what its residents and communities want
- Give residents and the community the opportunity and support to be involved if and how they want to
- Give residents and the community the opportunity to have more influence over the decisions that we make
- Consult residents and communities about major changes we propose to our services
- Provide residents with information about our services in appropriate formats.

## **Key Strategy One – Consultation**

We will consult about major changes we propose to our services, policies and procedures. Consultation will involve seeking the views of all groups including tenants, licensees, leaseholders and owner-occupiers.

We will consult utilising the methods set out in Key Strategy Two – Involvement.

We will feedback the results of the consultation we undertake, both directly to those involved and more widely through Estuary News.

## **Key Strategy Two – Involvement**

We will provide residents with a range of opportunities and methods for becoming involved in our services:

- Asking residents to complete satisfaction surveys, either face to face by post, telephone, email, text or on our website.
- Becoming a member of the Turnaround Team which is a group that consists of Board member, staff and residents who plan improvements to our service based on the results of surveys, Impact Assessments and customer feedback.
- Being a member of the Service Advisor Panel who we will consult about changes to our services, policies and procedures.
- Becoming an Estate/Block/Street Representative to liaise with us about their area, and to have the opportunity for involvement in estate inspections.
- Arranging estate meetings with Estuary staff.
- Arranging focus groups to look at specific policy or planning issues.
- Supporting the formation of residents associations.
- Supporting the work of the independent Federation of Estuary Residents.
- Giving residents the opportunity to become Board Members of the Association.
- Operating an accessible customer feedback procedure which allows residents to make suggestions, compliment and complain about the standard of service we provide. This will include information on how residents can access the Independent Housing Ombudsman Service.
- Becoming a Mystery Shopper
- Arranging estate days and fun activities to give residents the chance to meet staff and tell us their views about our services.
- Setting up Customer Advisory Groups to discuss our general services.
- Arranging meetings at convenient times
- Use venues that are accessible, convenient and safe.

Estuary will endeavor to meet any needs and respond to ideas from residents on any other forms of involvement.

## **Key Strategy Three – Communication**

We will provide information about our services through:

- A Residents Handbook issued when residents move into their home.

- Quarterly issues of our newsletter, Estuary News.
- An annual report and performance review.
- Service guarantees setting out the standard of service that can be expected.
- Letters about specific issues relating to residents and their property/estate.

An annual statement giving a breakdown of service charge expenditure.

We will provide this information in a format other than written English if you require.

## **Training**

Good quality training enables staff to deliver all three key strategies. Estuary Housing Association is committed to training staff in all areas of resident involvement. We will also provide training and capacity building opportunities for involved residents.

## **Equality and Diversity**

We aim to treat all individuals, communities and organisations fairly taking into account the diversity of their culture and background and circumstances. We are committed to ensuring residents have equal opportunities to take an active role in involvement and take active steps to engage with under represented and vulnerable people. We will monitor opportunities for involvement to ensure these are accessible to all customers, that residents groups are representative of their communities and that satisfaction levels of the services we provide are equally as good. We will provide financial, physical, advocacy, transport and childcare support to enable all residents to be involved where necessary.

## **Recording and Monitoring**

We will set up a system which will enable us to record and monitor the impact of our various involvement activities. This will include methods to demonstrate that our involvement activities constitute value for money for residents. This monitoring will be recorded in an annual Impact Assessment which will be available to all residents.

## **Implementation and Review**

The Impact Assessment will form the basis for a Resident Involvement Action Plan, which will feed into the Turnaround Team Action Plan agreed by Board members, staff and residents to look at continual service improvement. The plan will have SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Timed) targets which will underpin this strategy. We will report the progress of the Turnaround Team actions via the Estuary News. We will benchmark our activities against those of other housing associations and our local authority partners where appropriate and share best practice within the organisation and keep abreast of changes to legislation and regulatory requirements.

## **Publicity**

We will publicise the outcomes of consultation and the success of involvement activities through our quarterly newsletter. At every opportunity we will provide access to information about options for involvement