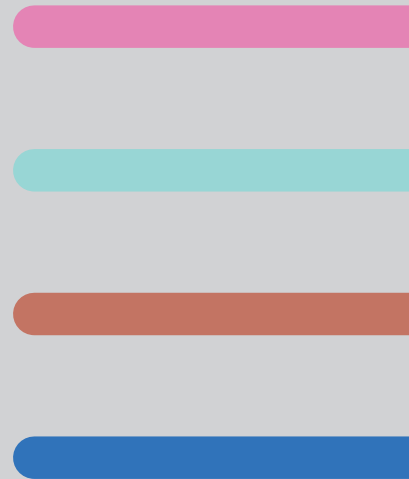


Our citywide tenant and leaseholder involvement compact

July 2007 – March 2010

“To listen to our tenants and leaseholders, involve them in decision making and deliver improved housing services that are informed by the experiences of their lives, homes and environment.”



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1. Foreword **by Councillor Cookson and Councillor Cooper**

Newcastle City Council values the importance of involving council tenants and leaseholders in housing services.

We are pleased to introduce our updated tenant and leaseholder involvement compact. It sets out how we will put your involvement at the heart of our housing services.

We recognise that you are all individuals with diverse needs and aspirations. You will want to participate in different ways and to different degrees. We need to make sure everyone has the opportunity to participate at a level that is both comfortable and convenient for them.

This compact sits alongside our revised tenant and leaseholder involvement strategy which links with the council's overarching community engagement strategy. It will make sure that tenant and leaseholder involvement is central to everything we do. The strategy sets out the vision and key principles for tenant and leaseholder involvement and what roles each of the organisations have in delivering these. The compact is an agreement between the council and its tenants and leaseholders which sets out what actions each organisation will carry out.

The compact is not set in stone; it will change over time to reflect changes and priorities that emerge from increased tenant and leaseholder involvement.

We want to involve tenants and leaseholders at all levels within all housing services. Achieving this will lead to meaningful involvement, improved services, better and increased choice for you and higher levels of tenant and leaseholder satisfaction.

We would like to thank everyone who has contributed to producing this document. In particular we would like to thank our partners in this project, Your Homes Newcastle and Newcastle Tenants' Federation. We would also like to thank the tenant and leaseholder working group who have given up their free time on a regular basis to work with us on this project.

2. About this compact

Introduction

What is the tenant and leaseholder involvement compact?

This compact is a binding agreement made between Newcastle City Council and council tenants and leaseholders which sets out:

- How tenants and leaseholders can get involved in housing issues that affect them.
- How Newcastle City Council and council tenants and leaseholders will work together to achieve improved housing services or a better quality of life; and
- How the compact will be implemented and checked to make sure it is working properly

What does it mean for Newcastle's council tenants and leaseholders?

This compact sets out some clear commitments for involving you in the management of your homes and improving the housing services we give you.

This compact will mean:

- You get clear and accessible information you need on all areas of housing services
- You can find out about the opportunities to get involved
- You understand how getting involved can lead to improved housing services
- You can have a role in important decisions on housing issues
- You can get support and training so you can take part effectively

Who is responsible for making sure the compact works?

Newcastle City Council has lead responsibility for this compact. It will be delivered in partnership with Your Homes Newcastle (YHN) and Newcastle Tenants Federation. When the term 'we' is used in this compact, it refers to all three organisations in the partnership.

Because this is an agreement it is not just down to officers working for or on behalf of Newcastle City Council to make sure this compact works. Tenants, leaseholders and councillors have an important role too.

Tenants and leaseholders can help to make the compact work by using the opportunities available to you to get involved and influence housing issues and services.



“Staff have made us feel our input is invaluable to improving housing services.”

Councillors can help to make the compact work by making sure that the views of the tenants and leaseholders they represent are fed into the council’s formal decision making process.

Officers working for or on behalf of the council can help to make the compact work in a range of ways. This includes developing good working relationships with tenants and leaseholders and making sure that all tenants and leaseholders have the opportunity to be involved.

What happens next?

The commitments made in this compact will be supported at a local level through neighbourhood agreements. These can be developed by local communities in order to meet specific local needs. There are currently 3 neighbourhood agreements in Newcastle; they cover the Byker, West Denton and Throckley Central and Northside areas.

The actions outlined in this compact will be monitored and reviewed every three months against agreed targets set out in the compact action plan. Details of the monitoring process are in section seven of this compact.

For further information about this compact please see the useful contacts section at the back of this compact.

Vision for the compact

Newcastle City Council’s vision for tenant and leaseholder involvement in Newcastle is:

“To listen to our tenants and leaseholders, involve them in decision making and deliver improved housing services that are informed by the experiences of their lives, homes and environment.”

To achieve this vision, Newcastle City Council has agreed to adopt a set of principles to support our tenants and leaseholders in shaping our services. These principles are set out in the Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Strategy. All actions in this compact will follow these principles.

Background to the compact

How have we developed this compact?

This is the second time we have reviewed the compact since it was first written in April 2000. We review the compact on a regular basis to make sure that it continues to be up to date and meets the needs of council tenants and leaseholders.

During this review we have worked in partnership with Your Homes Newcastle, Newcastle Tenants’ Federation and a working group of council tenants and leaseholders. We consulted with a wide range of people on this compact including tenants, leaseholders, tenants’ and residents’ groups, councillors, staff and YHN board members. This is to make sure that the compact is improved to bring it up to date.

This compact as well as being directed at the needs of tenants and leaseholders reflects the Governments’ standards in the National Framework for Tenant Participation Compacts (2005).

What difference has the compact made to services so far?

Tenants and leaseholders in Newcastle have been involved and successfully improved housing services to their estates in lots of ways since April 2000 when the Compact was first introduced, including:

- Involvement in the production of Your Homes Newcastle’s ‘Homes and People’ newsletter through an editorial panel
- Testing the quality of services delivered by Your Homes Newcastle through the development of a mystery shopping programme
- Tenants’ and residents’ groups discussed and agreed criteria for deciding the order in which decent homes work should be done. Consultation about the draft modern homes programme was then carried out with tenants
- Influencing improvements to delivery of housing services by Your Homes Newcastle through a programme of service user discussion groups
- Shaping the way that housing management services will be delivered in the future through a citywide housing management review consultation



“I get involved so I can improve housing for everybody.”

3. Getting involved

This city-wide compact covers all Council tenants and leaseholders within Newcastle.

We want you to get involved in ways which suit you. There are lots of different ways that you can choose to get involved.

You as council tenants and leaseholders can get involved in a number of housing issues, if you want to. Housing services that you have an opportunity to influence include:

- Developing and changing housing policies and strategies
- Regeneration, improvements and repairs to council homes
- Tenancy related issues
- Finance, budgets and setting rents
- Leasehold issues
- Monitoring performance of housing services

This section gives you more information about the ways you can get involved in improving housing services and what you can expect from us if you choose to get involved.

How you can get involved

Involvement can mean different things to different people, different communities and different services and situations. The ways you can get involved are divided into five main areas to make sure that we provide ways for you to get involved at a level that suits you. The amount of time needed, level of responsibility and influence will vary depending on the level at which you choose to get involved.

The five main areas are:

- providing you with information
- consulting you on issues and asking for your views
- deciding together the course of action to be taken
- in some instances by acting together with local people
- and supporting independent local initiatives led by local people

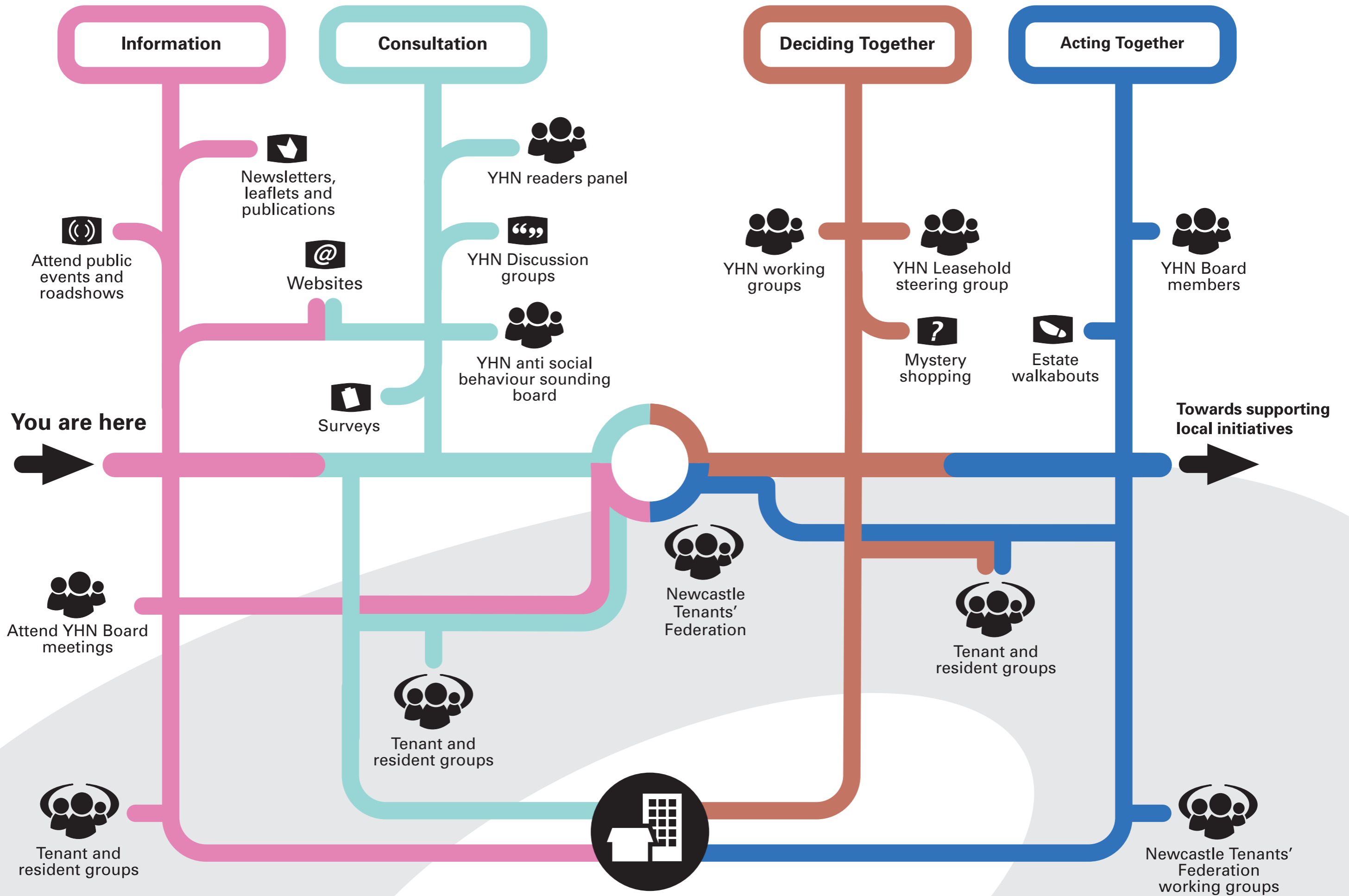
These 5 ways of getting involved are described in more detail in this section.

You can choose how, if at all, you want to be involved, and at what level. You can play a greater part in influencing decisions by becoming involved in collective forums and groups such as Tenants and Residents Groups or the area or main boards at YHN.

However, you may also choose to be involved as an individual to influence housing services. You can do this in a number of ways such as attending a focus group, filling in surveys or attending events and road shows.

The map overleaf shows some of the ways that you can be involved.

Routes to involvement





“I can really see that my involvement is making a difference to services because we get feedback from officers.”

Levels of involvement

Information

Information is very important as it supports all stages of involvement and lets you know about important things that affect you including decisions, services and local events.

All our tenants have the right to information about their tenancy, services they receive and who is responsible for it. Since January 2005, tenants and leaseholders also have additional rights to information under The Freedom of Information Act. You can use this legislation to ask for information that you feel you should have received. This could include information held about you in relation to your tenancy.

We will provide information about all aspects of housing services including policies, delivery of services and plans for housing investment.

The following information is available for tenants and leaseholders:

The following information is available for tenants and leaseholders:

Type of information	Frequency	Who produces it	Who receives it
Tenancy handbook	At sign up	Your Homes Newcastle	All new tenants
Service standards	Reviewed annually	Your Homes Newcastle	Available in Community Housing Offices, Customer Service Centres, YHN website
Homes and People	Every 3 months	Your Homes Newcastle	All tenants and leaseholders, Community Housing Offices, Customer Service Centres, YHN website
Tenants News	Every 2 months	Newcastle Tenants' Federation	Tenants and residents groups
City Life	Every 2 months	Newcastle City Council	All residents of Newcastle, libraries, customer service centres, other community buildings, Newcastle City Council website
Information leaflets	Produced and reviewed as necessary	Newcastle City Council Your Homes Newcastle	Community Housing Offices, Customer Service Centres, Concierge Lodges
Leasehold News	Every 6 months	Your Homes Newcastle	All leaseholders, YHN website
Performance monitoring information	Every 3 months	Your Homes Newcastle	Community Housing Offices, Customer Service Centres



Type of information	Frequency	Who produces it	Who receives it
Other service newsletters	Annually	Your Homes Newcastle	Sent to customers of relevant services On YHN website
Modern Homes Booklet	When improvement work is due to start	Your Homes Newcastle	Tenants, Investment Delivery Staff
Press releases/ media	Regularly	Newcastle City Council Your Homes Newcastle Newcastle Tenants' Federation	Local and trade press
Letters	As needed	Newcastle City Council Your Homes Newcastle	Individual tenants and leaseholders
YHN Annual Report	Annually	Your Homes Newcastle	Community Housing Offices, Customer Service Centres, YHN website
Policy and strategy documents	Produced as needed	Newcastle City Council Your Homes Newcastle	Staff, where appropriate available on request, YHN and Newcastle City Council's website.

Individual websites are:

- Your Homes Newcastle www.yhn.org.uk
 Newcastle City Council www.newcastle.gov.uk
 Newcastle Tenants' Federation www.newcastletenantsfed.org.uk

To make sure that all tenants and leaseholders can access and understand information we provide, this compact outlines standards for information. These are included in section four of this compact.

"It's amazing what you can accomplish when you get involved."

Consultation

Consultation will be used when there is a decision to make about something or when there are a number of options for change to choose from and we want to know what you think.

All council tenants have a legal right to be consulted on changes in the way that we manage homes. This includes improvements to your home; work planned for estates and also changes in your tenancy agreement. All council leaseholders have a legal right to be consulted on any charges or work to your home which costs £250 or more. Leaseholders also have a right to be consulted before Newcastle City Council or Your Homes Newcastle enters into any long term partnership with other organisations or companies.

We guarantee standards for consultation with tenants and leaseholders to make sure that you know exactly what to expect when we consult with you about housing services. These standards are included in section four of this compact.

We also guarantee basic standards for meetings to make sure that all tenants and leaseholders who attend meetings we have organised can put their views across and contribute fully. These standards are included in section four of this compact.

Deciding together

This is where local people are involved in deciding which options to choose but it is the council, or YHN that will carry the decisions out. Examples of this are:

- The Repairs Development Group at the Tenants Federation being involved in the procurement of the new repairs contract in 2006 by assessing contractors' responses to questions about customer service issues.
- The Leaseholder Steering Group represents leaseholders at regular meetings with officers from Your Homes Newcastle to influence the delivery of leasehold services.
- Tenants and Residents Groups working with their local housing management team to suggest proposals for using the Area Project Fund to improve the local environment
- Tenants and leaseholders were involved in deciding which option to choose for changes to housing management services as part of a Housing Management Review
- The Living in Flats group at Newcastle Tenants' Federation were involved in Service Standards for all blocks of flats being drawn up and agreed with YHN.



“Even if you have a disability, your view counts.”

Acting together

This is when decisions are made by partnerships between local people or agencies and the council. The people involved in making the decisions also take part in carrying them out. Examples of this are:

- Tenants and leaseholders being actively involved in good estate management through regular walkabouts with officers or helping to support individuals through Modern Homes work
- Tenants sitting on various boards and partnership groups across the city. These include the YHN main board and area boards
- Tenants’ representatives taking part in the Newcastle Housing Partnership and Forum.

Supporting local initiatives

This is when independent groups get help to develop and carry out their own plans. Examples of this include:

- The council supports the Newcastle Tenants Federation as an independent umbrella voluntary organisation to support and develop representative and democratic tenants and residents groups so that they can play a full part in decisions about their housing and environment.
- The Tenants Federation administers the ‘Tenants Fund’ on behalf of the City Council which provides tenants groups with funding for running costs and projects subject to them meeting some basic criteria.

“I joined to know what was going on and found it interesting and lively.”

4. Standards for involvement

This section sets out the standards you can expect if you get involved in improving housing services.

Standards for Information

We want all information we make available to all tenants and leaseholders to be easy to understand and accessible.

To make sure this happens, we promise that information about housing services will always:

- Be in clear and plain language
- Avoid using jargon
- If we need to use technical words we will say what they mean
- Be available in alternative languages, Braille, English audio recording and large print
- Be given at the right time, good quality, and designed to meet tenants’ needs
- Tell you where to contact to get more information

Standards for consultation

These are the standards that Newcastle City Council and Your Homes Newcastle will meet when carrying out consultation.

We will make sure that when consulting with tenants or leaseholders we are clear about the following:

The purpose of the consultation

This will include information on:

- What can change as a result of the consultation
- What, if anything, cannot be changed and why
- Any relevant legal restrictions for example building regulations



“It’s fun and enjoyable and I have learnt about different services that I can use.”

The period of time to respond

- We will make sure that people are given a reasonable period to respond. We will give tenants, leaseholders and/or their local tenant group at least one month to respond to written documents. If this is not possible the City Council or Your Homes Newcastle will explain why
- We will give you at least two weeks notice of consultation meetings. We will give a clear explanation if this is not possible

The timetable for consultation

We will make sure that we provide you with information which outlines important or key dates within the consultation process, for example when the relevant committee will receive a report for decision or when an improvement scheme is likely to start on site.

Who is making the decision

We will give you details of who will be responsible for making the final decision.

The level of influence tenants will have over the final decision.

- We will clearly explain the level of influence tenants will have over the final decision
- We will also clearly explain if we are taking into account views of other groups, for example staff

The ways we will give you feedback

We promise to inform you of results of consultation and how your views have influenced the final decision. We will also inform you about the timescale for any actions or changes which will follow as a result of the final decision made.

Any documents produced

Where an important document has been produced through consultation with tenants and leaseholders, we will identify in the document the consultation process used.

Standards for meetings

Meetings can be an effective way for the council and Your Homes Newcastle to give information and to consult with tenants, leaseholders and tenant representatives.

Standards for council and Your Homes Newcastle meetings

The following standards will apply to all meetings with tenants arranged by officers;

We will:

- Publicise meetings effectively and in good time
- Hold meetings at times that aim to be convenient for tenants
- Hold meetings in accessible venues with level access
- Where possible we will not arrange meetings during major religious and cultural events
- Provide facilities for child care if and when required at public meetings
- Provide interpreters where required
- Offer help towards transport, childcare or other caring responsibilities
- Make sure that any papers or reports tenants are required to comment on at the meeting are circulated 14 days prior to the meeting taking place
- Make sure there is an agenda
- Make sure all meetings are properly chaired and conducted in a fair and democratic way so that everyone gets a chance to have their say and find out what they need to know
- Make sure all meetings have clear objectives
- Produce a clear action plan to deal with issues that have been raised in meetings
- Give details of how we will give feedback to people who took part in a meeting
- Ask participants to complete an evaluation form about the meeting to help us improve future meetings
- Agree the date for any future meetings at the end of each meeting

Code of conduct - Your Homes Newcastle

Your Homes Newcastle has a code of conduct which it expects people to follow at their meetings.

Tenants’ and Residents’ Groups

The Tenants Federation has a code of conduct which it expects participants to follow when involved in its citywide work. They also encourage individual Tenants and Residents groups to develop their own code of conduct for their meetings.



5. Developing tenant and leaseholder involvement

Increasing involvement

Getting everyone involved

In the past the Council hasn't been very good at listening to and acting upon the views some groups of people. Now we and our partners are particularly keen to encourage tenants and leaseholders from all communities to get involved and give us your views.

Why is it important that everyone can get involved?

We know that involving people in managing their homes and estates is vital to delivering better housing services and improving quality of life for council tenants and leaseholders in Newcastle.

We also recognise that people who live in Newcastle have diverse backgrounds, circumstances and needs. We will make sure that we provide ways to involve all our customers so that we deliver services that meet the different needs of the communities we work with.

This means we will use a wide range of approaches to involve you at different levels in ways that suit your different needs and circumstances.

What are we doing to increase involvement?

We are doing a lot of work to increase involvement from all parts of the community. Some of the work we are currently doing includes:

- Newcastle City Council are involving older tenants in the development of an older persons' housing strategy
- A group of tenants from BME communities are working with Newcastle Tenants' Federation to raise awareness of some of their housing related issues
- Your Homes Newcastle has added 130 young tenants and BME tenants to their list of 'make a difference' volunteers. These two parts of the community are now well represented in all of the involvement sessions organised by YHN

"I really enjoy getting involved and working as part of a group."

To continue to increase involvement from tenants and leaseholders from all communities we will:

- Review regularly which groups are underrepresented in involvement
- Take action to increase the involvement of these groups
- Develop new approaches to involving these groups
- Remove barriers that may prevent certain groups from getting involved
- Learn from good practice

The compact action plan which is produced each year will include targets to make sure we increase involvement from all parts of the community in Newcastle.

Resources and support for tenant and leaseholder involvement

This section includes information about the resources and support available for tenant and leaseholder involvement and who provides it.

Support from Newcastle City Council

Newcastle's draft Community Engagement Strategy aims to improve the co-ordination of how the Council engages with its customers, individuals and communities. It is based on the belief that:

- All communities should be involved in the decisions that affect them
- All communities deserve high quality public services which reflect their needs
- Newcastle City Council policies and strategies should reflect local priorities, requirements and aspirations

The Engagement Strategy recognises that Newcastle has many diverse communities and the importance of building relationships within them. People and communities can participate at whatever level they wish, to influence how services are delivered, how decisions are made and how policy is developed.

While the Council as a whole has a responsibility to make sure that people are given the opportunity and support to be involved, there are particular parts of the Council that help this happen:

- Community Development, which gives help and support to communities and individuals to improve their skills, knowledge, experience and potential to get involved in activities, both locally and city-wide
- Ward Co-ordinators, who are responsible for helping to develop each Ward Committee's community groups and networks, and giving support to each Ward Committee. They also provide overall information on the city's wards, neighbourhoods and communities



“By getting involved you can monitor services.”

- The council’s Performance and Improvement Unit gives advice on and monitors consultation.

Support from Your Homes Newcastle

Your Homes Newcastle has a dedicated Tenant Involvement Team who support tenant involvement in a range of ways, including:

- Providing a wide range of opportunities for individual tenants and leaseholders to get involved at all levels
- Co-ordinating provision of information to tenants and leaseholders
- Promoting tenant involvement and raising awareness of the ways tenants and leaseholders can get involved
- Developing new ways for tenants and leaseholders to get involved
- Co-ordinating consultation with tenants and leaseholders on key housing issues
- Providing advice and assistance to other sections within Your Homes Newcastle on involving tenants and leaseholders
- Asking tenants and leaseholders how they want to get involved and responding to this
- Working to increase involvement from underrepresented groups
- Looking at what other organisations are doing locally and nationally and learning from good practice
- Working with Newcastle City Council and other partner organisations to deliver a coordinated approach to tenant and leaseholder involvement

In addition to this, tenant involvement is supported across the organisation from a range of officers in a number of ways including attending tenant and resident meetings, arranging estate walkabouts and supporting local initiatives.

Support from Newcastle Tenants’ Federation

Newcastle City Council will continue to support and assist in the development of the Newcastle Tenants’ Federation as the independent umbrella organisation for tenants and residents groups in the city.

Newcastle Tenants’ Federation helps set up and support representative and democratic tenants and residents groups so that they can play a full part in decisions about their housing and environment.

Another important part of the Federation’s work is to bring tenants and residents groups together to discuss issues of common concern. The information the Federation gains from these discussions is used to develop its city-wide work.

Funding for tenants’ and residents’ groups

Tenants’ fund

The tenants’ fund is a grant available to groups to cover their running costs for example printing, stationary, travel and childcare costs. It can also be used for special, one-off projects or initiatives such as research or consultation events. Groups are eligible if they represent council tenants and address housing and related issues. Newcastle Tenants’ Federation administers the fund on behalf of the council.

Ward committee

Your group may be eligible for a grant from your local ward committee if you are going to provide community based activities such as social or environmental projects.

Training

Newcastle Tenants’ Federation runs a number of training courses for groups including basic skills sessions for new tenants and residents groups and sessions on topics such as treasurer’s skills, representing your community, presentation skills and equality and diversity.



6. Monitoring performance and complaints

Monitoring this compact

Keeping it real!

It is very important that this agreement is regularly monitored to ensure that:

- The targets set within the compact action plan are being met
- We are meeting tenants' needs and expectations

The Tenant Involvement Advisory Group (TIAG) is a group of people who meet to consider proposals for changes in housing policy and service.

The group is made up of councillors and tenant representatives. It is supported by officers from Newcastle City Council and Newcastle Tenants' Federation. TIAG will monitor the progress of the compact every three months.

Through monitoring the compact, the council, YHN and Newcastle Tenants' Federation will be able to:

- Evaluate the impact the compact has made on improving housing services
- Evaluate how the compact has helped improve tenant and leaseholder involvement
- Monitor the progress of staff and volunteer training to ensure the compact is fully implemented

Putting things right

We always aim to deliver high quality services to our tenants and leaseholders. However, if you feel that we are not delivering the promises made in this compact, you have a right to complain. We welcome your feedback and every complaint we receive is logged and the information is used to improve services.

Making an individual complaint

If you have a complaint regarding services that Newcastle City Council or Your Homes Newcastle provides or your complaint relates to an officer or board member of either organisation you should use our complaints procedure.

You should initially report your complaint to the office or service area which dealt with you so that they can try to put things right. You can complain in person, by telephone, by letter, by email or online on the council's website. You will get a response in writing within 15 working days.

A leaflet which provides further information about the council's and YHN's complaints procedure is available from Customer Service Centres and Community Housing Offices.

Newcastle Tenants' Federation has a separate complaints procedure. If you wish to make a complaint about the Tenants Federation you should contact them directly.

Resolving group disputes

Where Tenants and Residents groups are involved in a dispute over a housing matter with either the City Council or Your Homes Newcastle, the Tenants Federation is available to support and advise them.

Where Newcastle Tenants Federation or any other organisation representing tenants feels that there are broader issues of concern which affect a large number of tenants which have not been resolved through this approach, they will raise it with the Tenant Involvement Advisory Group (TIAG) as part of their role in monitoring the compact.

7. Useful contacts

You can contact these numbers if you would like more information about this compact or getting involved:

**Newcastle City Council
Strategic Housing**
Telephone: 0191 211 5863

**Your Homes Newcastle
Involvement Team**
Telephone : 0191 278 8723

Newcastle Tenants' Federation
Telephone: 0191 232 1371

You can contact these numbers if you would like to find out more about some of the council services you have read about in this compact:

**Newcastle City Council
Performance and Improvement Unit**
Telephone: 0191 211 5037

Community Development
Telephone: 0191 232 8520

Ward Co-ordination
Telephone: 0191 211 6209

Newcastle Housing Partnership
Telephone: 0191 277 7860

"All for one and one for all."

8. Jargon Buster

What does it all mean?

We've tried to keep this document as easy to read as possible by using plain English and avoiding the use of jargon. However, sometimes we've had to use technical terms to describe what it is we want to say. Where we've done this we've described below what we mean.

Word/phrase	Meaning
Actions or Action Plan	Actions or an Action Plan is a statement of how we will achieve our aims. It describes who is responsible, how they will achieve it and when they will achieve it by.
Arms Length Management Organisation or ALMO	ALMO is short for Arms Length Management Organisation. It describes an organisation that manages council homes on behalf of the council.
The Audit Commission	The organisation that inspects and assesses the performance of local authorities, ALMOs and housing associations.
Authority	The Authority describes Newcastle City Council
Best Value	Best Value is a policy introduced by the Government, designed to improve services provided by councils and other public organisations.
Black and Minority Ethnic groups or BME groups	A term accepted for use by the Commission for Racial Equality to describe a group of people who see themselves as distinct from the majority of people in Newcastle in terms of cultural or ethnic identity.
The Board or Your Homes Board	The committee who manage Your Homes Newcastle Newcastle. It comprises six tenants, six councillors and six independent members.



“It’s a way to build up confidence and self-esteem.”

Word/phrase	Meaning
Compact	An agreement between the City Council and council tenants and leaseholders which sets out how they will work together to improve housing services and how tenants and leaseholders can get involved in housing issues that affect them.
The Company	Your Homes Newcastle
Community Engagement Strategy	A strategy which aims to improve how the City Council engages with its customers, citizens and communities.
Council, The Council	Newcastle City Council
Decent Home, Decent Homes Programme and Decent Standard	The Decent Homes Standard is a basic standard for council housing set by the Government. All council and housing association homes meet the standard by 2010.
Estate walkabout	Estate walkabouts are organised by Community Housing Offices. They involve customers, officers of Your Homes Newcastle and councillors to monitor the appearance of estates.
Focus group	Focus groups meet to discuss and give views on specific issues to improve what we do. Focus groups are made up of small groups of customers, usually less than 20.
Hard to reach groups	Groups who are currently less likely to get involved. An example might be young people or people from BME communities.
Homes and People	A newsletter sent every 3 months to tenants and leaseholders by Your Homes Newcastle
Leaseholder	Any person who has bought their flat or maisonette and continues to pay a service charge to the Council.

Word/phrase	Meaning
Local strategic partnership	The single body which brings together the Council, Newcastle Tenants Federation and Your Homes Newcastle along with other public, private, community and voluntary organisations to tackle issues within the local area.
Member	A Member is another word to describe a Councillor who is a person elected by the public to represent a defined ward and help decide council policy.
Mystery Shopping or Mystery Shopper	Mystery Shopping involves acting as a customer to check quality of services.
Newcastle Tenants Federation	This is an independent, umbrella voluntary organisation that represents over 85 tenants and residents groups in Newcastle.
Service Improvement Programme	The Action Plan developed to improve the service delivered by Your Homes Newcastle.
Service standards	A statement concerning a particular area of service that lists promises that have been agreed between tenant representatives and Your Homes Newcastle.
Tenant	Any person renting a house or flat from Newcastle City Council
Tenant Involvement Advisory Group (TIAG)	A group of people who meet to consider proposals for changes in service. The group is made up of councillors, tenants’ federation representatives and council employees.
Tenants’ and residents’ association	Tenants’ and residents’ groups are groups of people representing tenants, residents and leaseholders living in an area, block or street.
We	We is used to cover the partnership comprising Newcastle City Council, Newcastle Tenants Federation and Your Homes Newcastle.

This information is about how you can get involved and have your say about how our services are provided. If you need this information in your language we will arrange an interpreter for you.

This information is also available in large print, Braille and audio tape. We can also arrange for you to see a British Sign Language interpreter. Telephone: 0191 278 8633.

Bengali

এই তথ্য হল আমরা কিভাবে আমাদের সার্ভিস (সেবা) দিয়ে থাকি, তাতে আপনি কিভাবে অংশগ্রহণ করতে পারেন এবং আপনার মতামত ব্যক্ত করতে পারেন সে সম্পর্কে। এই তথ্য যদি <বাংলায়> অথবা অন্য কোন ভাষায় প্রয়োজন হয় তাহলে এই নাম্বারে ফোন করুন- ০১৯১ ২৭৮ ৮৬৩৩

Chinese (simplified)

这是有关您如何就我们提供的服务发表意见并参与改善的信息。如果您需要此信息的普通话版本或其它语言版本，请致电 0191 278 8633 索取。

Chinese (traditional)

這是關於您如何就我們提供的服務發表意見並參與改善的信息。如果您需要此信息的廣東話版本或其它語言版本，請致電 0191 278 8633 索取。

Farsi

این اطلاعات شما را راهنمایی می کند تا نظرات خود را درباره خدمات ما ابراز کنید. در صورت نیاز به این اطلاعات به زبان فارسی یا زبان های دیگر با شماره تلفن ۰۱۹۱۲۷۸۸۶۳۳ تماس بگیرید.

French

Ces informations concernent la manière dont vous pouvez vous engager et donner votre opinion sur la qualité de nos services. Si vous avez besoin de ces informations en français ou dans une autre langue, téléphonez au: 0191 278 8633.

Kurdish

ئەم زانیاریانە سەبارەت بە چۆنیەتی بەشداری ئیوه و رادەربەریتان سەبارەت بە خزمەتگەلیکە گە ئیپە دەیدەین. ئەگەر حەزتان لە وەرگرتنی ئەم زانیاریانە بە زمانی کوردی یا هەر زمانیکی دیکە هەیه بە ژمارە تیلیفونی 0191 278 8633 پیوهندی بگرن.

Portuguese

Esta informação refere-se à forma como pode participar e dar a sua opinião sobre a maneira como fornecemos os nossos serviços. Se precisar desta informação em <português> ou noutra língua, queira ligar para o 0191 278 8633.

Russian

Информация о том, как Вы можете быть задействованы и высказать свое мнение по поводу предоставляемых нами услуг. Если Вы нуждаетесь в этой информации <на русском> или другом языке звоните по тел. 0191 278 8633.

Spanish

Ésta es información sobre cómo puede participar y dar su opinión de cómo proporcionamos nuestros servicios. Si necesita esta información en español o en otro idioma, llame al 0191 278 8633.

