

Resident Involvement and Participation Strategy 2010-2012

Status	Approved
Document reference	SOPOPS376ST
Date document written/amended	October 2010

STATUS (Draft/Approved/Updated/Archived)	REFERENCE
APPROVED	SOPOPS376ST

Important notice:
Printed paper copies of this procedure are **uncontrolled**.
The current version of this procedure is available on the Group Intranet site

Version Number	Date Amended	Comments	Date Approved	Author	Approved by
1		Revised from 2008-2010 strategy	Apr 2009	JAF	Board
2	Oct 2010	Revised from 2008-10 strategy	Jan 2011	KW	GDO

Contents

1.	Introduction	3
1.1	Group Mission Statement	3
1.2	Related Strategies	3
1.3	Related Policies	4
1.4	The Role of Social Landlords in Resident Involvement	4
2.	Background	5
2.1	Context	5
2.2	The Tenant Services Authority – Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard	6
2.3	Consultation	6
3.	The Strategy	7
3.1	Strategic approach	7
3.2	The vision	7
3.3	Building on current achievements	8
3.4	Scrutiny	9
3.5	Participation	10
3.6	Resident Profiling	12
4.	Reviewing progress	12
4.1	Assessing the Impact	13
5.	Related Documents	13
6.	Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	13

Status	Approved
Document reference	SOPOPS376ST
Date document written/amended	October 2010

1. Introduction

In April 2009 the Boards of Signpost Housing Association (SHA) and Signpost Care Partnerships (SCP), to be referred to in this document as the Associations, approved the 2009-2010 Resident Involvement and Participation Strategy.

In consultation with residents, stakeholders and staff this strategy has now been reviewed and updated to cover the three year period 2010-2012.

1.1 Group Mission Statement

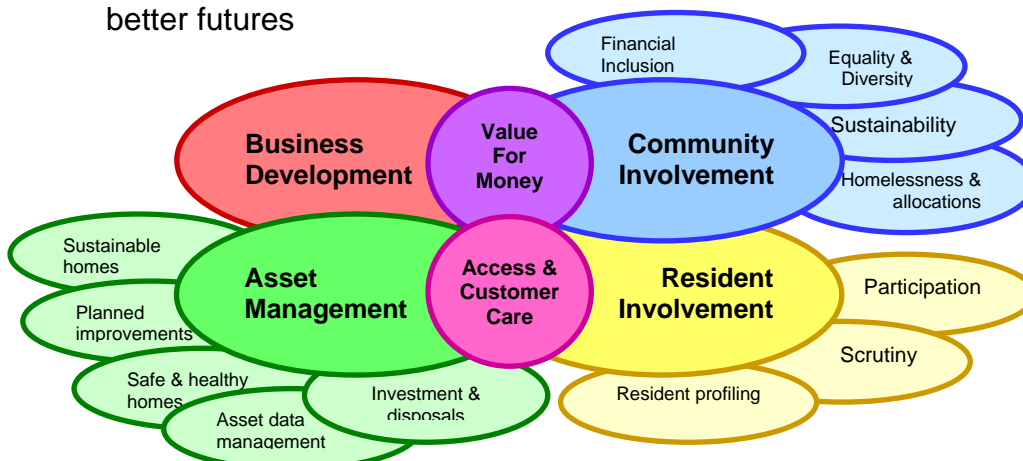
The Associations strive to achieve the Spectrum Group mission:

‘To be recognised and respected for providing quality homes and services. Empowering people, supporting active communities and building better futures’.

1.2 Related Strategies

The Associations have six interconnected operational strategies that deliver against each part of the Group’s mission:

- Business Development - Providing quality homes
- Asset Management - Providing quality homes
- Value For Money - Providing quality services
- Access and Customer Care - Providing quality services
- Resident Involvement - Empowering people
- Community Involvement - Supporting active communities and building better futures



In accordance with the Group’s Continuous Improvement Policy and Procedure and the Associations’ Continuous Improvement Policy, progress

Status	Approved
Document reference	SOPOPS376ST
Date document written/amended	October 2010

against all the key strategies is reviewed regularly. Annual action plans are developed to identify and address any remedial actions or improvements which may be required. The action plans are monitored on the Group's Continuous Improvement Database.

1.3 Related Policies

This strategy contributes towards the Spectrum Group's Core Objective of Tenants at the Heart, as set out in the Corporate Plan for 2009-2014:

"To ensure that the Group's tenants and residents have a strong and meaningful voice within the Group, that they advise and steer the strategic direction of the Group and take control of local decisions including budgetary spend".

The Associations Resident Involvement and Participation Strategy seeks to contribute to this theme by:

- Establishing a clear framework for resident consultation that empowers residents to contribute to the strategic direction and service delivery of the Associations
- Broadening and deepening opportunities for resident involvement and consultation
- Ensuring that the Associations work in partnership with residents, stakeholders and local partners to achieve continuous improvements to service delivery.

This strategy contributes towards the Spectrum Group's Medium-term Group Strategies (2009-2014) Updated April 2010.

This strategy acknowledges those residents who are willing to work voluntarily to make a difference for others. It also recognises the responsibilities of the Associations as registered social landlords.

1.4 The Role of Social Landlords in Resident Involvement

Resident Involvement is about how we engage with residents, how we support them to work with us and how we act on feedback to improve service delivery. It is also about SHA and SCP working with stakeholders internally and externally to understand how we can meet needs together by forming strong and effective partnerships.

Social Landlords have a responsibility to meet the expectations of residents in terms of customer service, engagement, service flexibility and responsiveness. A key aim of the TSA is to support this theory for people with traditionally less economic power and less able to demand this for

Status	Approved
Document reference	SOPOPS376ST
Date document written/amended	October 2010

themselves.

As well as the TSA's framework for co-regulation, Social Landlords will continue to carry out self-assessments based on the Audit Commission's Key Lines Of Enquiry (KLOE). The Associations' aim will always be to deliver an excellent service in accordance with the relevant KLOE for the service area and with consideration for the three cross-cutting themes of; Access and Customer Care, Value for Money and Diversity.

The resident profiling exercise undertaken by the Associations in 2009-2010 has gone a long way to enable us to better understand the diversity of our residents, which includes those living in SCP owned accommodation. While SCP no longer provides the support for those tenants, they are still very much a part of our activities and considered equally with all other residents.

2. Background

2.1 Context

This strategy takes account of:

- Housing Corporation Neighbourhoods and Community Strategy (2006)
- Sustainable Communities Act 2007
- Ends and Means: The future roles of social housing in England (Hills Report, February 2007)
- Housing Corporation Circular 05/07: Housing Corporation requirements in relation to resident involvement (May 2007)
- People First: Delivering change through involvement (Housing Corporation, May 2007)
- Every Tenant Matters: A review of social housing regulation (Cave Review, June 2007)
- The Audit Commission Key Line of Enquiry (KLOE): Resident Involvement (July 2007)
- Housing and Regeneration Act 2008
- Housing Corporation Good Practice Note 16: Working with local authorities (April 2008)
- Excellence in Service Delivery and Accountability: Code for members (National Housing Federation, 2009)
- Quality Assessment Framework (Supporting People, April 2009)
- A new regulatory framework for social housing in England: A statutory consultation (Tenant Services Authority, November 2009)

Status	Approved
Document reference	SOPOPS376ST
Date document written/amended	October 2010

- The Tenant Services Authority's Regulatory Framework for Social Housing in England (Tenant Services Authority, April 2010).

2.2 The Tenant Services Authority – Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

The Tenant Services Authority's (TSA) new regulatory powers came into effect for all social housing providers in England on 1 April 2010. The framework of service standards was developed in consultation with tenants, local authorities, housing associations and a variety of other partners.

The aims and approach to regulation, fundamental to the TSA include:

- Ensuring a fair deal for tenants
- Protecting taxpayers and other funders of social housing
- Being a modern and effective regulator.

Tenant involvement and empowerment features at the top of the list of six standards and consists of three required outcomes including:

- Customer service, choice and complaints
- Involvement and empowerment
- Understanding the diverse needs of tenants.

Associated with these outcomes are detailed specific expectations. These expectations should form part of the 'local offers' made to residents which in turn will be used as part of the framework for self-assessment. Involving residents is critical to this process.

2.3 Consultation

In drawing up the strategy for 2010-2012, consultation has taken place with residents and stakeholders at events, including:

- The 2009 Annual Stakeholder Conferences in Blandford, Exeter and Plymouth
- Seminars held throughout 2009 involving Board members, residents and staff
- The 2009 Annual Residents Conference
- The 2009 Annual Staff Conference
- Policy and Procedure Review Group
- Service Action Team meetings

Status	Approved
Document reference	SOPOPS376ST
Date document written/amended	October 2010

3. The Strategy

3.1 Strategic approach

The Associations activity in this area is contained within a strategic framework consisting of three key elements which in turn link fundamentally to the TSA's required outcomes for Tenant Involvement and Empowerment. They include:

- Scrutiny (Customer Service, Choice and Complaints)
- Participation (Involvement and Participation)
- Resident profiling (Understanding the Diverse Needs of Tenants).

3.2 The vision

For each of the three years of the strategy, we will determine some key achievements and milestones. This will provide the vision for what we want the future of Resident Involvement and Participation within the Associations to look like.

The Key Milestones for 2010 are:

- Successful establishment of regional Community Forums
- Empowerment of Community Forums to manage budgets for Resident Involvement in SHA and SCP
- Publication of a Resident Statement, developed in consultation with our residents and stakeholders which sets out our commitment to involvement and the options for support
- Publication of a clear set of Local Offers, developed in consultation with our residents and stakeholders which sets out our agreed standards at a local level for key service areas
- Successful establishment of Consultative Groups for some of our harder to reach residents
- Achieved or exceeded targets for Key Performance Indicators for Resident Involvement
- Achieved improvement in resident satisfaction as measured in the annual satisfaction survey
- Successful and thorough consultation with residents and stakeholders on any stock rationalisation and distribution of comprehensive feedback
- Achieved better understanding and response to our customers' needs by having household information available to all staff on ActiveH.

The Key Milestones for 2011 are:

Status	Approved
Document reference	SOPOPS376ST
Date document written/amended	October 2010

- Empowered Community Forums with increased skills and capacity from training undertaken through Resident Involvement opportunities
- Increased involvement and broader representation in Consultative Groups for harder to reach residents
- Achieved improvement in resident satisfaction as measured in the STATUS survey for 2011, in line with Spectrum Group objectives to obtain top quartile performance
- Active and ongoing usage of household information to deliver a better service to residents
- Reviewed Resident Statement in consultation with residents and stakeholders
- Achieved accreditation from Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS)
- Maintained KLOE gap analysis with accurate and up to date information to evidence delivery of an 'excellent' service
- Benchmarking of Resident Involvement taking place with other social landlords locally and nationally through HouseMark system
- All resident and community involvement recorded on a single database with associated costs and volunteer time accounted for
- Review of Resident Involvement function undertaken to identify opportunities for improvement as determined by residents and stakeholders

The Key Milestones for 2012 are:

- Reviewed Resident Involvement and Participation strategy in consultation with residents and stakeholders
- Developed robust framework for project planning of Resident and Community Involvement activities
- Achieved improvement in resident satisfaction as measured in the annual satisfaction survey

3.3 Building on current achievements

The Associations already involve residents in a number of ways to provide opportunities for residents to influence service delivery. This strategy aims to build on this work, including:

- Supporting the Spectrum Residents Group (SRG) established as a scrutiny group in 2009 with SHA and SCP resident representation
- Supporting residents involved in ongoing work on the Policy and Procedure Review Committee and the Service Action Team

Status Document reference Date document written/amended	Approved SOPOPS376ST October 2010
--	--

- Building on the work done with existing consultative groups for Independent Living, Supported Housing and Disabled residents by extending representation and including new groups for Young People and residents from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds
- Involving residents in decision making with colleagues in Signpost Services through the Planned And Responsive Repair Review Group (PARRR) and the Maintenance and Repair Group (MARG)
- Involving residents in staff events such as the Staff Conference and at local team meetings
- Consulting with residents on the Design Forum in the development of new homes and communities
- Consulting with residents at a local and scheme level through the existing Forums and future proposed structures.

3.4 Scrutiny

3.4.1 Aims

The Tenant Services Authority policy of Co-regulation requires organisations to have in place effective resident scrutiny. Pivotal to this is the need for residents to be equipped with the confidence, capacity and skills which are required for such a role. Resident scrutiny should aim to put residents at the heart of decision making by challenging the organisation, making it accountable and providing meaningful recommendations for improvement.

In consultation with residents, the actions identified to achieve this aim include:

- Engaging in discussions with the existing Forums to review the current structural arrangements
- Work within the Group to support the work of the SRG
- Seek to devolve Resident Involvement budgets to area Forums
- Engage with residents during the early stages of key strategic decisions
- Agree with residents which areas of service need to be improved
- Generally improve communication with residents, communities and stakeholders
- Deliver on any identified actions from previous year's annual Resident and Community Involvement Impact Assessment and carry out an annual Impact Assessment.
- Produce an Annual Report to residents in accordance with the TSA standards

Status Document reference Date document written/amended	Approved SOPOPS376ST October 2010
--	--

3.4.2 *Measures of success*

The key measures for success in achieving effective scrutiny include:

- Providing an effective mechanism for resident scrutiny of key business activities in the form of the SRG, with representation from SHA and SCP residents.
- Providing an effective mechanism for resident scrutiny of strategies, policies and procedures in the form of the Service Action Team and Resident Policy and Procedure Review Committee.
- The successful establishment of Regional Community Forums.

3.4.3 *Strategic Goals*

- Achieve a minimum of 2 star accreditation when inspected.

3.5 Participation

3.5.1 *Aims*

By providing a range of opportunities and support options, residents are able to challenge the Associations and influence decision making at strategic and local levels. Through these structures, residents can make a difference to the way we deliver services and improve their quality of life in the longer term. This participation is critical the Associations' success as a business by seeking the views and delivering a service which meets the needs of people who live in and around our homes.

In consultation with residents, actions identified to achieve effective participation include:

- Continue to support focus groups which are already established, paying particular attention to those that engage 'hard to reach' groups
- In consultation with residents, increase the range of ways to be involved, including seeking to engage with residents aged between 21 and 35
- Continue to promote and support current annual and celebratory events
- Expand current engagement activities with residents in the west area of our operations and consider developing an incentive scheme to provide motivation and reward
- Working with residents to identify individual training needs and deliver a training which will help to increase individual skills, capacity and confidence
- Seek to empower residents by involving them at the early stages of policy and strategy development, increasing decision making and

Status	Approved
Document reference	SOPOPS376ST
Date document written/amended	October 2010

formal consultations through Community Forums and increase involvement and control over Resident Involvement budgets to those groups

- Promote Resident Involvement through positive branding of the service
- Annually review the Resident Involvement statement
- Ensure all staff are aware of the ways residents can be involved and engage with the organisation and provide more opportunities for staff and residents to interact together
- Include Resident Involvement as a standard agenda item at team meetings and at 1-2-1s with staff
- Ensure all Resident Involvement activity is recorded on the organisations Continuous Improvement database and cross referenced to meet Quality Assessment Framework requirements
- Consider alternative means of communication as a way of engaging with residents including; text messaging, video conferencing and online methods
- Benchmark the service against other organisations in the sector both locally and nationally using HouseMark to support the principles of continuous improvement and the sharing of best practice.

3.5.2 Measures of success

In consultation with residents the key measures for success include:

- Maintaining an in-depth and accurate database to monitor participation to inform decision making and measure the impact of Resident Involvement on our services
- Benchmarking of the service
- Establishing consultative groups for those residents who have not traditionally participated
- Providing Resident Involvement training for all staff
- Demonstrate greater and more representative participation generally and in Governance structures

3.5.3 Strategic Goals

- Achieve a minimum of 2 star accreditation from the Audit Commission
- 1st / 2nd quartile performance in Customer Satisfaction
- Increase in satisfaction from residents that views are taken into account

Status	Approved
Document reference	SOPOPS376ST
Date document written/amended	October 2010

3.6 Resident Profiling

3.6.1 *Aims*

In order to provide the best possible service to our residents and understand their needs, it is vital for us to know who our residents are. The aim of the Resident Profiling initiative is to gather information about our resident population and analyse the data to inform business planning, resource allocation, and effective communication.

In consultation with residents, the actions identified to achieve resident profiling include:

- Actively engage and involve SCP residents in formal Resident Involvement structures
- Produce all literature and communications in 'plain language'

3.6.2 *Measures of success*

The key measures for success for this element of the strategy include:

- Having residents engaging with the Associations who are representative of residents as a whole, as measured by the annual Impact Assessment and Customer Diversity Audit.

3.6.3 *Strategic Goals*

- Achieve a minimum of 2 star accreditation from the Audit Commission
- 1st / 2nd quartile performance in Customer Satisfaction

4. Reviewing progress

We will report progress on the Action Plan each year on a quarterly basis through the resident newsletter, Your Voice. Reports will also be made to residents at Forum meetings east and west and to the Regional Community Forums when established.

Progress on the annual action plan will be reported to the Common Purpose Boards.

Progress against the annual action plan will also be monitored by Managers through standard performance reporting measures.

The strategy will be reviewed with residents between September and October of 2012 with a new strategy being presented to Common Purpose Boards by December 2012.

Status	Approved
Document reference	SOPOPS376ST
Date document written/amended	October 2010

4.1 Assessing the Impact

An annual Impact Assessment of Community and Resident Involvement will be carried out and reported to the Common Purpose Boards in July of each year.

5. Related Documents

- Group Policy: Resident Involvement (GCE251PO)
- Group Policy: Resident Consultation (GCE069PO)
- Group Policy: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (GCE115PO)
- Group Continuous Improvement Policy (GCE113PO) and procedure
- SHA & SCP Access and Customer Care Strategy
- SHA & SCP Value For Money Strategy (SOPOPS373ST)
- SHA and SCP Community Involvement Strategy (SOPOPS374ST)

6. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

We will strive to ensure that there will be no discrimination or unfair treatment on the grounds of gender (and gender reassignment status), background (e.g. gypsies and travellers, asylum seekers), race, colour, ethnic or national origin, faith, sexual orientation, marital/civil partnership status, age, disability, social position, politics, trade union membership or social disadvantage. We aim to ensure that everybody is treated equally and has equal opportunity to receive the services we offer.

Involvement of our customers is a fundamental means by which the Group ensures that its services are relevant, accessible, of a high standard and represent good value for money. It is important that the views of different groups within our customers are enabled to give us their views and feedback so that we can, with their help, shape the services to best meet their needs. In support of this, the Group will:

- take steps to use a variety of involvement methods so as to include customers from all groups and to involve them in consultations and the development of policies and services,
- take steps to ensure that no section of our communities are excluded from taking part in the representative structures both formal and informal and local and corporate,
- take steps to ensure that equality, diversity and inclusion training is made available to customers who are actively involved in our

Status	Approved
Document reference	SOPOPS376ST
Date document written/amended	October 2010

- management and decision processes,
- take steps to ensure that the involvement of different customer groups is monitored and reported as part of the wider involvement strategies.

Status	Approved
Document reference	SOPOPS376ST
Date document written/amended	October 2010