

# Housing Resident Engagement Strategy

2022-2027

Thurrock Council

DRAFT

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## Introduction

The Housing Resident Engagement Strategy 2022-27 sets out the aims and ambitions of the Housing service in improving its interaction and communication with those who live in and around Thurrock Council's homes and neighbourhoods.

The Housing department interacts with over 10,000 households throughout the borough across a broad range of services and recognises that each these households is unique. As a result of this diversity, those who access Housing services must have the opportunity for their voice and views to be listened to, not just heard.

The significance of meaningful engagement with residents may never have been higher than it is currently. The impact of and response to the tragedy at Grenfell Tower shows how important it is for residents and communities to be able to access information, express their views and opinions on changes, and play an active part in the way that duties are fulfilled and services are delivered by the Housing department.

This strategy aims to set the framework for future action, which is meaningful and valuable to residents and communities, reinforcing the understanding that residents and communities must be at the centre of all that the Housing service does.

The document seeks to establish an approach that will see resilient and respectful partnerships formed and maintained between the Housing department and those who access its services. The strategy sets aims to strengthen resident participation in the scrutiny and governance of the Housing service, which will offer greater transparency into how the Housing service operates.

Through this strategy, the Housing department lays the foundations to improve the experience residents and communities have when interacting with its services and further improve those services through continuous learning. This approach will ensure that the Housing department remains responsive, adaptable and flexible to residents' and communities broad and changing needs.

In developing this strategy, the Housing service has worked alongside its Excellence Panel, representing the residents who live in and around the Council's homes neighbourhoods.

## Corporate Context

Thurrock Council's vision and corporate priorities, adopted in January 2018, underpin this Housing Resident Engagement Strategy. The Council's vision is for Thurrock to be **an ambitious and collaborative community which is proud of its heritage and excited by its diverse opportunities and future.**

Sitting alongside the vision are the three corporate priorities of People, Place and Prosperity.

**People** – a borough where people of all ages are proud to work and play, live and stay.

This means:

- high quality, consistent and accessible public services which are right first time
- build on our partnerships with statutory, community, voluntary and faith groups to work together to improve health and wellbeing
- communities are empowered to make choices and be safer and stronger together

At the centre of this strategy is the intention to continually improve Housing services to meet the needs of those who access them. The strategy sets out that partnerships with residents and communities are integral to the success of both this document and the wider Housing service.

**Place** – a heritage-rich borough which is ambitious for its future.

This means:

- roads, houses and public spaces that connect people and places
- clean environments that everyone has reason to take pride in
- fewer public buildings with better services

The Housing service is responsible for estates and neighbourhoods across the borough, and by working in partnership with residents and communities, their priorities can be better understood. This improved understanding will allow the Housing service to proactively address concerns and facilitate areas where residents can take pride.

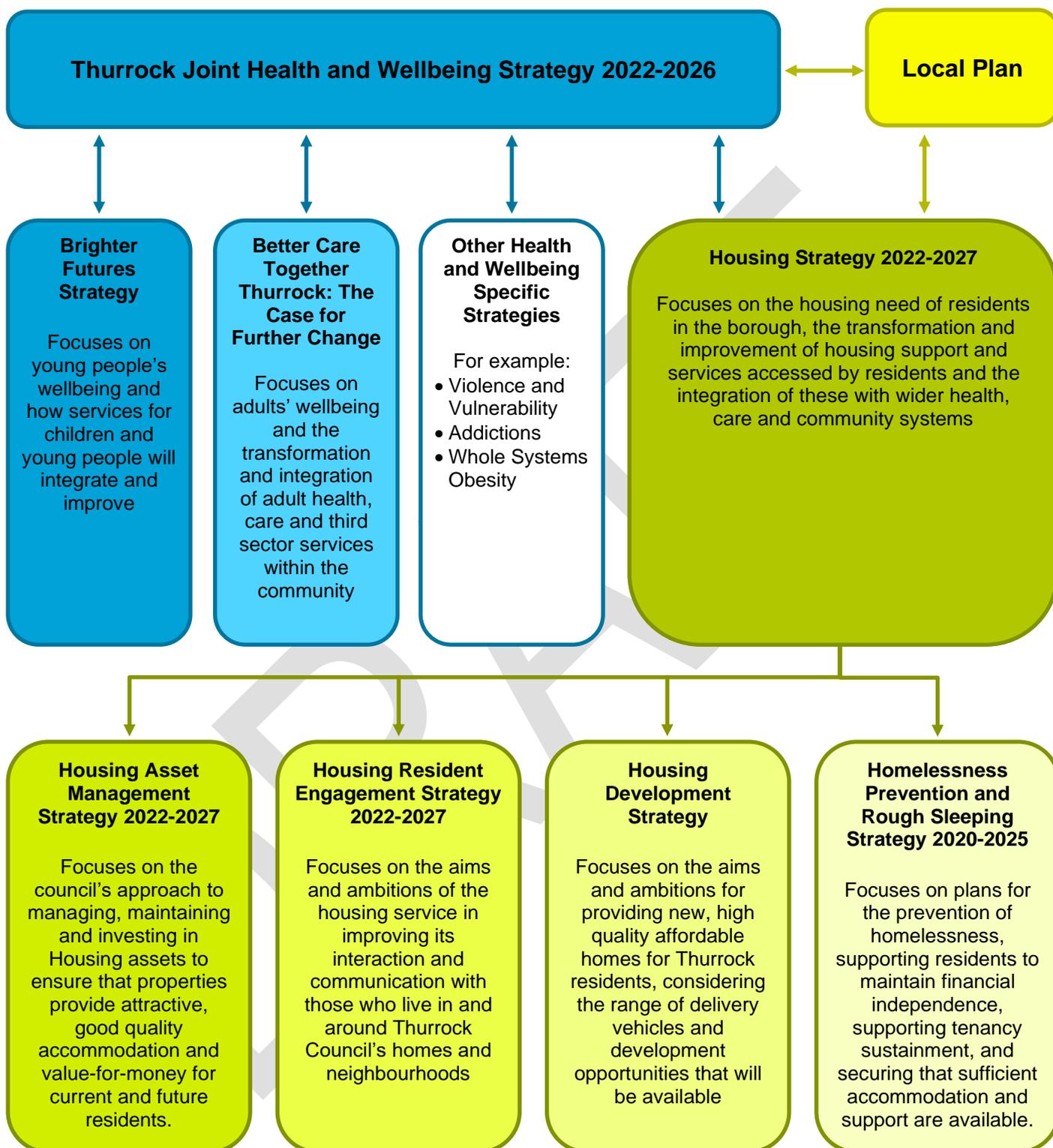
**Prosperity** – a borough which enables everyone to achieve their aspirations.

This means:

- attractive opportunities for businesses and investors to enhance the local economy
- vocational and academic education, skills and job opportunities for all
- commercial, entrepreneurial and connected public services

Through the key themes and strategic actions identified within this Housing Resident Engagement Strategy, the Housing service aims to build upon already successful and established partnerships to increase and further enhance the benefits and opportunities available to those who live in and around the Council's homes and neighbourhoods.

# Strategic Context



# Housing Vision and Principles

## Housing Vision

**Every Thurrock resident will have access to a safe, secure, suitable, and affordable home that meets their needs and aspirations, serving as a foundation to support their health and wellbeing.**

**Residents will be supported at home and in their local area through connected services, neighbourhoods, localities, and communities to achieve their vision of a 'good life'.**

Housing and health are intrinsically linked. Access to a safe, secure, stable, warm, and affordable home will provide people with a solid foundation upon which they can better protect their health and support their wellbeing. If a home is lacking any of these factors, it will have a detrimental impact on the physical health, mental health, and general wellbeing of all those in the household.

A safe home can mean many things, such as being hazard free, or maintained in line with compliancy measures such as gas servicing and electrical testing. A safe home goes beyond physical maintenance and bricks and mortar; it can also relate to a resident's perception of safety in their home and in the neighbourhood or estate in which it is located.

A secure home can refer to the security of tenure, giving residents peace of mind and stability by having that solid foundation to build their vision of a good life, or it can again be considered in like with the perception of safety within the home from any outside harms.

The factors that determine a suitable home are wide ranging and tailored to the housing needs of each household. It can relate to the size, type, location, and accessibility of a property, but can also refer to the standard in which the property is kept, ensuring good quality accommodation is provided and that it remains well maintained.

The definition for an affordable home is also aligned with the specific needs and commitments of every household. Affordability of home is linked with many wider consequences, such as fuel poverty and impacts on physical and mental wellbeing

Health and wellbeing run through every aspect of this strategy. This document's strategic aims and objects are rooted in the fundamental aim of tackling health inequalities through housing to support Thurrock residents to live healthy lives.

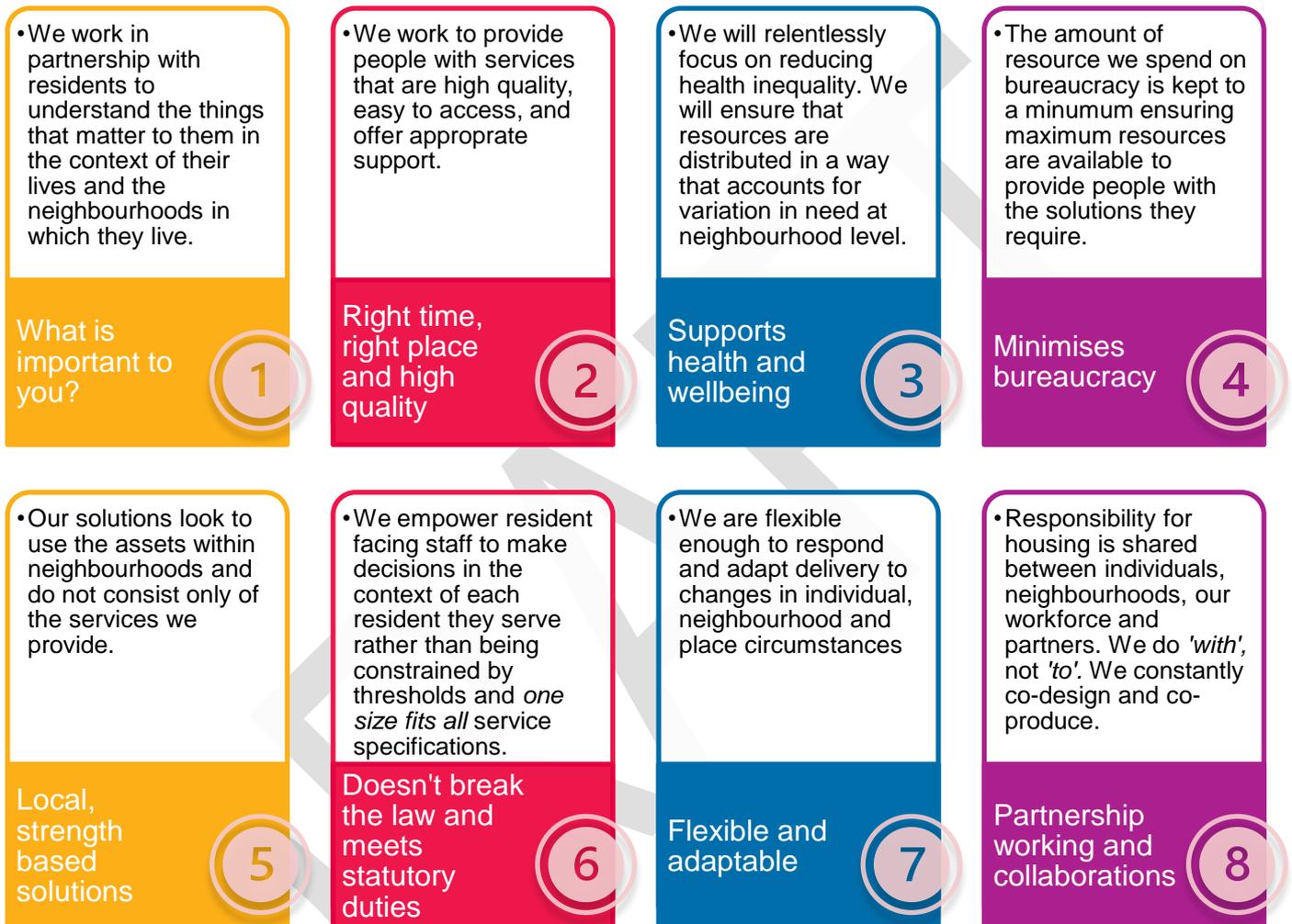
The vision for the Housing Strategy 2022-2027 is aligned with the aims of Domain 5 – Housing and the Environment within the Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2022-2026, outlined below:

**Fewer people will be at risk of homelessness, and everyone will have access to high quality affordable homes that meet the needs of Thurrock residents.**

**Homes and places in Thurrock will provide environments where everyone feels safe, healthy, connected and proud.**

## Housing Core Principles

The Housing Resident Engagement Strategy 2022-2027 has been developed to support the Housing Strategy 2022-2027 that set the basis for a new way of working for housing support and services in Thurrock. These strategies and the new way of working follow the below eight principles:



## Regulatory and Best Practice Framework

This section summarises the key regulatory elements that define social housing providers' duties and obligations towards engagement with tenants and residents and other best practice examples in the sector.

### Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard

The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard is one of four consumer standards with which registered providers of social housing must comply.

It sets expectations for registered providers of social housing to provide choices, information and communication that is appropriate to the diverse needs of their tenants, a clear approach to complaints and a wide range of opportunities for them to have influence and be involved.

### Neighbourhood and Community Standard

The Neighbourhood and Community Standard sets expectations for registered providers of social housing to keep the neighbourhood and communal areas associated with the homes they own clean and safe, co-operate with relevant partners to promote the wellbeing of the local area and help prevent and tackle anti-social behaviour.

### National Tenant Engagement Standards - 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition (2021)

Tpas, the tenant engagement organisation in England, published their revised National Tenant Engagement Standards following the release of the Government's social housing white paper, *the charter for social housing residents*. Within the National Tenant Engagement Standards, Tpas reflects the renewed focus on recognising the importance of the residents' voice.

The document is not statutory nor regulatory, but it clarifies the standards, expectations, and commitments that social housing organisations should meet to ensure that resident participation is active, valuable, and meaningful.

The National Tenant Engagement Standards provides a framework of seven key activities that support a positive engagement approach and reflect best practice. These activities are:

- governance and transparency
- scrutiny
- business and strategy
- complaints
- information and communication
- resources for engagement
- community and wider engagement

This framework has been considered in the development of this strategy. It will feature further in the ongoing delivery of its actions and wider resident engagement activity across the Housing service.

## National Context

### The Charter for Social Housing Residents: Social Housing White Paper

In late 2020 the Government published its social housing white paper, The Charter for Social Housing Residents. Within this document, the Government set out its intentions to ensure that residents in social housing are safe, listened to, live in good quality homes, and have access to redress when required.

The charter outlines the following seven elements that every social housing resident should be able to expect:

- to be safe in your home
- to know how your landlord is performing
- to have your complaints dealt with promptly and fairly
- to be treated with respect
- to have your voice heard by your landlord
- to have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in
- to be supported to take your first step into ownership

Further to establishing these aspects, the Government announced plans to strengthen the Regulator of Social Housing. It aims to empower the regulator to be proactive in monitoring and enforcing the consumer standards that social housing landlords are held to, and requiring landlords to:

- be transparent about their performance and decision-making so that tenants and the regulator can hold them to account
- put things right when they go wrong
- listen to tenants through effective engagement

Whilst the white paper outlines these intentions, the timelines for implementing all the policies and measures announced in the document remain unclear. However, there is now progress regarding the Social Housing Regulation Bill, and steps have been taken regarding building safety.

It is expected that the Government will undertake periods of engagement and consultation and introduce legislation during the lifetime of the Housing Strategy 2022-2027. However, the housing service has already begun to work proactively to ensure that the council is in a strong position to meet and address the white paper proposals as more information becomes available regarding implementation.

### Grenfell Tower Fire and Building Safety

The Grenfell Tower Fire on 14 June 2017 brought tenant and resident engagement into sharp focus for providers of social housing across the country. The tragedy triggered a wave of activity, such as tenant engagement roadshows by housing ministers and the development of a social housing green paper by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in 2018.

Most significantly, Dame Judith Hackitt was commissioned to undertake a review of building regulations and fire safety. The final report, entitled *Building a Safer Future*, was published in May 2018.

Among other recommendations, the report drew particular attention to the importance of engaging with residents, having appropriate strategies for engagement in place, and ensuring that residents had access to information and involvement in decision making.

The report also highlights the strength of structured engagement through residents' associations and tenant panels and the need for cultural change across the sector regarding the relationship between landlords and residents.

Although the report made these recommendations in the context of building and fire safety, they are applicable and appropriate to apply across the range of services provided by the Housing department.

### **Resident and Community Engagement during COVID-19 pandemic**

The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted how people interacted with others, including with organisations like local authorities and housing providers. Local authorities were required to engage with their residents and communities in new ways, in increased volumes and at a significant pace.

Although the COVID-19 pandemic restricted and prevented traditional face-to-face interaction and engagement activity with those who access the Council's Housing services, there were opportunities to find new ways to stay connected with residents and communities.

There was greater use of social media to share information with residents, the introduction of video calling in place of property visits and streamlined digital approaches to other general interaction. The level of contact with residents also increased to ensure that those most vulnerable could receive the support they needed through exceptionally challenging times.

The experience of the COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated that there is demand for developing new ways of engagement that take advantage of digital tools and resources available whilst retaining the capacity for traditional and in-person approaches to resident participation and sharing information.

## Housing Resident Engagement Strategy Aims and Objectives

Five key aims have been identified through the process of designing and developing the Housing Resident Engagement Strategy 2022-2027. Together with their corresponding objectives, an action plan will be informed that addresses the engagement requirements set out in the regulatory framework for social housing providers and meets the engagement standards as recommended by Tpas.



## **Strengthen Community Engagement and Empowerment**

Housing resident and community engagement is often fragmented into specific areas of responsibility or aligned by function. However, people want to be recognised, supported and engaged by a system that views them as a complex individual aiming to achieve their vision of a good life.

Engagement activity can often be standardised and traditional in its delivery, focussed solely on one single topic or issue determined on a borough-wide level.

Traditional forms of consultation mean that residents act as passive recipients of services provided by the council, providing feedback only when approached. Residents do not live their lives through our services, but through localities and neighbourhoods where many different factors combine to influence the quality of their lives.

People are likely to have multiple interconnected needs that would benefit from the support of multiple teams or organisations, but the current approach to sharing information about those needs is often lengthy, fragmented and features with elements of duplication.

This way of working increases rather than manages demand and does not realise the full potential that engagement opportunities can bring. It increases bureaucracy, costs, delays and wasted resource, and has negative impacts on those seeking to engage.

We need to move from an approach where we consult multiple times on services on strategies determined by us, to a single integrated approach based around place. Engagement needs to shift from being purely consultative to one of genuine co-design and co-production of new approaches to improve the quality of life of our residents.

Frontline staff have hundreds of interactions with residents every week, and staff groups like our tenancy management and sheltered housing officers have real insight into the needs of our neighbourhoods and communities, yet we never systematically collect this intelligence and use it to inform future strategy or delivery.

Locality based resident and community engagement provide the opportunity to develop offers of support and services that are designed specifically to meet the needs of that area. This makes the offered service more meaningful, prioritising what matters most to those in the local area and actively demonstrating evidence that resident feedback is being used constructively.

Broader community engagement also includes elected members. Mechanisms are already in place through Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Cabinet and Council to ensure that members are informed and engaged in matters relating to housing. This strategy will strengthen the relationship and information sharing between housing services and elected members relating to matters affecting the wards and communities they represent.

This overall approach would contribute towards a growing sense of community empowerment, with individuals becoming far more active citizens as they experienced a genuine sense of involvement and influence. It would also enable feedback to be delivered more consistently and quickly than is currently possible.

## Chapter 4 – Housing Resident Engagement Strategy Aims and Objectives

What?	How?	Impact?
<p>We will embed an approach for co-design and improvement of services in order to meaningfully involve and empower residents and communities</p>	<p>We will adopt an approach across housing services that empowers residents to formally and informally co-design solutions and provision, influence and make decisions, raise issues, input in the tendering of new contract arrangements and address challenges relating to housing in Thurrock</p> <p>We will achieve the Tpas Resident Involvement Accreditation for Landlords by completing the accreditation process to demonstrate our commitment to resident involvement and ensure our approach is effective and offers the best value for money</p>	<p>Residents will benefit from meaningful involvement in the way that housing services are provided and improved, ensuring that local priorities are properly understood and acted upon</p> <p>Residents will not have to rely on traditional consultative forms of engagement to have their views heard, and can trust that feedback provided through everyday interactions for service improvement will be taken forward and implemented</p>
<p>We will achieve more diverse representation in resident engagement and participation in order to better reflect the households which live in and around the Council's homes and neighbourhoods</p>	<p>We will undertake a project to identify the barriers that prevent residents from participating in existing engagement activity, such as involvement with the Excellence Panel</p> <p>We will take this learning and develop options and opportunities that encourage and empower residents and communities to participate and engage</p>	<p>Residents will be listened to regarding any challenges that may be preventing them from more active participation in engagement activity, and will be empowered by the Housing service acting, wherever possible, to remove or mitigate those challenges</p>
<p>We will develop a neighbourhood model for housing services in order to better focus on delivering what matters to residents in different localities</p>	<p>We will bring housing together at locality level and will empower front line staff from across housing to form relationships and networks across the system, to work together with residents to design and deliver meaningful, personal and holistic solutions</p>	<p>Residents will be supported by housing staff with an understanding of local priorities, networks and assets, improving the range of positive outcomes that can be delivered</p>
<p>We will collaborate more effectively with residents and other professionals that work across the Council's homes and neighbourhoods in order to improve health and wellbeing outcomes and reduce social isolation.</p>	<p>We will embed housing support and services within the Integrated Locality Networks encompassing a wide range of health, care and third sector partners, allowing staff to collaborate with each other and with residents to co-design bespoke integrated solutions rather than making referrals</p>	<p>Residents will experience improved integration between related but historically disjointed services, increasing and improving access to information and sources of support</p>

## Protect Resident Safety and Security

The *Charter for Social Housing Residents* sets out that every social housing resident should have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in. In relation to anti-social behaviour, it outlines that social housing tenants have a right to feel safe in their homes, without the stress, fear, and tensions that anti-social behaviour and crime can cause and encourages landlords to develop practical solutions to tackle crime and anti-social behaviour in their areas.

The topic of anti-social behaviour featured heavily as a priority throughout the engagement for the development of this strategy, with particular concerns raised regarding the perception of feeling unsafe.

The council's aims for its homes and estates are that they should be places where residents enjoy living and working, where they take pride in their homes and can enjoy being part of a thriving community. The aspiration is to invest in and maintain high-quality accommodation that demonstrates the benefits of the council's repairs and capital investment programmes and positively influences the health and wellbeing of our tenants and residents.

Building and fire safety are matters of significant importance for any party or organisation involved in the management or maintenance of residential properties, and the responsibilities must not be taken lightly.

To meet its responsibilities, the council has a compliance regime to provide complete assurance to residents that their homes are well managed and meet required safety standards. Specific fire safety policies are in place to set how the housing service will manage and maintain its assets following the regulatory framework.

The housing service has begun to proactively develop an action plan to ensure that the council is in a strong position to meet and address the Social Housing White Paper proposals.

The housing service also stands ready to ensure compliance with the emerging Building Safety Bill, the implementation of recommendations made within the '*Building a Safer Future*' report following the Grenfell Tower fire, and any new duties or responsibilities introduced by the Fire Safety Act 2021. This aligns with the Charter for Social Housing Residents, as set out in the Social Housing White Paper.

Resident engagement is also crucial from the perspective of building management and safety. As part of the '*Building a safer future*' report published following the Grenfell Tower tragedy, the introduction of a 'golden thread' was made. This golden thread aims to serve as a tool to manage buildings as holistic systems, allowing people to use information to design, construct and operate their buildings safely and effectively.

What?	How?	Impact?
We will work with partners, residents and other Council services in order to improve community safety across the Council's neighbourhoods	<p>We will work across the organisation to form a new Community Safety Service for Thurrock</p> <p>We will work across housing services to support the priorities identified by Thurrock Community Safety Partnership annually</p>	Residents will feel safer in their homes and neighbourhoods in Thurrock, resulting in improvements to quality of life and more positive perceptions of the local area

## Chapter 4 – Housing Resident Engagement Strategy Aims and Objectives

What?	How?	Impact?
<p>We will adopt a collaborative approach to improve safety on estates in order to address the issues that matter to local residents</p>	<p>We will work across housing, with our community partners and with residents to make our estates clean, attractive spaces where residents feel safe, using lighting, CCTV, and environmental improvements to do this</p> <p>We will establish a programme of resident and ward councillor estate walkabouts to improve the connection to and understanding of the local area and the issues that matter most to those who live there</p>	<p>Residents will benefit from targeted action and improvements in their neighbourhoods and estates that are informed by and aligned with their priorities, thereby strengthening connection with the area and improving perceptions of safety</p>
<p>We will proactively share information relating to building and fire safety in order to support residents to feel safe in their homes</p>	<p>We will develop a communications plan to ensure consistency in the approach taken by the council in communicating about safety</p> <p>We will use the plan as an opportunity to share information with residents about how their building operates and the steps and actions, they can take to protect their safety within the home</p>	<p>Residents will be supported to better understand their homes in the context of building and fire safety to address any concerns they may have about the safety of their building and prevent them from experiencing harm in the event of any incident</p>
<p>We will listen to the views of residents and understand their priorities in order to design, develop and deliver stock improvement programmes that target the things that matter</p>	<p>We will proactively engage with residents on their experiences of living in council-owned properties and their priorities for making homes fit for the future by embedding active engagement into the design of asset investment</p>	<p>Residents will be able to have their voices heard and priorities understood regarding what matters to them in future investment programmes in their homes and estates</p>

## Improve Communication and Interaction

The *Charter for Social Housing Residents* sets an expectation for residents to have their voice heard by their landlord. Within the social housing white paper, the Government sets out that it will:

- expect the Regulator of Social Housing to require landlords to seek out best practice and consider how they can continually improve the way they engage with social housing tenants
- deliver a new opportunities and empowerment programme for social housing residents, to support more effective engagement between landlords and residents, and to give residents tools to influence their landlords and hold them to account
- review professional training and development to ensure residents receive a high standard of customer service.

The white paper also expects that the Regulator of Social Housing will require landlords to show how they have sought out and considered ways to improve tenant engagement.

Traditional forms of engagement, such as consultation and surveys, are not always effective and can even have an adverse impact upon wellbeing if people feel pressurised to take part or communities suffer from consultation fatigue.

Tpas, the tenant participation advisory service, recommends through its engagement standards that residents should have access to an appropriate range of engagement opportunities that reflects the resident profile. It also encourages landlords to respond to different needs in relation to equality and any additional support, evidenced in the delivery of services, engagement activities and communications to promote widespread engagement.

Engagement can take many forms, but the crucial factor for the future is that it is tailored appropriately. There may be residents who want to proactively engage with policy design, for example, and others who may simply want to know that they are being considered in the way the council implements change and keeps residents them informed.

During the development of this strategy and the Housing Strategy 2022-2027, residents stressed the importance of diversifying and expanding the opportunities and methods used for engagement. Recent years have seen significant growth of digital communication technology in homes, such as video calling and meetings, and the decline in face-to-face interaction due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

What?	How?	Impact?
We will build meaningful channels of communication between the Housing service and its residents and communities in order to allow information and feedback to pass freely	We will assess current modes and models of communication to determine their reach and effectiveness and identify any gaps where new communication solutions could be introduced to maximise the flow of feedback and information	Residents will have greater confidence that their feedback is being listened to and will receive updates in a swift and timely manner

## Chapter 4 – Housing Resident Engagement Strategy Aims and Objectives

What?	How?	Impact?
We will design tailored approaches to engagement and communication in order to meet resident and community preferences and maximise interaction	We will develop an engagement framework that offers residents the opportunity to share their communication preferences and specify service areas of interest	Residents will have greater opportunities to have their voices heard regarding the subjects or areas that matter most to them, through a channel or format that matches their preference
We will embed resident engagement in estate regeneration in order to deliver projects that meet local needs	We will work closely with our residents to understand their priorities, identify required estate improvements, and progress opportunities for new housing to transform and enhance neighbourhoods.	Residents will have direct input, influence and opportunity to shape future council-owned developments and ensure that they meet their needs and priorities
We will implement and strengthen digital engagement and solutions in order to improve resident access to information and housing services, and increase diversity and participation through the use of technology	<p>We will improve digital access to housing services by enhancing the existing online tenant portal and developing new approaches for interaction, engagement and communication using technology</p> <p>We will establish a layered and interactive approach to digital engagement which goes beyond the use of social media in isolation</p>	Residents will find it easy to access housing services digitally and be able to interact with housing staff through digital devices, if that is their preference.

## Enable Resident Scrutiny and Participation

The Charter for Social Housing Residents seeks to ensure that landlords remain transparent and accountable to their tenants at all times. The white paper sets out that every social housing resident should be able to expect to know how their landlord is performing.

As a mechanism to achieve this, the Regulator of Social Housing is seeking to introduce a suite of tenant satisfaction measures for all registered providers of social housing, including local authorities. Whilst the specific measures are still to be determined, the indicative measures provided for consultation were grouped under the following headings:

- Overall satisfaction
- Keeping properties in good repair
- Maintaining building safety
- Effective handling of complaints
- Respectful and helpful engagement
- Responsible neighbourhood management

In addition to greater transparency, these measures aim to inform the regulator about landlord compliance with the consumer standards under a more proactive consumer regulation regime as proposed in the social housing white paper.

What?	How?	Impact?
<p>We will expand and develop the Excellence Panel and its subgroups in order to achieve greater representation of the diverse communities in the borough</p>	<p>We will review the current levels of scrutiny activity undertaken by the Excellence Panel and work with the group to adjust this accordingly so that appropriate levels of oversight are achieved</p> <p>We will use the learning from the project to identify barriers that prevent residents from participating in existing engagement activity to understand the challenges and implement a plan to achieve more diverse resident representation</p>	<p>Residents will be better represented by the membership of the Excellence panel and have greater opportunities to participate through an extended and expanded engagement offer</p>
<p>We will increase resident participation in the governance and scrutiny of the Housing service in order to remain transparent and accountable to residents</p>	<p>We will strengthen existing arrangements and develop new opportunities for residents to oversee the decision-making processes and shape Housing services where appropriate</p> <p>We will offer support, training and networking opportunities to those who want to engage in this way, helping to build knowledge, skills and capacity</p>	<p>Residents will have greater oversight of the operations of the Housing service. Residents will obtain greater clarity on Housing operations and have increased opportunities to shape and steer the direction of Housing services</p>

## Chapter 4 – Housing Resident Engagement Strategy Aims and Objectives

What?	How?	Impact?
<p>We will demonstrate our commitment to listen to residents about their experiences in order to better understanding their needs and priorities</p>	<p>We will explore the reasons for dissatisfaction in relation to each individual satisfaction measure by deliver focus groups with tenants</p> <p>We will close the contact loop with tenants by responding to the issues they raise, progress any actions required as a result and providing evidence of the outcome</p>	<p>Residents will be able to share their issues with the council directly, ensuring that the action required to address the issue is understood, with trust in the council that their feedback will be acted upon</p>
<p>We will proactively prepare to report against new national tenant satisfaction measures in order to make our performance as a landlord more visible to our tenants</p>	<p>We will implement a robust approach to recording, monitoring and reporting against the new tenant satisfaction measures that will be published by the Regulator of Social Housing by April 2023, to meet the first submission of data in Summer 2024</p>	<p>Residents will be better informed about the performance of the council as their landlord, and they will be empowered to hold the council to account through new regulation</p>

## Deliver Opportunities for Engagement

The *Charter for Social Housing Residents* sets an expectation for residents to have their voice heard by their landlord. Within the social housing white paper, the Government sets out that it will:

- expect the Regulator of Social Housing to require landlords to seek out best practice and consider how they can continually improve the way they engage with social housing tenants
- deliver a new opportunities and empowerment programme for social housing residents, to support more effective engagement between landlords and residents, and to give residents tools to influence their landlords and hold them to account
- review professional training and development to ensure residents receive a high standard of customer service.

The white paper also expects that the Regulator of Social Housing will require landlords to show how they have sought out and considered ways to improve tenant engagement.

Traditional forms of engagement, such as consultation and surveys, are not always effective and can even have an adverse impact upon wellbeing if people feel pressurised to take part or communities suffer from consultation fatigue.

Tpas, the tenant participation advisory service, recommends through its engagement standards that residents should have access to an appropriate range of engagement opportunities that reflects the resident profile. It also encourages landlords to respond to different needs in relation to equality and any additional support, evidenced in the delivery of services, engagement activities and communications to promote widespread engagement.

What?	How?	Impact?
We will share key information openly with residents and communities in a regular and timely manner in order to ensure transparency	We will share information across a range of formats and mediums, including the publication of an Annual Report co-designed with residents	Residents will be able to access information with greater ease and will be able to hold the Housing service to account accordingly, in line with the Social Housing White Paper proposals.  Residents will have the opportunity to take ownership of the development of an Annual Report for the benefit of residents in and around the Council's homes and neighbourhoods, ensuring that residents are formally informed about the actions of the Housing Service
We will proactively engage with communities across the Council's neighbourhoods in order to establish stronger relationships between the Housing service and residents	We will expand and strengthen the physical and digital opportunities for engagement on a locality and neighbourhood basis, providing more regular localised opportunities for residents to engage on the topics that matter most in their area	Residents will have greater opportunities to share and participate in activities that will directly support or benefit their local areas and communities

## Chapter 4 – Housing Resident Engagement Strategy Aims and Objectives

What?	How?	Impact?
<p>We will adopt a data and case study led approach to assess the impact of engagement activity in order to provide residents with useful and valuable opportunities for engagement</p>	<p>We will develop a new framework for assessing the effectiveness of engagement activity using qualitative and quantitative data</p> <p>We will monitor and review the feedback and collected data related to engagement activity in order to steer, design and tailor future events according to resident wants and needs</p>	<p>Residents will be empowered to have their voices heard regarding the engagement events and activities that the Housing service offers, ensuring that these reflect good value for money and are aligned with resident priorities</p>
<p>We will learn from best practice and innovation across the social housing sector in order to coordinate engagement activities and events that are meaningful and of value to residents</p>	<p>We will regularly review the Housing service's approach to Resident Engagement against that of leaders in the sector and use peer partnerships to identify areas for development</p>	<p>Residents will benefit from the continual advances in approaches to engagement and the use of technology that other social housing providers are pioneering with their tenants</p>

## **Monitoring, Measuring and Review**

A robust monitoring and review process will be implemented to measure progress against the strategic priorities presented in this document.

Firstly, an action plan will be developed, aligned with the priorities and themes from this strategy, developed alongside residents and other key stakeholders with reviews undertaken in regular intervals.

It is intended that progress towards the delivery of this action plan will be monitored on an annual basis by an established group of residents and the Housing Strategies Delivery Board.

Further to this, and building on the Deliver Opportunities for Engagement theme, the Housing service will seek to co-produce an annual report with residents, highlighting each year's projects and successes.

Finally, a system for recording resident feedback on engagement and project delivery will be established. This approach will utilise case studies to reflect on positive outcomes and identify areas for improvement.

Throughout the lifespan of this strategy, there is an expectation that new actions will be added to the action plan, reacting to changes in external factors (such as legislation) or proactively if an opportunity to do so arises. These additions will be managed appropriately and will ensure that they continue to reflect the key themes of this strategy.