

NEXT STEP HOMES

CUSTOMER PARTICIPATION POLICY

Definition of Customer: sharing owner, equity shareholder, or tenant

1. AIMS

Next Step Homes is committed to ensuring that its customers have influence and are involved in shaping the services they receive. The Association aims to enable customers to have an informed view of their housing service and be involved in the decision making process about the service they receive and the way their homes are managed.

The Association aims for continuous improvement. Customer participation can help the Association become more efficient, accountable and responsive to the needs of those it serves.

The Association aims to work in partnership with customers to improve services, increase customer involvement, strengthen and sustain local communities and offer a range of participation opportunities to enable customers to choose the most appropriate method for their needs and circumstances.

It is important that the Customer Participation Policy links with other policies in the Association.

2. OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that we offer customers a variety of methods to get involved in the participation process.
- To ensure that customers have access to quality information about the Association and any proposals which significantly affects them.
- To ensure that customers have regular opportunities to consult Association staff through meetings, consultation and information events and surveys.
- To encourage customers to become Association members and Committee of Management members.
- To ensure that customers have equal access to participation regardless of race, age, disability, location, sexual orientation, marital status, gender or dependency problems.
- To ensure that customers have access to information about the workings of the Association and its decision making process.

3. PROCEDURES

The Association will ensure that a Customer Participation Strategy is in place to set out how the aims and objectives of the policy will be carried out in practise.

4. STAFF RESOURCES AND TRAINING

The Policy will be implemented by the dedicated Housing Officer working within Customer Services at Langstane Housing Association

Training includes:

- Keeping abreast of Government initiatives regarding Shared Ownership, LIFT, and Mortgage to Rent
- Appropriate Information Technology (IT) skills.
- Regular ongoing training on the legal framework concerning Tenant Participation.

Staff are encouraged to study for formal qualifications, for example-

- Chartered Institute of Housing (CIOH)
- Higher National Certificate (HNC)
- Higher National Diploma (HND)

5. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The Association will monitor and review progress in achieving the aim and objectives of the strategy, jointly with sharing owners. The preparation of the Customer Participation Strategy is not an end in itself. To ensure that the strategy develops over time to match needs and aspirations Customer Service staff will monitor and review progress regularly in consultation with its customers. The strategy will be formally reviewed every two years with a view to presenting Next Step Homes Committee of Management with improvement amendments to reflect development achieved.

Right to Complain

In the event you are not satisfied with the service you have received, please contact the Association for a copy of our Complaints Policy, which can also be viewed on our website.

Approved by Committee:

6 May 2009

Review Date:

6 May 2011