

Creating the Strategic Tenant Advisory Panel (STAP)

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Background

- Housing service transferred to F&HDC on 1 October 2020
- Tenants felt they hadn't been listened to and that engagement wasn't a priority
- Shepway Tenant and Leaseholder Board (STLB) had existed for a long time but lacked support and direction

Our vision for the housing service is:
To create an excellent, digitally enabled service that is easy to deal with and where tenants are at the heart of everything we do

The road to creating STAP

- Tenant Engagement Strategy drafted (in collaboration with TPAS)
 - Consultation with STLB: Spring 2021
 - Wider tenant consultation: Spring 2021
- Strategy adopted post-consultation: April 2021
- STAP recruitment campaign: Summer 2021
- STAP launched: October 2021

What does STAP do?

STAP's purpose is:

To support the work of F&HDC's housing services through the monitoring and scrutiny of decisions and performance relating to the tenants' experience. To ensure compliance with regulatory and other legislative standards

- Meet every two months
- Input into housing policies and procedures
- Contribute to the development and review of the Tenant Engagement Strategy
- Ensure customer insight is used effectively
- Consider and review performance (including contractor performance)

Achievements

So far, STAP has been consulted on and influenced:

- Rechargeable Repairs Policy
- Allocations Policy
- Ending of fixed term tenancies
- Housing Asset Management Strategy
- Tenant Engagement Strategy and Action Plan
- Tenant Satisfaction Survey and Action Plan
- Overall housing service performance
- Tenant Handbook

Challenges and lessons learned

- Giving STAP a clear remit
 - Not a way of members raising individual grievances - their role is to hold us to account on behalf of all tenants and leaseholders
- Ensuring STAP members are representative of the wider tenant community
 - Wide recruitment campaign and robust selection process. Membership includes residents of all ages, as well as disabled residents and those from BAME backgrounds
- Making resident engagement part of the role of all housing staff
 - Training for all teams on what engagement means for their roles – it is part of their day-to-day work, not an add-on

Other F&HDC engagement activities

- Tenant Champions: Repairs, Compliance, New Build, Major Works, Procurement, Estates, Communications
- “Your voice, our action”: Better demonstrate how we listen to and act on resident feedback – biannual newsletters and biannual bulletins
- Independent Living Forum: a platform that focuses solely on the issues in sheltered housing. Main contractors and heads of departments are at every meeting. Review purpose and remit
- Leaseholders Forum: Run by the senior specialist to focus on consultation and policy that affect leaseholders only.
- Garden competition, Neighbourhood Inspections and other events.

Thank you

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