

How we consult



Statement of Consultation Arrangements Draft - awaiting tenants' approval

Introduction

Grwp Cynefin is committed to achieving effective resident participation when it comes to determining the vision, strategies, plans and priorities of the organisation or when a decision is being made which might have a direct impact on our residents. We recognise that having our residents' voice at the heart of what we do helps ensure that we meet the needs of our communities and deliver a service focussed on that need. It is important that we give our residents a wide range of opportunities to influence and be involved in key decision making.

As a community Landlord, The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016 requires us to have appropriate arrangements in place to consult with contract holders upon housing management matters and to prepare and publish a statement of those arrangements.

The Regulatory Framework¹ requires us to ensure that tenants are enabled and supported to influence strategic decision making, and to influence and shape the delivery of services. We must:

- ensure that our decision making is based on clear good quality information including the views of our residents.
- create a culture which values and promotes tenant involvement
- enable residents to understand our approach to resident involvement and provide opportunities for residents to be involved.
- ensure that resident views and expectations inform the development and review of housing and related services.

This statement sets out how and when we will consult with our residents.

¹ Regulatory Framework for Housing Associations Registered in Wales, January 2022



Grŵp Cynefin

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Who is responsible for this statement

Housing and Community Initiative Managers will have the responsibility for ensuring that this statement is reviewed on a regular basis and kept up to date.



A decision which requires consultation is most likely to be a decision which will be made at Board or Committee although it is possible that it may also be a decision to be made by the Senior Leadership Team. It will be for the decision maker to consider and determine whether the decision meets the criteria set out in this statement. If it does the decision maker(s) must appoint an appropriate team or member of staff to undertake the steps outlined in this statement prior to the decision being made and must satisfy themselves that this statement has been complied with before making the decision

When we will consult

We will carry out a consultation whenever we are considering making a decision which relates to:

- a new programme of maintenance, improvement or demolition of dwellings which are subject to occupation contracts
- a proposed change to a practice or policy which relates to the management of, or to the maintenance, improvement or demolition of dwellings which are subject to occupation contracts.
- We will consult if the decision or proposal is likely to substantially affect all contract holders, or where there is a relevant group of contract holders who are likely to be substantially affected.



A relevant group may be:

- a distinct social group
- tenant representative group
- a group of contract holders who occupy dwellings which constitute a distinct class, whether because they are a similar kind of dwelling, are on the same estate or in the same larger area.

When we will not consult

We do not need to consult upon the annual rent increase or increases in any other charges. We do not have to consult unless a proposed decision or change is substantial although we may still decide to carry out a consultation if we think it is appropriate.



What consultation will involve

The way we involve our residents will depend on the decision we are considering, who is affected by it and what information needs to be taken into account. At all times we will bear in mind the need to ensure that residents are given a proper opportunity to be involved effectively.



Consultation will generally be in three phases.

1 – Initial communication

We must communicate the following clearly:

- what the proposed decision and/or where relevant the different options under consideration are
- the reason(s) why the organisation is considering it or them
- who within the organisation is responsible for making the decision
- the anticipated impact of the decision on contract holders, on staff, on the organisation and on any other relevant parties including any cost or financial impact for contract holders²
- how residents may contact us to tell us what they think (which will be by telephone, email, text, website or in person at our offices) and the deadline for doing so. They must be given at least 28 days unless the decision is urgent.
- We might consider it appropriate to arrange a meeting or event with residents in which case the letter will contain details of the date, time and location (or, if virtual, the meeting link) for the event. The event should not take place within 14 days after the letter unless a decision is urgent. Residents should be advised that they can still contact us in writing or on the telephone even if we have arranged an event or meeting.
- Who any queries should be directed to and how they can be communicated
- The initial communication will normally be by letter which will be sent either to all contract holders (where the decision affects all) or to the relevant group if only the relevant group is affected.
- We will send a copy of the letter to any residents forum, and where we are aware that a contract holder lacks capacity, we will send a copy to their receiver/trustee/social worker or other nominated representative.
- We will also normally put a note about the plan or proposal in our newsletter advising contract holders that they can access the letter on the website or by requesting a copy by telephone, text or email and provide the relevant contact details for them to do so
- Our letter will be bilingual. Where appropriate, we will provide a translation.

² Ensuring no personal data is disclosed

2 – Engagement

The period after completing the steps set out at stage one and before the decision is made will normally be not less than 28 days but it may be more. During this time, we must deal with any queries promptly and clearly. If there is a meeting or event we will make all of the arrangements for it and we must ensure that we have sufficient staff present to deal with questions. Minutes of the event will be taken.

Where residents have chosen to contact us by telephone, we must ensure that what they say is accurately recorded and passed to the necessary staff so that what they say is taken into account.

All views communicated to us will be collated and provided to the decision maker(s)

3 – Decision making

Once steps 1 and 2 are complete, we may proceed to consider the decision. When doing so we will:

- ensure that the decision is made at the right level by the appropriately authorised person(s)
- ensure that all views which have been expressed (however expressed) are recorded and are available to the decision maker(s)
- the decision maker(s) will ensure that those views are taken into account and given the appropriate weight when the decision is made
- the decision maker(s) will also weigh up all other relevant information and evidence, and take into account the legal, commercial and other factors relevant to the decision.

Communicating the decision

Once a decision has been taken, we will communicate what it is. Where objections or views expressing concern or doubts about the proposed decision were received, or if we consider it appropriate to do so we will provide reasons for the decision.

If appropriate, the objections and responses to them might be summarised in the letter. The letter will be distributed in the same way and to the same people as the initial communication letter.



Making this statement available

We must send a copy of this statement to the Welsh Ministers and to the local housing authority for the area in which dwellings we manage are situated. The Local Housing Authority must make it available for inspection at all reasonable times without charge.

- We will give a copy of this statement to any contract holder who asks for it, free of charge. Anyone who is not a contract holder may have a copy on payment of a reasonable fee.
- We will prepare a summary of the statement which will be provided without charge to anyone who asks for it.

