



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY 2018-2023

INSPIRING COMMUNITIES SHAPING OUR SERVICES



FOREWORD



I am pleased to introduce our new Community Involvement Strategy 2018-2023, which focuses on the Housing Executive's continuing commitment to improving and encouraging effective community engagement through our community involvement framework. It sets out what we plan to do in partnership with our urban and rural communities over the next five years.

So much has been achieved to date and every year our communities make positive suggestions on how we continuously review and deliver our services. I would like to thank everyone involved for their contribution and support.

We will continue building on what has already been achieved, providing genuine opportunities for tenants, residents and leaseholders to be involved and influence decisions at the highest level within our organisation.

By working together, we will achieve all of the aims set out in this strategy and community involvement will be strengthened as a result of the hard work and

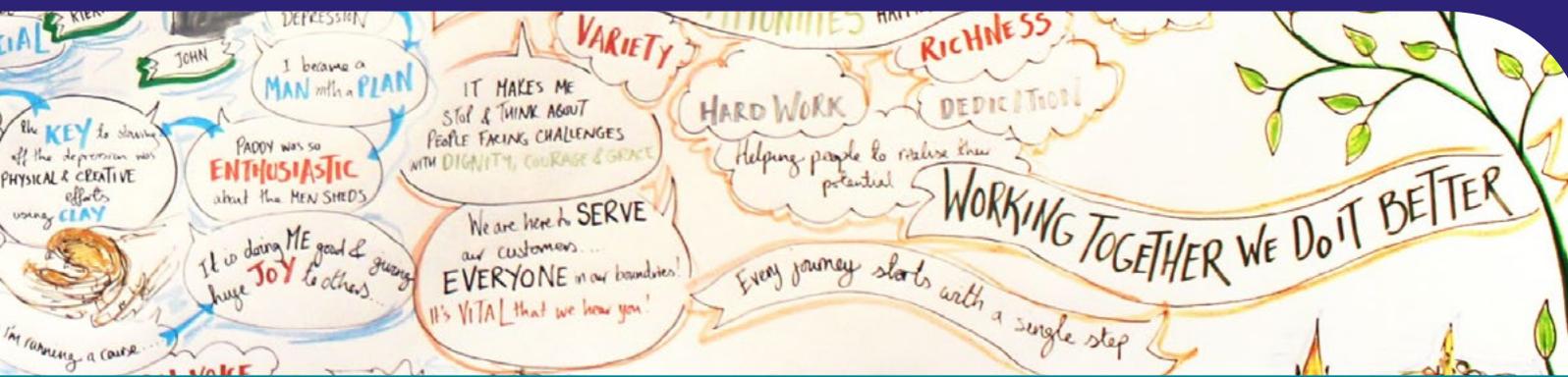
dedication from all who take part. Together we can make a difference.

We hope you will agree that this strategy is both innovative and inclusive and is a blueprint for genuine partnership between the Housing Executive and the communities we serve.

We understand the impact of GDPR and how it will affect communities in different ways, not only with their relationship with the Housing Executive but also with other public bodies. It is important that we all become aware of the boundaries that the legislative requirements bring and the importance of safeguarding and respecting the right of the individual.

The advocacy role undertaken by our community representatives is key to the delivery of our Community Involvement Strategy and we will need to continually review to ensure we meet our legislative obligations as well as the needs of our communities.

CLARK BAILIE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
HOUSING EXECUTIVE



As Chair of the Central Housing Forum, I fully endorse this new Community Involvement Strategy 2018-2023. During the consultation process the Housing Executive actively listened to the views and opinions of communities and I feel this is reflected in the pages of this document.

The Housing Executive is recognised as being a model of best practice by the Department for Communities in its Tenant Participation Strategy 2015-2020 and has been to the fore in delivering services to our communities for over 40 years.

We have worked in partnership with Housing Executive staff and Supporting Communities to produce this new strategy. We hope you will read it and decide to become involved in ways that suit your own needs. This will ensure that you, as a tenant or resident within Housing Executive estates, have the opportunity to influence

change by being involved in the decision making process.

Getting involved with your local community and the Housing Executive has many benefits such as gaining new skills, meeting new people and working together to make positive changes that could potentially change how Government deliver their services in your area, together we can make a difference by having our voice heard!



LINDA WATSON
CHAIR
CENTRAL HOUSING FORUM



“ *The members of the Central [Housing] Forum ensure that all new policies and strategies meet their requirements before they are implemented.* ”

Customer Service Excellence Assessor, May 2018



A VIEW FROM OUR CHAIR

THIS IS OUR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY 2018-2023 WHICH BUILDS UPON OUR KEY ACHIEVEMENTS OVER THE LAST 40 YEARS OF INVOLVING COMMUNITIES IN ALL FACETS OF OUR BUSINESS

“ [The Housing Executive] is excellent at keeping its tenants and customers up to date on developments within social housing.”

CSE Assessor, May 2018

We believe that a well informed and empowered community brings significant business benefits both to the community and the Housing Executive. In any given year the Housing Executive invests approximately £4 million in our community activities and we are committed to continuing that investment. We also want to develop new and innovative projects which will have a positive impact in our communities.

For example we have secured approximately £6 million over the next four years from Special European Programmes Body (SEUPB) under PEACE IV in partnership with our key delivery partners to implement programmes specifically targeted at children and young people in our estates.

The outgoing strategy of 2014-2017 has resulted in some significant changes to our approach to community involvement. Examples would include:

- The appointment of a tenant to chair our Central Housing Forum (CHF)
- The establishment of Tenant Scrutiny Panels resulting in policy changes
- Area Managers managing our Community Grants Programme
- The Launch of our Social Enterprise Programme



We want to continue to enable, empower and engage our communities through our community involvement framework.

This new strategy sets out what we plan to do and in partnership with our tenants, residents, leaseholders, community representatives and key stakeholders. For this strategy to make an impact it requires us to embed our values into every aspect of its delivery.

We want it to make a difference in communities, by being fair as well as creating a culture of mutual trust, respect and interdependence.

We want this strategy to be a living working document, which sets out the way in which we will continue to develop and improve community involvement in our services. A major consultation exercise has been undertaken with our stakeholders in the development of this strategy.

During the consultation process we actively listened to our staff and communities alike. We feel this strategy reflects their views and voices.

Through the life of this strategy we will:

- Give tenants, residents, community representatives and leaseholders the opportunity to influence, challenge and shape our services
 - Ensure that our communities have a key role in scrutinising our business performance and services
 - Strengthen our Housing Community Network Structure
 - Ensure we give our communities the opportunity to network and share best practice
- Give a voice to our tenants of tomorrow
 - A greater emphasis is to be placed on succession planning. With the baseline survey used as a tool, we will be in a position to discover the number of young people currently involved with community groups and seek out a way which can encourage young members to become involved with our Housing Community Network (HCN) structures
- Overcome technological barriers and give our communities their 'digital wings'
- Remove the barriers to involvement with our hard to reach/easy to ignore customers, and,
 - Increase options for tenants, residents and leaseholders to become involved in a way that suits them either formally or informally.



The Housing Executive has continued to listen to what we, as community representatives, have to say.

My fellow Housing Community Network members and I can see where we have influenced the new Community Involvement Strategy.

I feel that this is most evident in the proposed restructuring of the Network where tenants and community representatives can once again engage with the Housing Executive at a local level.

This came across loud and clear during the consultation sessions and the re-introduction of the local office tier in the framework will prove very important for tenants, residents and leaseholders for the duration of the new Community Involvement Strategy and beyond.

I look forward to working together to deliver this challenging agenda on behalf of Housing Executive customers and their communities.



**PATRICIA MCQUILLAN MBE
VICE-CHAIR, CENTRAL HOUSING FORUM AND
CHAIR, THE RURAL RESIDENTS FORUM**



INTRODUCTION



BUILDING STRONGER COMMUNITIES IS A CORE OBJECTIVE OF THE HOUSING EXECUTIVE

Engaging, enabling and empowering our communities has been at the core of what we do and we will continue to play our role in developing the capacity of our communities to make improvements in their estates whether it be social, environmental or economic. Improving community relations and cohesion to help build the trust that enables us and our partners to address the legacy of the conflict in NI is a vital component of our work.

Recent research by the University of Westminster¹ has reinforced the positive impact our community involvement work has in achieving this objective. We also want to provide support for communities and individuals to develop social enterprise skills to support the economic well-being and sustainability of our communities.

Tenant participation and community involvement is embedded in the way the Housing Executive delivers services we are committed to ensuring we engage with our customers in a way that suits them.

We want to hear all our customers' views and opinions first hand and we feel this new strategy provides the framework to allow this to happen.

The demographics in our estates are changing and we feel it is important to take a collegial approach with social housing providers and other partners to get the best outcomes for our communities.

Over the years local communities have been involved in transforming our services through, for example our service scrutiny panels, participating in procurement project teams for maintenance and heating contracts and delivering our annual community conference.

A by-product of this has been that our communities have sharpened their skills and gained the power to challenge and lobby us; asking those sometimes very difficult questions and we hope getting the answers.

There are over 3,500 Housing Executive staff across our office network and every staff member has a responsibility and a role to play in delivering this strategy.

1. University of Westminster, *The Business Benefits of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive's Community Involvement Activities*, Tony Manzi and Ian Simpson, 2016



What do we mean by Community involvement?

Community involvement is how we enable, engage and empower our communities to influence, challenge and lobby to help improve our services.

By engaging directly with us in a way that suits communities we have the chance to really improve what we do and how we do it. Using methods appropriate to the needs of our customer is integral to continually improving our services.

We enable our communities to become involved

We enable our communities to be involved through:

- influencing and challenging our services
- using our 300 rent abated community lets (hubs) to facilitate local services, meetings, training, community development, networking events



Chief Executive, CSE Assessor, Permanent Secretary and Director of Housing Services at the joint launch of Customer Tenants Omnibus Survey findings and presentation of Customer Service Excellence certificate

- providing training courses and conferences
- participating in consultation exercises and procurement of contracts
- providing out of pocket expenses

We also enable our communities to secure funding through various programmes such as:

- Community Grants Programme
- Community Safety Grants
- Community Involvement Funding Streams
- Community Cohesion Programmes
- Social Enterprise Grant Awards

We value our Housing Community Network and Community Champions

The Customer Service Excellence Assessor (CSE) report for Landlord Services - Housing Services (2018) highlighted that “The Northern Ireland Housing Executive has the best and most collaborative working relationship with its

customers of any organisation that the assessor has experienced. It is involved in multiple projects, both large and small that are designed to help communities move forward not only in relation to housing issues, but across many areas such as health and education. Much of this effort also relates to the needs of the most vulnerable in society. The revised Community Involvement Strategy has been designed to gain further involvement of tenants in the



Members of the Housing Community Network with the Chief Executive and the Customer Service Excellence Assessor

development of their estates and areas. The work of the Housing Community Networks (HCNs) and the Scrutiny Panels ensures that all policies and strategies meet the needs of tenant.

We are extremely proud of this and we want to build on it and find new ways to interact and consult with our communities.



Inspire Business Centre Garden Maintenance Project funded through the Community Grants Programme



KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

THE KEY ACHIEVEMENTS DURING THE LIFE OF THE OUTGOING 2014-2017 COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY CAN BE SUMMARISED AS FOLLOWS

We invested approximately £2.5m each year in community involvement and development

The Housing Executive has invested in our communities through various funding streams including our revenue and capital works programmes, our community cohesion and community safety initiatives and most recently the investment we have made in our social enterprise programmes.

We invest approximately £2.5m each year in community involvement activities ranging from the provision of direct support to community groups through our service level agreement with Supporting Communities, the provision of community lettings, our small grants programmes, the sponsoring of our annual community conference and supporting the various tiers of our Housing Community Network.

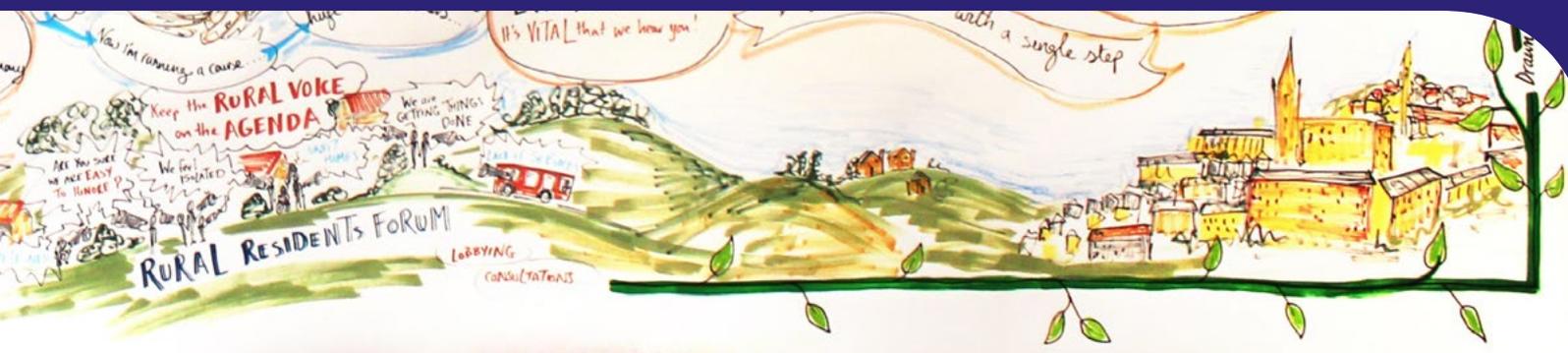
The role of our Central Housing Forum has been enhanced

The Central Housing Forum, comprising representatives from our area community networks and other community fora, is our key consultative forum where we discuss strategy and policies. Since 2015 the forum has been chaired by a Central Housing Forum representative and the Forum now engage with the Housing Executive's Board and Directors at least twice per year.

Over the life of the last strategy members of the Central Housing Forum participated in specifying requirements for new contracts. They have also been actively involved in procurement panels ensuring services are delivered to our customers' requirements and expectations. Examples include the recent procurement exercises for the repairs service, heating and grounds maintenance contracts.

The Central Housing Forum was also involved in the development of the then Department for Social Development (now Department for





The Talking Wall at 2016 Community Conference (Inspiring Communities)

Communities) Tenant Participation Strategy¹ giving our communities a voice in the drafting of this government policy.

We now have full representation from the community on our Continuous Tenant Omnibus Survey Working Group which provides feedback on tenant views on our services. Tenant representatives assist in deciding the subject areas for this important survey as well as assisting in the drafting of questions.

We connected communities and shared good practice

The annual community conference is one of the largest events in the Housing Executive's calendar, with over 250 delegates from local communities, housing professionals and key stakeholders.

The aim of this event is to celebrate the exceptional work carried out by communities in our estates, and for communities to share best practice and future proof their sector. We work in partnership with the Central Housing Forum and Supporting Communities in the planning and delivery of the conference. Our annual conference has covered numerous themes over the course of the last strategy and topics have included:

- Fit for the Future - exploring how digital technology can

enable communities (2017);

- Inspiring Communities - providing examples of how our communities are changing for the better (2016);
- Social Enterprise and how communities can help themselves (2015).

Local services were scrutinised

Scrutiny Panels were set up to scrutinise local services

A key objective of our 2014 - 2017 strategy was the development of Tenant Scrutiny Panels comprising tenant and community representatives from across our 13 Areas. We have worked in partnership with Supporting Communities in the provision of training for staff and community members to enable our community representatives to scrutinise and challenge local managers in how services are delivered at a local level. A number of reports have been produced by these Scrutiny Panels across a range of housing services and many of the panel recommendations made have resulted in change to our policies. Some good examples would include:

- The development of a Leavers Pack for tenants terminating their tenancy - South Down Scrutiny Panel
- A report on our response maintenance service, which was presented to our Board, made

various recommendations that have since been incorporated in our new contracts - West Belfast Scrutiny Panel

- A review of our scheme consultation standards; the recommendations made are being incorporated into our new policy in this area - North Belfast and Belfast Region Scrutiny Panels

Inter-agency working facilitated

We have continued to facilitate and encourage inter-agency working. Local groups have been encouraged to avail of our Estate Inspections initiative to improve the environment in their communities. The inspections have been delivered in partnership with other key agencies and this has resulted in improvements being made at a local level. Notable achievements by these inter-agency groups would include:

- The introduction of a one way system in their estate to reduce congestion and improve safety - Barcroft, Newry Inter-Agency Group
- The implementation of a 20mph speed limit and improved road maintenance - Langley Road, Ballynahinch Inter-Agency Group
- Reducing incidents of anti-social behaviour through partnership working - Dunclug, Ballymena Inter-Agency Group

1. Department for Social Development, A tenant participation strategy for Northern Ireland: 2015-2020, 2016



A new Leaseholders Panel established

A Leaseholder Panel, comprising residents that have purchased their flat from the Housing Executive, was established in the last financial year. The members meet on a quarterly basis and are the ‘voice’ of leaseholders in their local areas. We are keen to develop the forum as a model of best practice for leasehold engagement to discuss issues such as services charges and service delivery. As a minimum, the membership will always comprise of at least two representatives from each of the Housing Executive’s three regions.

Encouraged digital inclusion “giving our tenants, residents and leaseholders their digital wings”

A key achievement of the outgoing strategy was the development of a paperless Central Housing Forum.

Members have been provided with mobile devices thus helping the environment and developing the IT skills of members.

Development of the D4C project

We have developed a Digital for Change demonstration project involving tenants from four areas across Northern Ireland with the objective of improving our tenants digital skills and combating social isolation. All participants were trained by Supporting Communities.



Queens Quarter Digital for Change (D4C) project

Connected with our Hard to Reach Groups

Over the life of the last strategy we have attempted to connect with those groups that would be considered as “hard to reach/easy to ignore”. These included our rural residents, people with disabilities, young people, representatives from communities in transition and all Section 75 groupings.

The Rural Residents’ Forum

This Forum has provided a voice for rural residents who were previously under-represented in our community involvement framework.

Examples of their achievements include their contribution to improving latent demand testing procedures to determine unmet housing need in rural areas.

The Housing Executive’s Rural Unit piloted the new approach in Ballyhoran and Rathlin Island. This resulted in both areas generating evidence of the need for social housing.

Our Youth

We have been working in partnership with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum (NIYF) in our efforts to boost youth engagement/ involvement in our Community Involvement Framework.

Members of the Youth Forum have attended Central Housing Forum meetings to express the views of young people.

They also developed a video on shared housing experiences in Feldon in North Belfast.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n-SoEV1TRBo>



Members of the Northern Ireland Youth Forum taking part in a workshop



The Strategic Cohesion Forum

The Housing Executive launched its Strategic Cohesion Forum in September 2016. The Forum works as a partnership, to influence, shape and inform the Housing Executive's Community Cohesion Strategy and policies to the wider community, voluntary and statutory sector. The Forum will help communities develop good relations and assist communities to move forward.

The Disability Forum

The Disability Forum is facilitated by Disability Action and is comprised of members with experience of disability/disabilities.

One of the key achievements of the Disability Forum has been their recent production of a DVD training tool to raise awareness of disability issues in a housing context. The DVD was produced in conjunction with the Ulster University. They have also undertaken a review of Housing Executive reception areas across our network of offices which has led to positive improvements for customers with a disability.

The Disability Forum has also been recognised as a model of good practice in engagement with people with disabilities.



Engaging communities through social enterprise

This innovative scheme is aimed at developing economically vibrant and self-sustaining communities through the creation and development of social housing enterprises. Our Social Enterprise Strategy was launched in September 2015.

https://www.nihe.gov.uk/social_housing_enterprise_booklet.pdf

Within the first two years of this funding programme we have committed approximately

Housing Executive Area Manager, Malachy McKinney, with the staff from Bosco Bakery New Lodge North Belfast - one of the new Social Enterprises supported through our funding programme

£1.3 million resulting in the creation of 27 new social enterprises; assisting 27 existing social enterprises; made 429 volunteer places possible; supported 112 part time and 95 full time employment opportunities and created 774 training opportunities.



STRATEGIC DRIVERS

Programme for Government

The draft Programme for Government 2016/2021 focuses on the impact on our people rather than the actions they take within Government. One of the key outcomes of our Government is to improve community relations and to continue the journey towards a more united and shared society.

As Northern Ireland's comprehensive housing authority we deliver a wide range of housing and community related services across Northern Ireland. These reflect our statutory obligations, government priorities and in particular, the Draft Programme for Government and the Department for Communities 'Facing the Future' Housing Strategy Action Plan 2012-2017.

We continue to carry out equality screening/impact assessment, rural proofing and community proofing of our policies and to develop

policies in ways which will further promote equality of opportunity and good relations for the people of Northern Ireland.

Social Housing Reform Programme

In January 2013 the Minister for Social Development (now Department for Communities) Nelson McCausland announced proposals to radically change the way social housing is delivered in Northern Ireland.

He said that his "proposals seek to establish a housing model that is tenant-focused, that is sustainable and that enables investment in our communities."



One of the key outcomes of this programme was the development of a sector wide Tenant Participation Strategy. The Department's "Tenant Participation Strategy for Northern Ireland 2015-2020" explores how social landlords and tenants can work together to improve services highlighting that, when we use tenants' views to shape services, we deliver better, more responsive services. The strategy sets out 10 principles for tenant participation and includes desirable outcomes expected to be achieved through effective engagement between tenants and their social housing providers.

This strategy takes cognisance of and is in line with the Department's overall direction for tenant participation in Northern Ireland.

The Housing Executive Build Yes Transformation Programme

The Housing Executive is currently implementing a transformation programme across all front line services which places the customer at the heart of service delivery. A Customer Excellence Strategy has been developed that applies across all our services and this strategy reinforces our desire to provide excellent services that meet our customers' requirements.



STRATEGIC REVIEW PROCESS

WE ADOPTED A BROAD CONSULTATION APPROACH IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS STRATEGY ENGAGING BOTH COMMUNITIES, SUPPORT AGENCIES AND STAFF WITHIN OUR ORGANISATION



South Regional consultation event for the Community Involvement Strategy

Community Consultation events

In conjunction with Supporting Communities (SC) we facilitated community consultation events at five different locations across Northern Ireland.

These well attended events were held in Derry/Londonderry, Ballymena, Craigavon, Omagh and Belfast.

Consultation with various community involvement fora

We also consulted with our hard to reach groups and key stakeholders including:

- Rural Residents Forum
- Strategic Cohesion Forum
- Supporting Communities
- Disability Forum
- Northern Ireland Youth Forum
- Area Housing Community Networks
- Belfast Regional Housing Forum
- Central Housing Forum
- Housing Executive's Equality Forum

Staff Consultation Events

A number of staff consultation events were also held to ensure we captured staff views on our future strategy.



The use of the HCNs ensures that information moves to and from tenants quickly and accurately.



CSE Assessor, May 2018



STRATEGIC PLAN 2018-2023

THIS STRATEGY HAS BEEN DEVELOPED TO HELP DELIVER THE HOUSING EXECUTIVE'S CORPORATE OBJECTIVE OF FOSTERING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

VISION

Our vision is to work in active and meaningful partnership with our communities and to give residents, tenants and leaseholders a real say in making their neighbourhoods better places in which to live.

VALUES

The strategy has been developed in line with our core values of:

MAKING A DIFFERENCE THROUGH FAIRNESS, PASSION AND EXPERTISE

AIMS

This strategy has been developed to help deliver the Housing Executive's corporate objective of Building Stronger Communities.

This strategy has two specific aims:

- Promote Community Involvement across all our communities.
- Enabling our communities to challenge, influence and shape our housing service.



Clark Bailie speaking at this year's Community Conference 2018 held at the Tullyglass Hotel, Ballymena with the theme #MakeAnImpact

AIM 2 ENABLING OUR COMMUNITIES TO CHALLENGE, INFLUENCE AND SHAPE OUR HOUSING SERVICE

We will ensure that our communities have an opportunity to discuss and review policies and decisions that affect them, ensure that they have a key role in scrutinising our service delivery and have an input into the organisations business planning and identification of future priorities.

We will achieve this by:

Strengthening the Housing Community Network structure to maximise its input into service delivery by:

- Re-focusing local Housing Community Network meetings to regularly review all housing services at an estate, local office and area level. It was clear from the consultation exercise that community representatives wanted more focus on broader housing issues at all levels within the Network and maintaining strong local engagement
- Re-introducing a regional tier within the network comprising representatives from Area Networks and other community fora within that particular region. Consultation with Network members emphasised the need to re-establish a Regional Forum to improve communication between the Central and Area Forums. The proposed revised Housing Community Network is detailed overleaf.

AIM 1 PROMOTE COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT ACROSS ALL OUR COMMUNITIES

We will achieve this objective by:

Conducting research to establish a baseline of current participation levels and participant views across our communities

- In conjunction with the Housing Community Network and Supporting Communities, we will undertake a survey of participants across the 500+ groups in our network. This research will help identify gaps in our network by location or customer profile. It will also assist in ensuring we identify, encourage and support difficult to reach/easy to ignore and under-represented groups to become involved
- We will also seek to baseline community views and satisfaction levels with our

current community involvement structures, policies and procedures as well as identify any barriers to involvement.

Continue to develop new groups in under-represented locations and customer segments

- Review Service Level Agreements with supporting agencies to ensure resources target under- represented areas
- Area and Regional Business Plans will include proposals to promote and engage with under- represented locations and customer segments.

Review the effectiveness of the existing Community Grants Programme and ensure resources are targeted to most effective activities

- Review the outcomes achieved to date from our community grants funding stream to inform future policy and procedure.



Members of Edgarstown Residents Association receiving an award for special recognition pictured with Colm McDaid, Chief Executive of Supporting Communities and Clark Bailie, Chief Executive of the Housing Executive

- Enabling Area, Regional and Central Networks to scrutinise services and produce both "Service Improvement Plans" at a local level and/or recommendations on organisational policy or procedural improvements
- Ensuring our communities are consulted on both Area and Regional annual Business Plans
- Encouraging tenant chairs for local office, area and regional network meetings
- We will continue to provide a range of methods of involvement to encourage participation by all customers as either an individual or on a group basis.

Enhancing the role of the Central Housing Forum by:

- Maintaining annual accountability meetings between the Central Forum, the Board and Directors and reporting outcomes to our Housing Community Network members
- Supporting the Central Forum's service specific working groups
- Producing an annual report on Central Forum activities and achievements
- Connecting with other community network Members and relevant stakeholders to share good practice
- Continuing to 'customer proof' new policies and procedures

- Ensuring succession across the Network by establishing a shadow Youth Central Forum
- Tracking progress of our Community Involvement Strategy, Action Plan and reviewing measures of success
- Providing feedback to the HCN on the various thematic working groups.

Encouraging involvement of our difficult to reach customers

- We will continue to support the Rural Residents' Forum, the Disability Forum, the Youth Forum and the Strategic Cohesion Forum
- Respond to any research findings as detailed in Objective 1
- We will continue to provide a range of methods of involvement to encourage participation by all of our customers ie a menu of involvement developed
- We will be working in partnership with the Northern Ireland Youth Forum and others to engage with young people to set up a shadow Housing Forum that will run parallel to the Central Housing Forum.





The benefit of this approach would include:

- Shaping policy and priorities in terms of a more youthful engagement for the Housing Executive
- Contributing to succession planning for local community groups
- Developing skills through needs-led training/placements
- Improving understanding of housing issues, housing policy and related strategies.



Promoting digital inclusion

- Introduce/launch a revised Housing Executive website with greater emphasis on the provision of online services for our customers
- Provide internet access at all our reception areas to enable customers to access digital services
- Evaluate the Digital for Change (D4C) pilot project and assist customers to move increasingly to digital services;
- Develop new apps on key service areas eg pre-tenancy
- Maximise the potential of our community lets as Digital Hubs
- Implement the recommendations of Supporting Communities Community House Review.



Glenravel and District Community and Resident's Association's Life Saver Campaign which was funded under the Community Grants Programme

Developing the capacity of community groups by:

- Continuing to fund Supporting Communities to build capacity within our communities so that they can engage effectively in the HCN
- Ensuring adequate funding for our Area, Regional and Central Housing Fora with responsibility for managing their own budgets
- Encouraging and assisting groups to follow/adhere to/achieve good governance principles across the HCN
- Signposting and assisting communities to access complementary funding/training opportunities
- Provide opportunities for our community groups to avail of appropriate and timely training - accredited and non-accredited.

Improve networking and sharing of best practice by:

- Supporting our annual Community Involvement Conference
- Developing a web based community hub site for Network members to communicate with each other, share good practice and report on new initiatives across the network
- Publishing an annual report of HCN activities over the year
- Consider the development of a Central Housing Forum website.



Figure 1: How well do you feel you are consulted by the Housing Executive (%)?

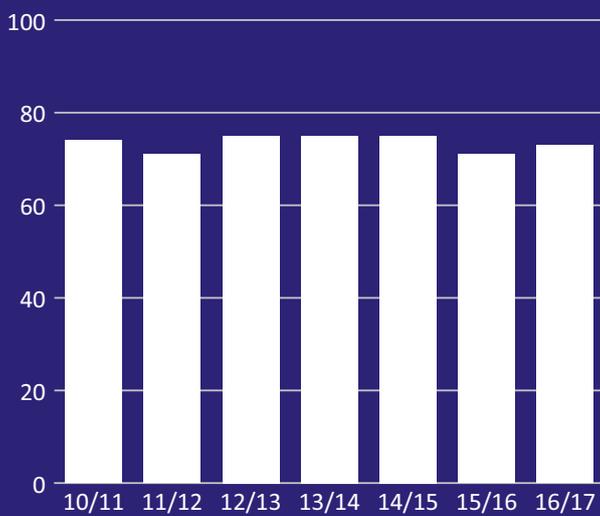


Figure 2: Views taken into account and acted upon (%)



HOW WILL WE MEASURE THE PROGRESS AND OUTCOMES OF THIS STRATEGY?

We will monitor progress and measure the success of this strategy by:

Regular monitoring of the Action Plan

- Detailed action plans to ensure delivery of this strategy will be developed with year 1 actions included in Appendix 1. The Action Plan will be reviewed at least bi-annually by our Central Housing Forum.

Measuring progress against baselines

The research element, as proposed under Objective 1, will provide a comprehensive baseline for the

measurement of success of the overall strategy.

Progress will be tracked and the following areas will be measured:

- Estates with active community groups
- Levels of participation across all groups
- Participants' satisfaction levels with their ability to shape our services

Undertake a 'Return on Investment' analysis at mid-point of the strategy

A similar exercise undertaken by Supporting Communities in 2016 indicated a return of £8 for every £1 invested. It is proposed to revisit this approach as a method of highlighting value for money of the overall strategy.

Tracking customer views through our Continuous Tenant Omnibus Survey (CTOS)

Tenant satisfaction with our services in our estates will be regularly monitored through our Continuous Tenant Omnibus Survey. The following tables provide a summary of tenant views on involvement over recent years

These key indicators will be tracked and reported through the Central Housing Forum on an annual basis.

APPENDIX 1

ACTION PLAN 2018-19

Objective 1: To promote community involvement across all our communities

What we will do	How we will do it	Who's going to do it	When it will be done	Why we are doing it	What success will look like
Conduct research to establish a baseline of current participation levels and participants views across our communities.	In conjunction with the HCN & SC we will undertake a survey of participants across the 500 groups in our network and produce report.	Housing Services, SC, HCN.	February 2019.	To help identify gaps in our network by location or customer profile. Identify and include difficult to reach and under- represented groups.	All sections of our community will be represented on our Housing Community Network Structure.
	In conjunction with the HCN we will also seek to baseline views & satisfaction levels with our current HCN structure.	Housing Services, SC, HCN & CI.	February 2019.	To help prioritise improvement activities and provide basis of measurement for any improvements in service/ communication.	Baselines established.
Continue to develop new groups in under-represented areas.	We will review & renew Service Level Agreements with Support Agencies.	CI.	March - April 2019.	To ensure resources are targeted at under- represented groups.	Resources targeted at under-represented groups.
	Establish new steering groups for at least 15 tower blocks.	Housing Services.	March 2019.	To establish good communication links between Housing Executive and Tower Block residents to deliver the new Tower Block strategy.	15 new Steering Groups established.
Review the effectiveness of the existing Community Grants Programme and ensure resources are targeted to most effective activities.	Review the outcomes achieved to date from our Community Grants funding stream and produce an amended guide for Area Managers.	CI & SC.	February 2019.	To inform future policy and procedures.	Community Grants informing future policy and procedures.

Objective 2: Enabling our communities to challenge, influence and shape our Housing Service

What we will do	How we will do it	Who's going to do it	When it will be done	Why we are doing it	What success will look like
Strengthening the Housing Community Network structure to maximise its input into service delivery.	Re-introducing a Regional tier within the Network comprising representatives from Area Networks and other community fora.	Regions & SC.	December 2018.	Consultation with Network members emphasised the need to re-establish a Regional Forum to improve communication between Area and CHF.	Regional Tier re-introduced.
	Enabling Regional, Area and Central Networks to scrutinise services and produce Service Improvement Plans.	Central, Regional, Area & SC.	Ongoing.	To make recommendations on organisational policy or procedural improvements.	Changes made to organisational policy or procedural improvements.
	Establishing a Tenant Chairperson for local office, Area and Regional Network meetings.	Local office, Area & Regional Network & SC.	Phased approach from Sept 2018 - Dec 2019.	Tenant Chairpersons at District Area and Regional tiers.	All tiers have Tenant Chairpersons.
	Reframe our Scrutiny Forum framework to 3 Regional Scrutiny Forums meetings on a quarterly basis and agree Terms of Reference and agenda for all levels.	Local office, Area & Regional Network & SC.	September 2018 - December 2019.	To scrutinise policies and procedures and improve service delivery & increase efficiencies.	Feed forward scrutiny forums, recommendations for changes to policy and procedure. Services improved in line to customer expectations.
	Provide job description, role, responsibilities and training for staff and community representatives and review length of tenure.	Local office, Area & Regional Network & SC.	September 2018 - March 2019.	To ensure all staff and community are involved in the Scrutiny Structure.	Annual Business Plans should reflect the proposals and outcomes.
	Review CHF, Scrutiny and HCN membership.	CI - SC.	February 2019.	To give all members a voice at our CHF, HCN and Scrutiny Forums.	Community Representatives have equal opportunity to be involved, no matter where they live in Northern Ireland.
	Continue to 'customer proof' new policies and procedures.	CI & SC.	Ongoing.	To act as a Central Consultative Panel and ensure our communities are kept appraised.	All major policy and procedural changes are fed through the Central Housing Forum from all Divisions in the Housing Executive.

What we will do	How we will do it	Who's going to do it	When it will be done	Why we are doing it	What success will look like
	Tracking progress of our Community Involvement Strategy, Action Plan and review measures of success. Establish a baseline of digital knowledge & skills, internet usage across our community lets, HCN membership and record on GIS.	CI, SC & CHF. CI - Research- GIS Unit - SC.	March 2019. June 2019.	To measure success of all actions in Community Involvement Strategy. To establish a baseline of internet usage, digital skills and knowledge across the Network.	Progress achieved across the Action Plan. Number involved increased over the life of the Strategy.
	Develop a Pre-Tenancy Training Course.	CI - Sustaining Tenancies - SC.	March 2019.	To ensure that our new tenants are supported as they embark in their new tenancy.	Pre-Tenancy Training Course developed and delivered to new tenants in order to prepare for launch of a Pre-Tenancy APP.
	Develop a Welcome Pack.	CI - Sustaining Tenancies - SC.	March 2019.	To ensure that our new tenants are welcomed and informed as they embark in their new tenancy.	Welcome Pack developed and delivered to new tenants in order to prepare for launch of a Pre-Tenancy APP.
	Implement a revised Website with greater emphasis on the provision of online services for our customers - a wide range of community involvement enhancements (Community Hubs/News/Polls/Events Calendars etc).	CI - IT - SC.	March 2019.	To ensure customers have a number of methods to contact us with.	Revised Website with a customer Portal - more business completed online Efficiencies & savings made.
Overcoming barriers - giving our communities their 'digital wings'.	Provide Internet access as a Digital Platform to all offices impacted by Universal Credit. Evaluate our Digital for Change pilot project. Develop community Lets as Community Hubs/Digital Zones.	CI - IT - CHF. I - IT - SC. CI - IT - SC.	March 2019. February 2019. Patch Managers Phased approach - 50 per year x 3 years.	To give our communities choices in how they can engage with us. To assist customers in using more Digital Services. Given the onset of UC and Welfare Reform this will provide support and assistance for our Tenants to access Benefits and Services online.	Create an online Portal where Residents can access information. More customers moving to Digital Services. Community Lets are equipped and re-branded as Community Hubs AKA Digital Zones.

What we will do	How we will do it	Who's going to do it	When it will be done	Why we are doing it	What success will look like
Strengthening our Housing Community Network structure.	Estate Inspections/Inter Agencies.	CI - SC - HCN members.	Ongoing.	Ensuring the physical and environmental aspects of estates are managed by all Agencies - responsibilities shared & platform for accountability provided.	Service Level Agreement with all participants. People will want to live in our estates. Improving contact and accountability with all Agencies.
	Planning Project with NI Youth Forum called 'Young Champions 4 Change'.	CI - NIYF - SC.	Ongoing.	To give young people a voice in our Community Involvement Framework in recognition of the role they will play as our tenants of tomorrow.	At least 1 young person represented at Regional Level and 2 young people represented at Central Housing Forum.

What we will do	How we will do it	Who's going to do it	When it will be done	Why we are doing it	What success will look like
Develop the capacity of our community groups.	Continue to fund/support Communities. Ensure adequate administrative funding for our Area, Regional and Central Housing Fora.	Housing Services. Housing Service.	Ongoing. Ongoing.	To build the capacity within our communities. To ensure we can deliver this service to implement strategic objectives.	Capacity build within our communities. Adequate funding delivered to our Area, Regional and Central Housing Fora.
	We will continue to encourage and assist groups deliver good governance across the Network.	CI - SC - HCN members.	Ongoing.	Create an annual good governance health check for groups in our Community Hubs.	Annual good governance health check for groups Groups better able to manage community lets and follow good practice in managing their business. Groups accessing funding and training opportunities.
Improve networking and sharing of best practice.	Signposting and assisting communities to access complementary funding/training opportunities. Supporting our annual Community Involvement Conference.	CI - SC. CI - SC - CHF.	Ongoing. Annually.	To ensure our groups have access to funding and training opportunities. To create opportunities for networking, sharing best practice and inspiring communities with a view to creating interdependence.	Over 250+ to Celebrate the success of Community Conference.

APPENDIX 2

CONSULTATION RESPONDENTS

Written responses to the Community Involvement Draft Consultation Report were received from the following:

COUNCILS

Armagh City, Banbridge and Craigavon District Council

Newry, Mourne and Down District Council

VOLUNTARY/EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

Supporting Communities

National Energy Action NI

Belfast Metropolitan College

Armoy Community Association

Community Relations Council

HOUSING EXECUTIVE AND NETWORKS

Employee of the Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Rural Residents Forum

Disability Forum

Member from the Housing Executive's Disability Forum

Housing Community Network Belfast Region

Housing Community Network South Region

Housing Community Network North Region

This document is available in alternative formats.
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#getinvolved

Housing
Executive

December 2018
www.nihe.gov.uk