

North Yorkshire Council

9 April 2025

North Yorkshire Council Tenant Involvement Strategy

Approval of the Proposed North Yorkshire Council Tenant Involvement Strategy Following Public Consultation

Report of the Corporate Director Community Development

1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval from the Executive Member for Culture, Arts and Housing to adopt the Tenant Involvement Strategy following consultation.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 This report highlights the need for the Council to adopt a new landlord Tenant Involvement Strategy. This strategy replaces any existing strategies relating to Tenant Involvement that remain in operation in the former Harrogate, Richmondshire and Selby council areas.
- 2.2 Registered Providers (and which includes North Yorkshire Council) are required by law to meet the expectations set out in the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer standards. The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard sets out how social landlords must give tenants a wide range of meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise their landlord's strategies, policies and services.
- 2.3 The Tenancy Involvement Strategy sets out who we will engage and involve tenants, using their insight to influence and improve services, and to ensure their voice is heard in decisions that affect their home, their safety and their communities.
- 2.4 This draft strategy has been created with tenants and further amendments have been made following a wider tenant consultation exercise. Recognising the importance of tenant participation in decision-making processes, this strategy enhances tenant engagement, improves service delivery, and builds stronger relationships.

3.0 BACKGROUND

- 3.1 North Yorkshire Council provides over 8,000 council homes and is a registered social housing provider regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing (RSH). In April 2024, the RSH introduced four consumer regulatory requirements that housing providers must adhere to. One of those is the transparency, influence and accountability standard which has key outcomes relating to tenant engagement and involvement. The regulatory standard makes it clear that registered providers must take tenants' views into account in decision making about how landlord services are delivered, they must provide tenants with information to enable them to hold their landlord to account.
- 3.2 Effective tenant involvement is crucial for fostering a sense of community and ensuring that housing services meet the needs and expectations of tenants. Tenant involvement can take many forms, from participating in surveys and focus groups to being part of a more formal scrutiny panel. By actively involving tenants, housing providers can gain valuable insights into the issues that matter most to their residents, leading to more responsive and effective services.

- 3.3 The development of this tenant involvement strategy is informed by best practice and the creation of it was supported by YD Consultancy who have many years of experience in customer involvement. YD Consultancy provided a bespoke service, creating and leading a steering group of tenants and officers to review existing involvement activities and draft the new strategy. The draft strategy also considers the unique needs and preferences of our tenants, following the development of a focus group, specific feedback sessions and wider consultation.
- 3.4 The 2023/24 Tenant Satisfaction Measures reveal that 69% of tenants feel treated fairly and with respect, 60% feel informed, and 55% feel their views are listened to. While there are positive areas of satisfaction a key area for improvement was keeping tenants informed.
- 3.5 In May 2024, North Yorkshire Council self-referred to the Regulator of Social Housing due to issues identified in a self-assessment, including insufficient information on tenant needs and limited opportunities for tenant influence. In August 2024, the regulator issued a C3 grade judgement, highlighting significant improvements needed in safety, quality, transparency, influence, and accountability standards.
- 3.6 Further to this judgement the Council is subject to significant and intensive monitoring and scrutiny from the Regulator including monthly performance review meetings. The C3 Grading will not be upgraded until the Council demonstrates compliance, which is most likely to be through a full regulatory inspection.

4.0 THE STRATEGY

- 4.1 The Tenant Involvement Strategy aims to engage tenants and use their insights to improve services and ensure their voices are heard in decisions affecting their homes, safety, and communities.

The strategy focuses on three key outcomes:

Strong Culture of Engagement: Establish a transparent, open, and accountable housing service that meets or exceeds regulatory standards.

Integral Tenant Involvement: Collaborate with tenants to design, improve, and deliver housing services meaningfully.

Modern, Varied Engagement: Ensure diverse tenant voices are heard, understood, and translated into actions to improve services and outcomes.

- 4.2 The new strategy emphasizes North Yorkshire Council's commitment to involving tenants in scrutinizing, shaping, co-designing, and influencing services. All interactions with customers are valued as sources of feedback and engagement, from casual conversations with the Customer Service Team or workmen to participation in surveys, consultation groups, or scrutiny panels. The council aims to make it easy for tenants to provide feedback and will tailor its approach to meet the diverse needs and preferences of its customers, actively seeking input from a wide range of backgrounds and communities.
- 4.3 The council recognizes that engagement with smaller groups may not represent all customer opinions, so it will test feedback with broader groups to ensure it is representative. The approach will be inclusive, celebrating diverse views and ensuring no customer is excluded.
- 4.4 A blended approach to involvement will be offered, including a new digital engagement platform, with necessary training provided to support tenant participation. Transparency and honesty are key; the council will clearly communicate its goals, the feedback received, and its impact, supporting tenants in exercising their housing management rights.

- 4.5 Tenants can get involved with North Yorkshire Council's housing services through various opportunities. The Scrutiny Panel, a small tenant-led group, examines the council's housing service performance in detail, focusing on areas needing improvement or with low tenant satisfaction and provides a strategic opportunity for tenants to influence services. The larger Tenant Voice Panel and Forum is open to all tenants and leaseholders and is a network of tenants who will help review policies and procedures for service improvement either virtually or through task and finish groups. This panel is supported by quarterly forum meetings, it connects with the Housing Improvement Board and the council's elected member overview and scrutiny committee and is an opportunity for the council to share information.
- 4.6 My Housing Voice is a digital involvement platform offering a range of flexible opportunities. This could be making suggestions, completing online questionnaires, becoming a mystery shopper, receiving email updates, following us on social media, contributing to the tenant newsletter or reviewing letters and forms.
- 4.7 The Big Conversation initiative engages with tenants through community visits and pop-up events, gathering feedback to help build a service that reflects tenant priorities.
- 4.8 By implementing this strategy, we aim to create a more inclusive and collaborative environment where tenants feel valued and heard. This will not only improve tenant satisfaction but also contribute to the overall success and sustainability of our housing services.
- 4.9 A copy of the draft strategy is in **Appendix A**

5.0 TENANT VOICE

- 5.1 It is important to make clear the influence that the tenant voice has had on the proposed strategy, and on any future housing strategy or policy document. When policy reviews take place it is essential that tenants are involved early and given the for meaningful involvement.
- 5.2 This proposed strategy is a document which was initially developed by a steering group of officers and existing involved tenants. Meetings were held on 22nd May 2024 and on 6th June 2024. The draft strategy was then discussed at the All-Panels Involved Tenant meetings on 11th September 2024 and on 4th December 2024.
- 5.3 In accordance with North Yorkshire Councils consultation principles, a public consultation was carried out between 20th November 2024 and 4th February 2025 and the draft strategy was published on the consultation area of the NYC website. 10 responses were received. A copy of the questions asked during the consultation is in **Appendix B**
- 5.4 The strategy was refined further following a wider consultation with tenants. Tenants will also be involved in the implementation of the strategy.
- 5.5 Respondents to the consultation expressed varied levels of understanding regarding the opportunities for tenant involvement. Some of the key points include:

Lack of Clarity: Some respondents indicated confusion about the involvement process and the wording has been changed to make the strategy clearer.

Training Needs: It was highlighted that there is no mention of training for involved tenants. Respondents suggested that both internal and external training should be provided to ensure tenants are well-equipped to participate effectively. This has been added to the commitment.

Desire for Involvement: Several respondents expressed a strong desire to be involved in the strategy consultation. They believe that tenant involvement is crucial for ensuring their voices are heard and their concerns addressed.

Feedback on Promises: Respondents provided specific feedback on the 12 promises set out in the strategy. Amendments have been made to address the points made.

Support for Involvement: Respondents noted that area tenant meetings would help tenants engage with the council, especially those who cannot use technology. Updates have been made to the strategy to make the intention for face-to-face interaction with tenants clearer.

Overall, the feedback underscores the need for clearer communication and more effective support to ensure meaningful tenant involvement in the strategy.

6.0 CONTRIBUTION TO COUNCIL PRIORITIES

6.1 The Tenant Involvement Strategy contributes principally to the following Council priorities:

- Place and Environment: Communities are supported and work together to improve their local area.

7.0 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

7.1 As a registered provider of social housing, it is a legal requirement to comply with the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer standards. Specifically, the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard states that registered providers must give tenants a wide range of meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise their landlord's strategies, policies and services.

7.2 North Yorkshire Council has received a C3 (non-compliant) judgement from the Regulator of Social Housing. Without a Tenant Involvement Strategy there is an increased risk of additional non-compliance which will further undermine the organisations' credibility.

8.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The tenant involvement team was a new team introduced following local government reorganisation, the new and this investment was in response to the changing regulatory environment and evidence of the commitment to delivering a great customer experience and giving a greater voice to our tenants. The cost of delivering the strategy, including delivering training, producing reports and covering any out-of-pocket tenant expenses are within the existing budget. It is the ambition of the service that going forward the tenant voice will help shape the Housing Revenue Account Financial Plan.

9.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 It is a requirement of the Regulator of Social Housing Transparency, Influence and Accountability standard for a Registered provider, 'to take tenant's views into account in their decision making about how landlord services are delivered and communicate how tenant's views have been considered.'

9.2 In carrying out the public consultation and in considering the feedback received, the Council is seeking to ensure that its decision making is open, transparent, and fair.

10.0 EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 An initial Equalities Impact Assessment screening form has been completed and reviewed internally. No detrimental effects were identified and the ambitions in the Tenant Involvement Strategy will result in increased opportunities for all tenants to get involved, which will lead to better outcomes and improved customer focused service delivery for all North Yorkshire Council tenants and leaseholders (**Appendix C**).

11.0 CLIMATE CHANGE IMPLICATIONS

11.1 A climate change impact assessment screening form has been completed acknowledging that there are no significant impacts. (**Appendix D**).

12.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS

12.1 The Tenant Involvement Strategy will be a new strategy document for the Community Development directorate and as such will require regular review.

13.0 RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

13.1 The Council (in its role as Social Housing Landlord) risks remaining non-compliant with the Regulator of Social Housings' consumer standards

14.0 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

14.1 The Tenant Involvement Strategy has been subject to a broad consultation exercise; responses to the consultation have resulted in this version.

15.0 RECOMMENDATION

15.1 It is recommended that approval is given to adopt the Tenant Involvement Strategy following consultation with tenants.

APPENDICES:

Appendix A – Tenant Involvement Strategy
Appendix B – Consultation Questions
Appendix C – Equalities Impact Assessment screening form
Appendix D – Climate Change Impact Assessment

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS: none

Nic Harne
Corporate Director – Community Development
County Hall
Northallerton

Report Authors – Sarah Thompson, Tenant Involvement

Presenter of Report – Andrew Rowe, Assistant Director for Housing

North Yorkshire Council
Housing Management and Landlord
Services

Tenant Involvement
Strategy

2025-2030

1.0 Introduction

1.1 The legacy of tenant involvement

This Tenant Involvement Strategy builds on our legacy organisations engagement opportunities and sets out how we will listen and engage our tenants.

This underpins our continued commitment to co-regulation by involving tenants in scrutinising, shaping, co-designing, and influencing services.

This co-created strategy will help us to plan and set goals and priorities to get us where we want and expect to be. It will help us stay focussed on what is important.

1.2 The vision for tenant involvement

Our vision for our Tenant Involvement Strategy is simple.

“To engage and involve tenants and use their insight to influence and improve services and to ensure their voice is heard in decisions that affect their home, their safety and their communities”

To support the delivery of the strategy, we have developed three key outcomes. These outcomes were developed with tenants and are:

1. *We will have a strong culture of tenant engagement throughout North Yorkshire Council, with a transparent, open, and accountable housing service that meets or exceeds the requirements of the Regulator of Social Housing’s consumer standards.*
2. *Tenant involvement will be an integral part of the delivery of all our housing services and we will work together with tenants to design, improve and deliver services in a meaningful way.*
3. *We will offer a modern, varied engagement service that ensures the voice of a diverse range of tenants is heard, understood, and translated into actions to improve services and outcomes for Tenants.*

This strategy sets out how we will do this, and we will produce an action plan to detail how the strategy will be delivered.

2.0 Background

2.1 The Steering Group

We met with the existing engaged customers from the legacy organisations and listened to what was important to them and what they wanted to see in the new involvement framework. Tenants and officers then formed a steering group to work together, share ideas and discuss the next steps in more detail. This strategy is a result of this work.

2.2 National Context

In April 2024 the Regulator of Social Housing introduced four consumer regulatory requirements that housing providers must adhere to.

The transparency, influence and accountability standard has six required outcomes, and these are:

- Fairness and respect: treat all tenants with fairness and respect.
- Diverse needs: take action to deliver fair access to, and equitable outcomes of, housing and landlord services for all tenants.
- Engagement with tenants: take tenants' views into account in decision making about how landlord services are delivered.
- Information about landlord services: communicate with tenants and provide information so tenants can use landlord services, understand what to expect from their landlord, and hold their landlord to account.
- Performance information: collect and provide information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in delivering landlord services.
- Complaints: ensure complaints are addressed fairly, effectively, and promptly

2.3 Local Context

2.3.1 The Council Plan

This Tenant Involvement Strategy will support the delivery of our Council Plan (2024-2028) which sets out the council's vision, ambitions, and priorities for the next four years, as well as the approach we will take to achieve them.

The plan addresses the exciting opportunity provided by the creation of North Yorkshire Council to transform services, drive innovation and improve outcomes. It also outlines the many significant challenges ahead including the impact of inflation, increased demand for our services, climate change, and the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on our communities.

Here is a summary of what the plan entails:

Our vision: We want to build on North Yorkshire's natural capital, strong local economy, and resilient communities, to improve the way local services are delivered and support a good quality of life for all.

Locality working is a key element to the council plan, with the plan outlining our four pillars of locality working:

- local services and access
- local accountability
- local action
- local empowerment

2.3.2 North Yorkshire Housing Strategy

North Yorkshire Council provides over 8,000 homes across the county and has ambitions for growth. Most properties are socially rented properties, but we also manage leasehold properties and a small number that are shared ownership.

We aim to become an exemplar landlord, providing high quality tenancy services. Our North Yorkshire Housing Strategy commits to ensuring the Council housing stock remains decent and continues to improve. We will meet this challenge by:

- Implementing a robust investment plan for all our Council housing stock over the next 30 years
- Putting tenant safety first and fully meeting our regulatory responsibilities, including the eradication of mould and damp issues within set timescales
- Developing a new Tenancy Strategy and establishing clear and high standards for the delivery of tenancy services.
- Appraising our Council housing stock and re-purposing where required.

2.4 Tenant Satisfaction Measures

2.4.1 Introduction of the measures

In April 2023, the Regulator of Social Housing introduced Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) aimed at helping improve standards for people living in social housing. They enable the regulator to see which landlords may need to make improvements but are also a way of enabling tenants see how well their landlord is performing.

2.4.2 North Yorkshire Council TSM survey results 2023/2024

The results give us up to date information of our tenants' perception of our current services. The 2023/24 Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey results tell us that in terms of engagement:

- 69% of tenants surveyed feel they are treated fairly and with respect.
- 60% of tenants surveyed feel informed.
- 55% of tenants surveyed feel their views are listened to.

Whilst there are some good areas of overall satisfaction, there is some work to do particularly in relation to positive contribution to neighbourhood, Anti-social behaviour handling and being kept informed, which are the lowest ratings in the survey.

This strategy aims to help North Yorkshire Council improve satisfaction with these important measures.

3.0 Current position

3.1 Local government reorganisation

3.1.1 Bringing services together

Following local government reorganisation and the bringing together of the former council housing services, we have a new structure to deliver services and resources have been increased to support the delivery of this strategy. Tenant involvement has always been important to us, but we also recognise that we need to do more to meet tenant expectations, as well as meet the new requirements of the regulator.

We take our responsibility seriously in respect of gaining the trust and respect of our tenants. We will ensure that this strategy and engagement framework does not lose sight of the realities of the tenant experience.

3.1.2 The Tenant Involvement Team

To tackle some of these challenges at pace and put us in a strong position to build on the legacy organisation's engagement opportunities, we have established a dedicated tenant involvement team. Local government reorganisation was an opportunity for us to invest in our services and this new team is made up of a Tenant Involvement Manager and three Tenant Involvement Officers. We want to create new opportunities to address the gaps that exist, strengthen our offer, and amplify the voice of our customers.

3.2 The profile of our customers

To enable us to address the gaps and to ensure we deliver fair and equitable outcomes for our tenants, we need to collect and understand relevant information and data to understand their diverse needs. This includes those that arise from protected characteristics, language barriers, and any additional support needs.

We deliver services to a diverse range of people and so it's important that we understand more about them so that:

- when we develop or review services, policies and procedures we can be sure that our services are accessible
- when we test services, we do so from a wide range of perspectives
- when we plan engagement activities, we can develop methods that are of interest to relevant groups; and
- when we ask for views and ideas, we do so from a wide range of perspectives.

Improved data collection and analysis will also enable us to tailor our services and take appropriate action in areas such as anti-social behaviour and repairs.

3.3 Regulator of Social Housing

3.3.1 Regulatory judgement

In May 2024, North Yorkshire Council self-referred to the Regulator of Social Housing because a range of issues were identified following a self-assessment against the standards. The issues included a lack of reliable information to support our understanding of and response to the diverse needs of our tenants and limited and inconsistent meaningful opportunities for tenants to influence and scrutinise our services.

In August 2024, the regulator published a regulatory judgement specifically in relation to outcomes in the Safety and Quality Standard and Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard. The conclusion was a C3 grade and significant improvement is needed.

DRAFT

4.0 The new tenant involvement service

4.1 A values-based service

What we do and how we do it, is in line with our council values: to be inclusive, ambitious, creative, and together.

Tenant involvement is a term used to cover many different tasks and activities but what it means to us, is that we will give tenants the opportunity to scrutinise our services, to shape and help improve them. We are committed to keeping tenants informed.

We will be ambitious in our plans, ensure the opportunities are available to all and we will come up with new creative ways of working together.

4.2 Our approach

- *We will aim to make it easy*
This new strategy will recognise our commitment to involving tenants in scrutinising, shaping, co-designing, and influencing services. We consider and value all interactions with customers as a source of feedback and engagement and tenant engagement includes everything from ad hoc contact such as a call to the Customer Service Team or a conversation with an operative at home, through to taking part in a transactional survey, consultation group or being a scrutiny panel member. We will aim to make it easy to give feedback.
- *We will involve those with a direct experience*
We will tailor the approach for different customers and depending on the issue and customer needs, our wide range of engagement opportunities will be tailored to different customer preferences and needs. We will consider the barriers to involvement and then actively seek out feedback from tenants from a diverse range of backgrounds and communities.
- *We will consider the wider tenant voice.*
We recognise that each type of engagement may not be representative of all customer groups and opinions. Where we consult with a smaller group of customers, we will seek to test this with a wider group where possible. We aim to ensure that feedback overall is broadly representative of all relevant customer groups. We will take additional steps to ensure that customers are not excluded by tailoring our tools and approach to listen to and celebrate diverse views.

- *We will offer choice.*

We will offer a blended approach to involvement, with the development of a new digital engagement platform offering digital methods of engagement to widen the pool of engaged customers. We will support tenants to get involved in a way that suits them, and ensure they are offered the required training to enable them to do this.

- *We will be open and honest.*

We will be clear about what we are hoping to achieve with input from customers and tenants, what other feedback we have received and what will happen when. We will communicate clearly and regularly the impact feedback has had.

In accordance with the Transparency, Accountability and Influence standard, North Yorkshire Council we will support tenants to exercise their Right to Manage, Right to Transfer or otherwise exercise housing management functions.

4.3 Our commitment

We have made a number of promises in relation to our approach to tenant involvement and therefore to show tenants our commitment we will:

1. share information through a tenant led magazine, four times a year in a format suitable for you
2. co-produce an annual report with tenants which will include details of our performance and how income is spent
3. share the results of our Tenant Satisfaction measures at least once a year
4. use plain English and keep our information jargon free
5. offer our information in different formats, for example, in large print
6. share our learning following complaints on an annual basis
7. hold four open tenant forum events, every year
8. provide hybrid meetings in different locations and allow you to join remotely through using Microsoft teams
9. let you know what involvement events are taking place, and where to come and see us
10. provide quarterly performance information including key information relating to how we keep your home safe
11. tenants will be offered training and meetings will be supported by a terms of reference and a code of conduct

12. let you know how you and the tenant involvement activities, have made a difference

4.4 What are the opportunities for involvement

There will be a range of opportunities for involvement, some more formal than others and some requiring more a time commitment.

✓ Scrutiny Panel

The Scrutiny Panel examines how well North Yorkshire Council delivers its housing service and will work on an annual plan of specific topics focusing on areas that are under performing or where there is poor tenant satisfaction. This group will be tenant led and is an opportunity for tenants to work more strategically to influence services.

✓ Tenant Voice Panel and Forum

This Tenant Voice Panel is open to all tenants and leaseholders and is led by an elected tenant chair and committee. The purpose of the panel is to enable tenants to be involved in the review of policies and procedures, or other aspects of service improvement. The Tenant Voice Panel is supported by a forum meeting every quarter. Meetings will take place in one of the council offices with the option to join the meeting on-line via Microsoft teams and at the forum we will present our quarterly performance report and provide updates against our improvement plan. This group will link to the officer led Housing Improvement Board and the council's elected member overview and scrutiny committee

✓ Task & Finish Groups

The purpose of these groups is to enable members of the Tenant Voice Panel to be part of shaping any detailed work on service improvement and policy. It could also include bite size scrutiny work, and these groups often only require a short-term commitment.

✓ My Housing Voice

Tenant involvement does not always mean having to go to a regular meeting or becoming a committee member, many people find this option too formal or do not have the time or commitment for it. My Housing Voice is our digital involvement offer and there is a menu of opportunities that are flexible and don't require tenants to big time commitment.

These include:

- emailing your comments and ideas to us at myhousingvoice@northyorks.gov.uk
- making a suggestion for an improvement
- completing questionnaires and responding to consultations on-line
- becoming a mystery shopper
- opt to receive email updates from us
- following us on social media
- contribute to the tenant newsletter.
- be involved in a virtual task and finish group
- helping review our letters and forms

We will use social media and electronic communications to widen the reach of our consultation or engagement requirements.

✓ Editorial Panel

The Editorial Panel will support and influence our tenant communications including our printed materials, website, and social media.

The panel will also generate ideas for the Open Door (our newsletter for tenants) and support the creation the of the Annual Report.

✓ Local Tenant Representatives

This role is for anyone who wants to work with their local community. They may represent tenants within a scheme, or community, and provide a link between tenants and North Yorkshire Council's housing service. They will not advocate for tenants but will represent tenants are the Tenant Voice Forum

✓ The Big Conversation

We want to speak to as many tenants as possible to find out what they think and what matters to them. By hearing from many voices, we can build a service that we know reflects tenants' priorities. We will be out in the community throughout the year, visiting tenants and holding community pop-up events listening to tenants.

4.5 How we support customers to be involved

Being an involved tenant can bring lots of rewards including:

- The chance to really make a difference to the homes and communities where they live
- The opportunity to learn new skills and increase knowledge

- The chance to meet other volunteers who have similar interests and make new friends.

It is important that staff and involved tenants have the necessary skills to be involved at a level that suits them to allow us to achieve our objectives and we will offer the following training and support:

- We will pay reasonable out of pocket expenses to cover the cost of travel and car parking
- We will arrange transport by taxi if public or private transport is not possible
- We will choose venues which are as accessible as possible for people with disabilities
- Some of the ways to get involved take up a lot of your time and to recognise this and say thank you, we may provide vouchers
- We will offer training which can be informal or formal training.

5.0 How will we know if this has been successful?

It is essential that we monitor and share the difference tenant involvement has made. Tenants have told us that they want more feedback on things that have changed because of the work they have undertaken. We have committed to sharing the results and we will monitor if our strategy has been successful through the following measures:

- Increased tenant involvement and evidence that tenants have given their views through a range of activities
- Improved Tenant Satisfaction Measure survey results and transactional feedback survey results
- An increase in involvement from underrepresented groups

Tenant Involvement Strategy Consultation

North Yorkshire Council wants to hear from you!

We are committed to listening to our tenants to make sure your voice is heard in decisions about your home, safety and community.

We have worked with tenants to create a new Tenant Involvement Strategy. This plan explains how we will listen, engage and involve you in our services.

We take our responsibility seriously and want to earn your trust and respect. This strategy will help us involve you in scrutinising, shaping and improving our services.

Key points of the strategy:

- It explains how North Yorkshire Council will involve tenants.
- We describe what tenant involvement means.
- We have 12 promises to support tenant involvement.

About this consultation

Before answering the following six questions, please read the proposed strategy at www.northyorks.gov.uk/TenantInvolvementStrategy

If you need this information in a different format or language, or if you have any questions, please email myhousingvoice@northyorks.gov.uk or telephone 0300 131 2 131 and say 'Housing' when prompted.

If you prefer, you can complete this consultation online at www.northyorks.gov.uk/survey/tenant or by scanning the QR code below:



Privacy Notice

Read our Privacy Notice online at www.northyorks.gov.uk/your-council/transparency-freedom-information-and-data-protection/privacy-notices/consultations-and-surveys-privacy-notice. It will help you understand how and why we process your personal data.

Please do not include any personal identifiable information about yourself or someone else in your responses.

Please return this completed paper copy in the freepost envelope provided.

Closing date: Monday 3 February 2025.

We want your feedback on our proposals. There are six questions and none are compulsory:

Q1 Have you ever been an involved tenant?

Yes

No

Q2 How clear do you find the proposed strategy? Use the scale where 1=very clear to 5=very unclear

1

2

3

4

5

Please add any additional comments below:

Please do not include any personal identifiable information about yourself or someone else in your response.

Q3 Do you understand the opportunities for involvement?

Yes

No

Please add any additional comments below:

Please do not include any personal identifiable information about yourself or someone else in your response.

Q4 We have set out 12 promises. Is there anything else you think we should add?

Please do not include any personal identifiable information about yourself or someone else in your response.

Q5 Do you think we offer enough support to help people get involved?

Yes

No

Please add any additional comments below:

Please do not include any personal identifiable information about yourself or someone else in your response.

Q6 Is there anything else you would like to add about the Tenancy Involvement Strategy that has not already been covered?

Please do not include any personal identifiable information about yourself or someone else in your response.

Please return this completed paper copy in the freepost envelope provided.

Equality impact assessment (EIA) form: evidencing paying due regard to protected characteristics

(form updated June 2023)

Tenant Involvement Strategy

Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are public documents. EIAs accompanying reports going to County Councillors for decisions are published with the committee papers on our website and are available in hard copy at the relevant meeting. To help people find completed EIAs, we also publish them in our website's Equality and Diversity section. This will help people to see for themselves how we have paid due regard in order to meet statutory requirements.

Name of Directorate and Service Area	Community Development - Housing
Lead Officer and contact details	Carl Doolan – Head of Housing Management and Landlord Services
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the EIA	Sarah Thompson – Tenant Involvement Manager
How will you pay due regard? for example, working group, individual officer	This overarching EIA has been carried out by the Tenant Involvement Manager. Tenants have been involved in the creation of the Strategy.
When did the due regard process start?	September 2024

Section 1. Please describe briefly what this EIA is about. (for example, are you starting a new service, changing how you do something, stopping doing something?)

Introducing a new Tenant Involvement Strategy

Section 2. Why is this being proposed? What are the aims? What does the authority hope to achieve by it? (for example, to save money, meet increased demand, do things in a better way.)

The Council is transforming landlord services for its own tenants and leaseholders. To support that process, the Council is undertaking a full review of all policies relating to our tenants and leaseholders in our role as their landlord. The new Tenant Involvement Strategy sets how tenants can scrutinise, shape and improve housing landlord services

Section 3. What will change? What will be different for customers and/or staff?

APPENDIX C

The Tenant Involvement Strategy replaces existing strategies in operation in the former Harrogate, Richmondshire and Selby council areas. The new strategy provides greater meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise our strategies, policies and services. There is a greater emphasis on co-creation and tenant led meetings.

Section 4. Involvement and consultation (What involvement and consultation has been done regarding the proposal and what are the results? What consultation will be needed and how will it be done?)

This draft strategy has been created with tenants through joint officer and tenant focus groups, and further amendments have been made following a wider tenant consultation exercise which was carried out between 20th November 2024 and 4th February 2025. Some of the feedback highlight that some areas were not as clear as they could be, and amendments were made. Some tenants were concerned that it would be difficult for those who cannot use technology therefore updates were made to make the intention for face-to-face engagement clearer.

Section 5. What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?

The proposal does not have an impact on existing budgets

Section 6. How will this proposal affect people with protected characteristics?	No impact	Make things better	Make things worse	Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.
Age		✓		<p>From information currently available we can estimate that 51% of our tenants are aged over 60. In 2021, 25% of the county’s adult population was over the age of 65. This is higher than the national percentage of 18.4%. This means that our tenant population is significantly more aged than the average population for North Yorkshire and the country.</p> <p>By 2035, 32.60% of North Yorkshire’s total population will be aged 65+ and 5.97% will be aged 85+.</p> <p>Nationally 23.26% will be 65+ and 4.05% will be 85+ by 2035.</p> <p>Less than 5% of our tenant population are under 29. North Yorkshire has a lower proportion of young people than the</p>

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			<p>national average- 24.5% under 25 compared to 29.2% nationally.</p> <p>We recognise that not everyone wants to attend evening meetings or meetings in person. We offer a variety of ways to get involved and support and training for those that need it. We also support tenants with transport and plan to undertake involvement activities in our communities.</p>
Disability		✓	<p>North Yorkshire has a lower proportion (19.3%) of people with a disability or long-term limiting illness whose day-to-day activities are limited a lot- against the national average of 23.69%.</p> <p>However, this will rise to 20.89% of the 65+ population in North Yorkshire, against a national average of 24.86%.</p> <p>By recognising the needs of our residents who may be more vulnerable or have specific accessibility and adaptability requirements we will improve our service.</p> <p>We offer tenants support to get involved which could include transport. We make it clear that we want our involved tenants to be representative of our tenant base and that we will monitor this and target those that are underrepresented to identify specific barrers.</p>
Sex	✓		<p>The proportion of females is slightly higher (51%) than that of males (49%).</p> <p>This pattern is reflected across all localities, with the exception of Richmondshire where the large number of predominantly male military personnel have the effect of reversing the proportions.</p> <p>Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.</p>

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Race	✓			<p>North Yorkshire has a much lower proportion (4.77%) of people who identify with a non-UK identity than the national average (12%).</p> <p>Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.</p>
Gender reassignment	✓			<p>In the 2021 census 1478 (0.28%) of residents across North Yorkshire identified themselves as transsexual or with a gender identity different to that registered at birth.</p> <p>Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.</p>
Sexual orientation	✓			<p>In the 2021 census 11,291 (2.2%) of residents across North Yorkshire identified themselves as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, or Other (LGB+).</p> <p>Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.</p>
Religion or belief	✓			<p>North Yorkshire has higher levels of Christians (55.6%) than the national average (46.2%), and lower levels of all other religions than the national average. Percentages of those with no religion or not stating their religion are broadly similar to the national average.</p> <p>Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.</p>
Pregnancy or maternity	✓			<p>In 2021 there were 5133 live births in North Yorkshire.</p> <p>In 2020 the conception rate per 1000 for under 18's was 10.9. This is below the rate for England (13).</p> <p>In 2020/21 4.2% of deliveries in North Yorkshire were to mothers from ethnic</p>

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				<p>minorities, compared to the England value of 21.6%.</p> <p>Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic</p>
Marriage or civil partnership	✓			<p>A higher percentage of North Yorkshire's population is married or in a civil partnership (53.7%) than the national average (46.8%)</p> <p>Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.</p>

Section 7. How will this proposal affect people who...	No impact	Make things better	Make things worse	Why will it have this effect? Provide evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.
..live in a rural area?	✓			<p>The population in North Yorkshire is generally sparser than the national average (77 people per square kilometre as opposed to 434 nationally). In some parts of the county this is lower still (Ryedale 36, Richmondshire 38, Craven 48, Hambleton 69).</p> <p>We recognise that a lot of our meetings will be held in central locations. We will offer transport and support to access the meetings in person or an option to join on line. We also commit to introducing more community-based activities and involving tenants where they live. This will not be limited to urban areas</p>
...have a low income?	✓			<p>The proportion of households in deprivation in North Yorkshire reduced between 2011 and 2021. In 2011 52.1% of households in North Yorkshire were deprived in at least one of the four dimensions (employment, education, health and disability, housing).</p> <p>By 2021 this had fallen to 46.7%. This 5.4 percentage point reduction in North Yorkshire compared with a 5.9 percentage</p>

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				<p>point reduction across England as a whole, with the proportion of households in deprivation in North Yorkshire remaining below the national average.</p> <p>We are committed to covering the cost of expenses that tenants could incur as a result of attending involvement meetings/events.</p>
...are carers (unpaid family or friend)?	✓			<p>Carers' allowance claimants make up 0.98% of North Yorkshire's population.</p> <p>This is lower than the average for England (1.42%) but there are variations across the county. It is likely, however, that these figures do not reflect the true number of people carrying out caring roles in the county as many do not claim allowances.</p> <p>Our ambitions will not have any anticipated impacts on people specifically due to them sharing this particular protected characteristic.</p>
..... are from the Armed Forces Community	✓			<p>North Yorkshire has 29,831 Armed Forces Veterans. Richmondshire has the highest proportion of Armed Forces Veterans in North Yorkshire at 9.5% (3,962), which is the third highest nationally.</p> <p>The proportion of veterans in Richmondshire is more than double the national average rate, which is 3.8%.</p> <p>Harrogate has the highest number of Armed Forces Veterans in North Yorkshire with 7,076 (5.2%).</p> <p>Our ambitions will not have any specific impact on those from the armed forces community and we will deliver services in line with the Armed Forces Covenant.</p>

Section 8. Geographic impact – Please detail where the impact will be (please tick all that apply)	
North Yorkshire wide	
Craven district	

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Section 8. Geographic impact – Please detail where the impact will be (please tick all that apply)	
Hambleton district	
Harrogate district	✓
Richmondshire district	✓
Ryedale district	
Scarborough district	
Selby district	✓
If you have ticked one or more districts, will specific town(s)/village(s) be particularly impacted? If so, please specify below.	
No, specific towns and villages will not be impacted.	

Section 9. Will the proposal affect anyone more because of a combination of protected characteristics? (for example, older women or young gay men) State what you think the effect may be and why, providing evidence from engagement, consultation and/or service user data or demographic information etc.
The proposal will not affect anyone more because of a combination of protected characteristics.

Section 10. Next steps to address the anticipated impact. Select one of the following options and explain why this has been chosen. (Remember: we have an anticipatory duty to make reasonable adjustments so that disabled people can access services and work for us)	Tick option chosen
1. No adverse impact - no major change is needed to the proposal. There is no potential for discrimination or adverse impact identified.	✓
2. Adverse impact - adjust the proposal - The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We will change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, or we will achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people.	
3. Adverse impact - continue the proposal - The EIA identifies potential problems or missed opportunities. We cannot change our proposal to reduce or remove these adverse impacts, nor can we achieve our aim in another way which will not make things worse for people. (There must be compelling reasons for continuing with proposals which will have the most adverse impacts. Get advice from Legal Services)	
4. Actual or potential unlawful discrimination - stop and remove the proposal – The EIA identifies actual or potential unlawful discrimination. It must be stopped.	
Explanation of why the option has been chosen (include any advice given by Legal Services.)	
The proposed strategy highlights the adjustments we will make to ensure tenants can access involvement opportunities.	

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Section 11. If the proposal is to be implemented how will you find out how it is really affecting people? (How will you monitor and review the changes?)

We will use customer profiling data to ensure that our involved tenants are representative of our tenant profile. We will target tenants from hard-to-reach groups to identify any barriers to involvement. We will also review and monitor involvement feedback, satisfaction results and any complaints received.

Section 12. Action plan. List any actions you need to take which have been identified in this EIA, including post implementation review to find out how the outcomes have been achieved in practice and what impacts there have actually been on people with protected characteristics.

Action	Lead	By when	Progress	Monitoring arrangements
Review TSM results	Carl Doolan	June 2025		TSMs
Collect diverse needs data	Carl Doolan	December 2025		Housing Improvement Board

Section 13. Summary Summarise the findings of your EIA, including impacts, recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

The ambitions in the Tenant Involvement Strategy will result in increased opportunities for all tenants to get involved, which will lead to better outcomes and improved customer focused service delivery for all North Yorkshire Council tenants and leaseholders

The anticipated impacts of our ambitions are therefore positive ones.

Due regard to equalities will be paid when making decisions on actions to realise these ambitions and, where appropriate, these will be subject to full EIAs.

Section 14. Sign off section

This full EIA was completed by:

Name: Sarah Thompson
Job title: Tenant Involvement Manager
Directorate: Community Development
Signature:

Completion date: 10th March 2025

Authorised by Assistant Director: A Rowe

Date: 12 March 2025

Climate change impact assessment

The purpose of this assessment is to help us understand the likely impacts of our decisions on the environment of North Yorkshire and on our aspiration to achieve net carbon neutrality by 2030, or as close to that date as possible. The intention is to mitigate negative effects and identify projects which will have positive effects.

This document should be completed in consultation with the supporting guidance. The final document will be published as part of the decision making process and should be written in Plain English.

If you have any additional queries which are not covered by the guidance please email climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk

Please note: You may not need to undertake this assessment if your proposal will be subject to any of the following:

Planning Permission
Environmental Impact Assessment
Strategic Environmental Assessment

However, you will still need to summarise your findings in the summary section of the form below.

Please contact climatechange@northyorks.gov.uk for advice.

Title of proposal	Tenant Involvement Strategy
Brief description of proposal	Approval of the Tenant Involvement Strategy
Directorate	Community Development
Service area	Housing
Lead officer	Andrew Rowe
Names and roles of other people involved in carrying out the impact assessment	Sarah Thompson
Date impact assessment started	December 2024

Options appraisal

The Tenant Involvement Strategy is a high-level overview of the strategic vision for tenant engagement across housing landlord services supporting the delivery of the housing management function.

Climate change and the potential environmental impacts of our strategy are key considerations for the Housing Service

What impact will this proposal have on council budgets? Will it be cost neutral, have increased cost or reduce costs?

The strategy and policy will be delivered within existing service budgets and will be cost neutral.

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Changes over and above business as usual Evidence or measurement of effect Figures for CO₂e Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>	
<p>Minimise greenhouse gas emissions e.g. reducing emissions from travel, increasing energy efficiencies etc.</p>	Emissions from travel		X				
	Emissions from construction		X				
	Emissions from running of buildings		X				
	Emissions from data storage		X				
	Other		X				
<p>Minimise waste: Reduce, reuse, recycle and compost e.g. reducing use of single use plastic</p>		X					
<p>Reduce water consumption</p>		X					

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO₂e • Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>
<p>Minimise pollution (including air, land, water, light and noise)</p>		<p>X</p>				
<p>Ensure resilience to the effects of climate change e.g. reducing flood risk, mitigating effects of drier, hotter summers</p>		<p>X</p>				
<p>Enhance conservation and wildlife</p>		<p>X</p>				
<p>Safeguard the distinctive characteristics, features and special qualities of North Yorkshire's landscape</p>		<p>X</p>				

<p>How will this proposal impact on the environment?</p> <p>N.B. There may be short term negative impact and longer term positive impact. Please include all potential impacts over the lifetime of a project and provide an explanation.</p>	<p>Positive impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>No impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Negative impact (Place a X in the box below where relevant)</p>	<p>Explain why will it have this effect and over what timescale?</p> <p>Where possible/relevant please include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes over and above business as usual • Evidence or measurement of effect • Figures for CO₂e • Links to relevant documents 	<p>Explain how you plan to mitigate any negative impacts.</p>	<p>Explain how you plan to improve any positive outcomes as far as possible.</p>
<p>Other (please state below)</p>		<p>X</p>				

<p>Are there any recognised good practice environmental standards in relation to this proposal?</p>
<p>N/A</p>

Summary Summarise the findings of your impact assessment, including impacts, the recommendation in relation to addressing impacts, including any legal advice, and next steps. This summary should be used as part of the report to the decision maker.

The implementation of the Tenant Involvement Strategy will not have an environmental impact

Sign off section

This climate change impact assessment was completed by:

Name	Sarah Thompson
Job title	Tenant Involvement Manager
Service area	Housing
Directorate	Community Development
Signature	
Completion date	4th December 2024

Authorised by Assistant Director: Andrew Rowe

Date: