

MOLENDINAR PARK HOUSING ASSOCIATION

TENANT PARTICIPATION POLICY

Date of Review: 15th October 2013
Date of Next Review: October 2018

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This policy document outlines Molendinar Park Housing Association's policy in relation to tenant participation and involvement. In implementing this Policy, we shall ensure that we achieve fairness towards staff, governing body members, tenants and local residents. Our commitment to equal opportunities and fairness will apply irrespective of factors such as gender or marital status, race, colour, disability, age, sexual orientation, language or social origin, or other personal attributes.
- 1.2 The Association recognizes the importance of effective tenant participation – both for the organisation and for individual tenants. Benefits are likely to include:
- Improved service delivery and value for money
 - Help in decision making and priority setting
 - Increased power and choice for tenants
 - Improved tenant satisfaction
 - Personal and community development
- 1.3 The Housing Association model adopted by Molendinar Park provides a very high degree of local tenant control over the management of the housing stock. The Association is, however, keen to maximise the opportunity for other forms of wider tenant participation.
- 1.4 The term “*tenant participation*” is used throughout this policy document to describe a wide range of different activities from basic communication with tenants (informing tenants, listening to tenants, consulting and negotiating with tenants) to their involvement both in making choices and in detailed decision-making. The Association accepts, as a basic starting point, the Chartered Institute of Housing/TPAS definition of participation as a:
- *Two-way process involving sharing of information and ideas, where tenants are able to influence decisions and to take part in what is happening” (CLOH/TPAS 19890, P19)*
- 1.5 The Association also recognizes the importance of integrating tenant participation into all aspects of the ownership and management of the Molendinar Park stock.

GENERAL AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 1.6 The following general objectives have been developed by Molendinar Park in relation to tenant participation:
- To ensure the Association fully complies with legislation and good practice

- To actively encourage the participation of tenants in the work of the Association with a view to improving service delivery, value for money, effective housing management and community development
- To maximize the areas of Association activity in which tenants can participate including:

Financial and strategic issues

Management issues

Design issues

- To encourage and work with any local tenants/residents groups in the area
- To increase levels of tenant satisfaction by maximizing ways of engaging with our tenants to understand if and how we are meeting their needs.
- To improve the decision making process by enabling tenants to have an input on Policy formulation.
- To encourage tenants to exercise their right to be involved in the decisions affecting their home environment and service at whatever level of participation they choose.
- To ensure that the culture and organizational structure of the Association is one that supports the meaningful involvement of tenants.

BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE

- 1.7 This policy has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and the guidance provided by the Scottish Executive.

2. HOUSING ASSOCIATION STATUS

- 2.1 Molendinar Park Housing Association has been established as a Housing Association under SFHA Model Rules. It is also a charity Registered in Scotland.

3. INFORMATION

INTRODUCTION

- 3.1 Effective participation relies on the provision of high quality information to tenants – without information, tenants are not able to understand the Association’s position or to make informed decision.
- 3.2 Molendinar Park will develop a communications strategy detailing the information that will be provided to tenants.
- 3.3 The Association will ensure that all written information provided to tenants will be:
- Relevant

- Accurate and objective
- Easily understood

- 3.4 Where required, written information will be translated for the benefit of tenants with special language needs.
- 3.5 All tenants will receive a tenants' handbook. This handbook will be reviewed at least every five years.
- 3.6 All relevant major policy documents will be made available to tenants via our Website.
- 3.7 Tenants will be given written information on the performance of the Association on an annual basis.
- 3.8 The Association will produce a bi-annual newsletter.

4. FEEDBACK MECHANISMS

- 4.1 Molendinar Park Housing Association intends to develop a range of feedback mechanisms to allow tenants to comments on the services they receive from the Association at the time they receive it.
- 4.2 The views expressed by tenants will be used either to take immediate action to improve services where appropriate or to inform policy and practice reviews.
- 4.3 These feedback mechanisms may take the following forms:
- Continuous monitoring: Encouraging tenants to comment on the services they receive as they receive them, for example by issuing satisfaction comment slips at the time of repair.
 - Undertaking regular tenant satisfaction surveys.

5. CONSULTATION STRATEGY

- 5.1 In accordance with its Constitution, Molendinar Park Housing Association will hold an Annual General Meeting once year to which all Association members will be invited.
- 5.2 In addition, the Association will hold public meetings where appropriate to discuss relevant issues in particular areas.

6. TENANT/RESIDENT ASSOCIATIONS

- 6.1 The Association will delegate to local management committees the power to provide support to any Tenants/Residents Association in the local area should they so wish.

7. LOCAL COMMITTEES

- 7.1 To ensure meaningful tenant involvement at a local level, the Association have established Local Management Committees
- 7.2 These Local Committees were established in consultation with local tenants.
- 7.3 Membership is open to local tenants and representatives from existing tenants/residents associations.
- 7.4 Molendinar Park staff service the Committees.
- 7.5 Each Local committee has agreed its remit with Molendinar Park but it is hoped that each one will be involved in local policy development, in agreeing practice issues, in identifying local spend priorities etc.
- 7.6 Each Local Committee has purchased one share in MPHA and are able to nominate up to three of its members to serve on the Management Committee of MPHA.

8. STAFF AND COMMITTEE MEMBERS

COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

- 8.1 The Committee will be responsible for reviewing the policy on tenant participation and for monitoring actual performance against established targets and standards.

STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES

- 8.2 All staff will be responsible for encouraging tenant participation but the Director will have a specific remit relating to the involvement of tenants in the working of the Association.

TRAINING

- 8.3 The Association will ensure that all staff receives the adequate training in relation to tenant participation.

9. POLICY REVIEW

- 9.1 This policy will be reviewed at least every five years.
- 9.2 The review will take account of legislative changes, new policy guidance, best practice advice, the performance of the Association and the views of the tenants.
- 9.3 The Association will ensure that proposed policy and practice changes are discussed with tenants.