

# Tenant Involvement Strategy 2020-2023

You are the experts of living in council homes

Waverley hive are proud of our tenant involvement activities including the Tenants Panel who celebrated their 25th anniversary in 2020.

Our tenants, leaseholders, the Tenant's Panel and the tenant Scrutiny Group have all played a critical role in shaping and monitoring our housing services over the course of the last Tenant Involvement Strategy 2016-2019.

In the next three years we want to expand the number of ways you can be involved and have your say in your homes and communities.

We want to engage with more of you in more ways and ensure that if you are interested in working with us support will be available to you if required.

bee involved

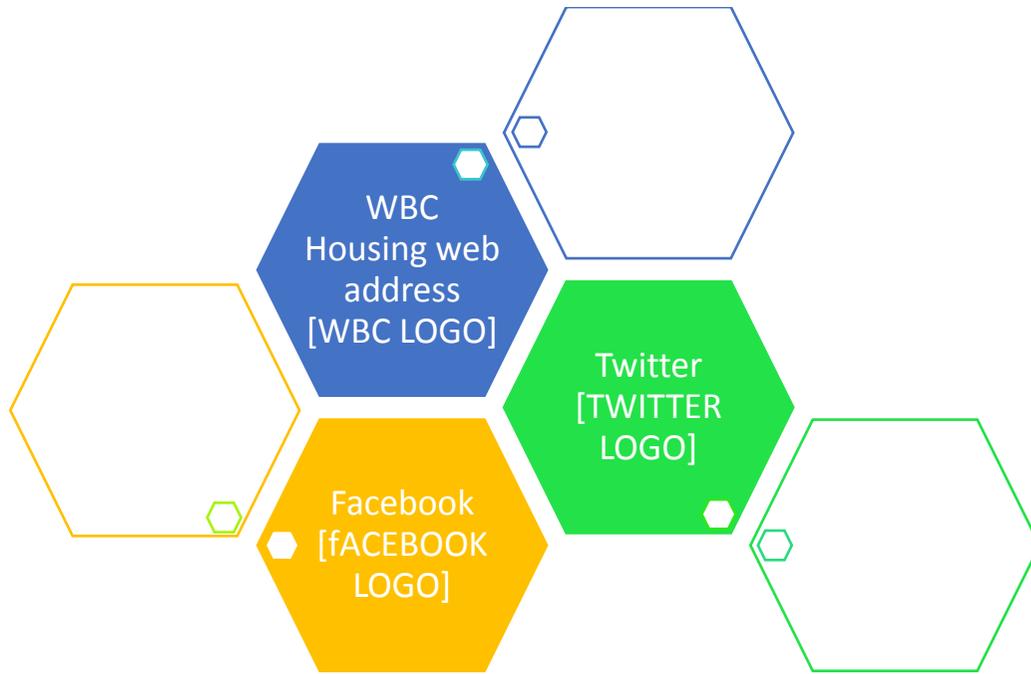


If being involved in your community appeals to you, we would love to hear from you. Please find more information in the meet the team section.

This document is for Waverley leaseholders as well as our tenants. The term tenants will be used throughout.

Welcome to the hive





Images of TP, 100 years, zoom call

## Contents

Achievements.....	4
Foreword.....	7
Key Priorities .....	8
Helping you to get involved .....	<b>Error! Bookmark not defined.</b>
Increasing ways, we work together .....	9
Making it easier to be involved.....	10
Meet the team .....	12
Waverley Equality Statement .....	19
Climate Statement .....	19

## Achievements

Some examples of tenant involvement achievements from 2016 to 2019

### A SUCCESSFUL PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE TENANTS PANEL, ELECTED MEMBERS AND WAVERLEY OFFICERS

In response to the Government's Green Paper 'A new deal for social housing', the Overview and Scrutiny Housing Committee held a task and finish group to identify if there was existing stigma about Waverley social housing tenants or homes. They also examined how tenants view their homes to develop future services to promote pride and remove stigma.

Outcomes were presented at committee and shared at national level through the Chartered Institute of Housing. Collectively we are challenging prejudice and improving homes and services to prevent negative stereotypes and ensure everyone has a home to be proud of.

bee proud



### TENANTS PANEL CELEBRATE THEIR 25TH ANNIVERSARY IN 2020

The Tenants Panel continue to be a strong and independent voice for all tenants. They use a variety of forums to gain and express views regarding service delivery and share feedback from Waverley tenants. Panel members meet regularly with the Head of Service, Housing Portfolio Holder and elected members of the Overview and Scrutiny Housing committee.

The Panel have also established connections with other tenant groups through Housing Quality Resident Network (a national best practice network) and in particular Guildford Borough Council's TAG (Tenant Action Group).

### HAVING A SAY IN RESPONSIVE REPAIRS PROCUREMENT CONTRACT

Tenants were part of the £32m responsive repairs contract procurement in 2018/19. Tenants views were collected before the contract specification was written to ensure it reflected what was important to you. Three tenant volunteers formally took part in assessing the contractors submissions regarding resident involvement and scored each contractor. Those involved were invited to attend a small gathering to thank everyone who had been involved in the project.



## bee vocal

### PRESENTING VIEWS ON RECHARGES, EMPTY PROPERTIES AND MUTUAL EXCHANGE PROCESS

Waverley Scrutiny Group presented three reports to the Overview and Scrutiny Housing Committee and senior Waverley officers. These reviews focussed on the recharge process, empty properties and mutual exchange process. Each report contained recommendations which were converted into an action plan for Waverley officers to work on. Some of the outcomes from their work were

- the re let standard was reviewed
- a recharge policy was implemented
- the mutual exchange process is now online

### FAMILY FRIENDLY EVENTS PROVIDING OPPORTUNITIES TO HEAR FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS ON WHAT MATTERS TO THEM

Since 2016 the Housing service has held 12 summer family events visiting Godalming, Farnham, Haslemere and Cranleigh. Fully supported by our Tenants Panel and Scrutiny Group they provided an opportunity to meet with local residents and hear about what matters to them.

In 2019 we met with over 100 tenants at our parties celebrating 100 years of social housing.

## bee inquisitive



### ENSURING PEOPLE LIVING IN OUR SENIOR LIVING SERVICE ARE HAPPY WHERE THEY LIVE

The Tenants Panel actively participated in the Senior Living service level review in 2017 due to a change in Surrey County Council funding. Members presented a report of senior living tenant's comments and their findings to a Surrey County Council committee later that year. The Panel continue to monitor service delivery.

### ADVOCATING FOR TENANTS

Tenants Panel members continue to be advocates for tenants. Working with the tenant and Waverley officers they seek resolution regarding housing specific issues.

The group provide a forum for tenants to be informed of developments within the Housing service and to raise issues. ATOM All Tenants Open Meetings were held quarterly around Waverley in 2017-2019.



## bee more involved in your community

### AN ONGOING PART OF OUR COMPLAINTS PROCESS

Our Designated Tenants Complaints Panel are part of Waverley's complaint process. They offer a channel for tenants to present their complaint to an independent group to seek a resolution. Since 2016 members have reviewed [emailed SP 6.7.20 for case numbers](#).

The group meet quarterly to scrutinise complaints data and Housing Ombudsman case studies.

In 2018 members were involved in Waverley's response to the Housing Green paper regarding complaints.

### IMPROVING DESIGN STANDARDS

Tenant Panel members were part of improving the design standard for our new homes. Sharing their thoughts on what makes a home and what is best value for now and the future.

Communicating and receiving feedback has been an essential part for the contract management regarding major building works at Ockford Ridge in Godalming. Local residents such as Rob ([see photo](#)) have helped by sharing their views and ensuring Waverley support the local community.

## Foreword

Welcome to the Waverley Tenant Involvement Strategy 2020.

I am delighted to introduce our vision to give everyone the opportunity to influence and shape our services for the next three years.

This Strategy outlines how we intend to engage and consult with you and demonstrates how we will support you to get involved with us during this time.

Opportunities to work together and your feedback is vital for quality homes and the successful delivery of our services. We are committed to putting you at the heart of everything we do to ensure our communities thrive.

This strategy comes at an unprecedented and challenging time in our living history. We are adapting the ways we work to keep everyone safe during Covid-19 pandemic. This presents an opportunity for you to get involved and contribute to how the service evolves and will work for you, as our tenants.

It is also encouraging, to see more tenants making use of technology to keep in touch. This will not replace other ways we work together but does allow us to continue to hear what matters to you during this difficult time and to reach more tenants if your preferred form of communication is digital.

I look forward to working in partnership with you to improve our services and to create an environment that makes a positive difference to you and the wider community.

Thank you for being a Waverley tenant.

Hugh Wagstaff, Housing Head of Service



help us bee the best

Forward from TP Chair

## Key Priorities

We promise to

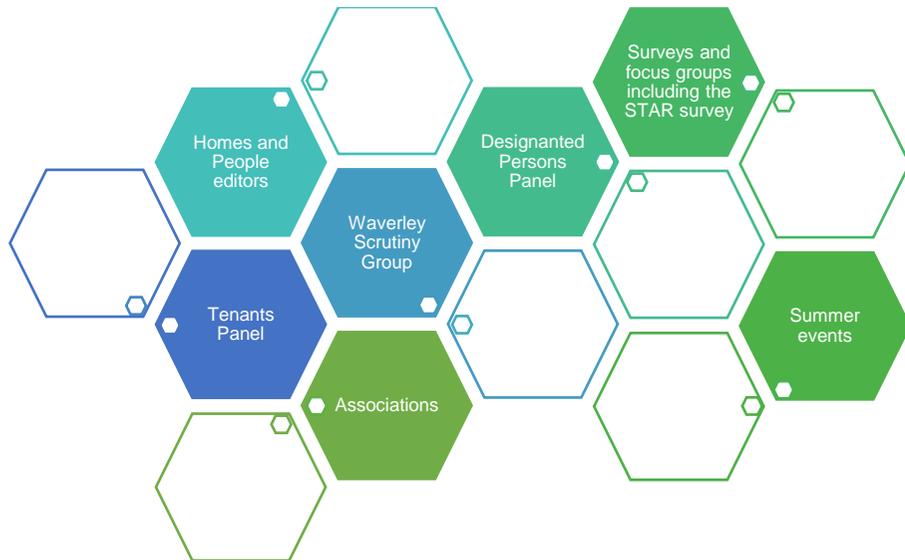
1. Increase the ways we can work together
2. Make it easier to be involved
3. Listen, consider and act on input

*[Insert picture]*

## Increasing ways, we work together

Join the hive - We have and will continue to develop ways to work together

bee a team





### Making it easier to be involved

Tenant involvement can mean different things to different people and captures a range of interactions or activities with the Council. They can be informal such as giving feedback - compliment, complaint, comment or suggestion through to more formal involvement such as joining a tenant's panel or group.

## bee involved



Whether it be, informal or formal, long-term or short term, engaging with us provides us with vital information regarding what matters to you in your homes and communities. We will be developing new ways of measuring this impact, with the help of the tenant groups, over the course of the next three years to ensure that even more of what is learnt informs our service improvement strategies in the future.

We recognise that tenant involvement requires commitment from you and that there may be barriers, which prevent you from becoming involved, such as:

- Confidence
- Transport
- Family commitments
- Time
- Expense

We can support you to ensure you can take part in helping us to shape the service by:

- Providing training and support. You can even be supported to take a qualification.
- Offering alternative channels to voice your views
- Reimbursing your travel or care costs
- Arranging meetings at locations and times suitable for you

Our training and development opportunities are being improved and will be available to you if this is something you are interested in. These are available to tenants who are more formally involved with us such as a tenant's panel member. These range from support with joining an online meeting to learning research skills.

We will carry out a large-scale tenant satisfaction survey in 2021. This will give all our tenants a chance to have a say. Do look out for the 2021 STAR survey in the summer and the results in autumn. You know your communities better than we do. It is important that we learn what matters to you from you.

### Listen, consider and act upon

We are open to listening, committed to addressing difficult issues and learning from you. All tenant involvement activities give you the opportunity to have your say and inform the future changes and improvements to the service.

We will be developing new ways of measuring this impact, with the help of the tenant groups, over the course of the next three years. We want to be able to clearly show you the impact your involvement has had as we work together.

## Meet the team

### the bees knees



#### Jeanette Englefield

Tenant Involvement Officer

Jeanette helps tenants who are more formally involved to focus and develop their ideas and activities, communications and makes sure they get their say. The role involves facilitating meetings, supporting volunteers and making sure that the tenants and Waverley housing each know what the other is thinking. It's a way of making sure people have a measure of influence in decisions that affect their lives.

[tenantinvolvement@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:tenantinvolvement@waverley.gov.uk)

#### Tenants Panel

Waverley Housing Tenants Panel are a group who seek to represent the interests of all of council tenants on matters housing related matters provided by Waverley.

Working in partnership with the Waverley Housing Service Panel members consider both national and local housing issues. There are also opportunities to get more involved in your local community.

Being a member of the Panel you will be offered:

- Full training and support
- A chance to develop new skills
- A chance to meet new people
- A channel to learn about Waverley Housing
- Community based activities to engage in

There is also an opportunity to sign up to their more specialist roles which involve:

- Chairing meetings
- Looking after the Tenants Panel budget and accounts
- Social media communications
- Event organiser
- Note taker

[tenantspanel@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:tenantspanel@waverley.gov.uk) or telephone 01483 523196

## Scrutiny Group

Waverley Scrutiny Group is at the hub of the Housing Service. Group members gather information, interview officers/contractors and seek tenant's views for a variety of service areas. Findings are collated into a report which include the groups' recommendations. This is presented to Senior Housing Officers and the Overview and Scrutiny Housing Committee.

Being involved in the Waverley Scrutiny Group makes a difference in these areas:

- The housing service customer focus
- The best use of resources
- Continuous service improvement

If you have an eye for detail, enjoy being part of a team and hold an impartial viewpoint this volunteer role may suit you.

[ScrutinyDirect@waverley.gov.uk](mailto:ScrutinyDirect@waverley.gov.uk) or telephone 01483 523196

## Designated Persons Complaints Panel

The Waverley Designated Persons Complaints Panel are a small group of volunteers who, when requested, help to resolve Housing complaints locally.

Part of the Waverley Borough Council complaints process, the group provide an option for tenants to have their complaint reviewed before progressing to the Housing Ombudsman Service, if local resolution is not possible.

Group members use their local knowledge and life skills to work with tenants and Waverley Council to find solutions to complaints raised.

Meetings are held every three months unless the group are called to review a live case.

TenantInvolvement@waverley.gov.uk or telephone 01483 523196

## Your Local Housing Officers

Comments and suggestions to your local housing officers are a great way to have your say if you do not wish to be more formally involved in a group or panel.

[Insert housing officer map – Website link](#)



Action Plan 2020-2023			
Waverley Priorities and 2020/23 Housing Service Plan	Activity	Lead officer/s	Priority
	<p>Continue to support and develop a robust Tenants Panel and Scrutiny Group.</p> <p>Ensure our co – regulatory partners receive information and data in a timely manner.</p> <p>To provide opportunities for both the Tenants Panel and the Scrutiny group to meet with members, senior Waverley officers and contractors.</p> <p>Support volunteers to use platforms such as Zoom or Microsoft teams. The outcome will offer more accessibility for those who wish to become involved.</p> <p>Develop with both the Tenants Panel and Scrutiny Group an annual TI activity goal planner.</p> <p>Evaluate, track and monitor tenant involvement activities for satisfaction and value for money.</p>	Service Improvement Team	Gold
Corporate Plan – Promote and sustain a sense of responsibility for our environment, promoting biodiversity and protecting our planet.	<p>Create a new volunteer ‘Green’ group to monitor and work on the actions from Waverley’s Climate Emergency Declaration.</p> <p>Group members to consider borough wide impact and actions within resident’s homes and environment.</p>	Service Improvement Team and Sustainability Manager	Gold
Corporate Plan –	Create Neighbourhood Champions supporting local	Service Improvement,	Bronze

Promote and sustain a sense of responsibility for our environment, promoting biodiversity and protecting our planet	community and monitor green spaces contract.	Housing Management and Commercial Services teams	
2020/23 Housing Service Plan – Ongoing development of corporate website and digital services to increase range of means to access services.	<p>Research models from other organisations to find successful digital practice.</p> <p>Explore the possibility of online forums or virtual meetings for ‘Green’ group and Neighbourhood Champions. This action would reduce the need to travel and provide an accessible channel for residents to share their views.</p> <p>Trial digital options to increase feedback from previously underrepresented groups using tools such as survey monkey.</p> <p>Explore offering an online calendar which would include tenant involvement and community activities.</p>	Service Improvement team and Communications	Gold
2020/23 Housing Service Plan – Ongoing development of corporate website and digital services to increase range of means to access services.	<p>Explore developing an online option Homes and People as an alternative. This will provide a variety of ways to access our publications.</p> <p>Support volunteers to be part of Homes and People editorial group. Assisting in both reviewing issues and contributing articles.</p>	Service Improvement and Communications	Gold

<p>2020/23 Housing Service Plan – Procure, design and project manage comprehensive satisfaction – STAR (Survey of tenants and residents) to inform service improvement plan.</p>	<p>Measuring and benchmarking performance with organisations such as Housemark.</p> <p>Tenants Panel members to be involved in the STAR design and outcomes from the results.</p>	<p>Service Improvement Team</p>	<p>Gold</p>
<p>2020/23 Housing Service Plan – Review regulatory consumer standards with tenants and members to assess areas for improvement to inform the service improvement plan.</p>	<p>Review Regulatory Consumer standards with Waverley’s Tenants Panel.</p>	<p>Service Improvement Team</p>	<p>Silver</p>
<p>Corporate Priority – Promote and sustain the value and worth of all residents, regardless of income, wealth, age, disability, race, gender or sexual orientation.</p>	<p>To offer a variety of training options to support all volunteers for both their role and personal growth i.e. Equality and Diversity, HQN (Housing Quality Network) and CIH (Chartered Institute of Housing) national events.</p> <p>Encourage interested volunteers to undertake a CIH qualification supported by Waverley Housing.</p> <p>Provide IT skills training through Waverley’s IT trainer.</p>	<p>Service Improvement Team and IT officer</p>	<p>Silver</p>
<p>Corporate Priority – Promote and sustain the value and worth of all residents, regardless of income, wealth, age, disability, race, gender or sexual orientation.</p>	<p>Embed tenant involvement in all areas of Waverley’s Housing service. Using feedback to improve services and engage with tenants in a meaningful way.</p>	<p>All Housing officers</p>	<p>Gold</p>

## Waverley Equality Statement

For our communities to thrive we need feedback and engagement from as many different groups in our communities as possible. To fairly represent the population of our tenants. We are particularly concerned that we do not have any formal involvement from tenants under the age of 35.

Waverley do not discriminate and would like to encourage involvement from all who would like to get involved regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, race, culture, religious beliefs or disability.

## Climate Statement

All over the world, climate breakdown is causing serious damage, impacting on people and ecosystems – from rising sea levels, shrinking glaciers and dying coral to increasingly severe flooding, droughts, hurricanes and other extreme weather.

Waverley Borough Council has responded by officially declaring a Climate Emergency. This commits the council to regard climate change as a serious threat that requires urgent action to reduce carbon emissions and conserve biodiversity.

In 2021 we will be offering you the opportunity to take part in our Green Group. Working with you we will develop plans to help both the environment and nature in your local community.