

Tenant Voice Panel

Purpose

The purpose of the Tenant Voice panel is for tenants to work collaboratively with Berneslai Homes to ensure that policies, procedures and services delivered by the landlord and its partners meet the consumer standards set out by the Regulator for Social Housing (RSH).

The consumer standards aim to do the following:

- To support the provision of social housing that is well-managed and of appropriate quality.
- To ensure that actual or potential tenants of social housing have an appropriate degree of choice and protection.
- To ensure that tenants of social housing have the opportunity to be involved in its management and to hold their landlords to account.
- To encourage registered providers of social housing to contribute to the environmental, social and economic well-being of the areas in which the housing is situated.

Role

To ensure that Berneslai Homes and its partners gather and use residents, views, priorities and aspirations effectively when developing, delivering and reviewing housing related services.

To act as tenant champions and offer a representative and objective tenant view of the policies, procedure and standards used to deliver housing related services.

To review how well these policies, procedure and standards meet residents' views, priorities and aspirations.

To be accountable to the wider tenant population and to act with transparency.

To ensure Berneslai Homes and its partners' continually review and improve services.

To ensure Berneslai Homes meets the consumer standards as set out by the RSH.

To ensure Berneslai Homes has a range of relevant, challenging and effective local performance indicators and monitor performance against these standards.

To ensure all tenants have access to easy to understand information about Berneslai Homes and its partners performance and improvement plans, and to support the development and publication of such information.

To offer assurance to Berneslai Homes and BMBC that standards are being met.

How the panel will fulfil their role

1. The panel will have access to performance reports, benchmarking data, tenant feedback and non-sensitive or confidential customer services committee or board reports. This includes tenant feedback from the Service Excellence Assessment Programme, TARAs, local involvement and consultation, the Customer Panel, the STAR survey and social media.
2. The panel can request to meet other involved tenants and/or attend meetings to enable them to make judgements.
3. The panel can request additional information or undertake additional activities to enable them to make judgements.
4. These additional activities will be agreed subject to confidentiality, practical and sensitivity considerations.
5. The panel will agree and or make recommendations for service improvement priorities on an annual basis and will monitor progress on actions.
6. The panel will agree key elements of a good service, including any published service standards.
7. The panel will be the first point of contact for any new initiative, policy or procedure review. In considering any such item they can direct wider tenant or customer consultation.
8. The panel can request and direct any detailed scrutiny activities into individual areas of housing activity, including contracted and support services. To maintain focus and ensure objectivity, any detailed scrutiny must be referred to and undertaken by Berneslai Homes scrutiny panel.
9. To panel can request that additional reality checks and inspections are undertaken relating to various aspects of the service delivered. To maintain focus and ensure objectivity these will be undertaken under the terms of the Service Excellence Assessment Programme.
10. The panel will receive any reports produced by the scrutiny panel and present findings and recommendations to Customer Services Committee.
11. The panel will follow up on concerns raised by other involved tenants or individual tenants (subject to signed support from at least 5 other tenants/residents).

12. The chair of the panel and one other member will present six monthly Co-regulation reports to Customer Services Committee.
13. The panel will receive non confidential and non-sensitive reports which are scheduled to be considered by Customer Services Committee and Board.
14. The chair of the panel and one other tenant member can attend customer services committee or Board on invite or request to attend to offer a tenant view on reports being presented.
15. The chair of the panel and one other member will be integral members of the quarterly BMBC Liaison meetings.
16. The chair of the panel and one other member will meet the Director of Customer and Estate Services on a quarterly basis.
17. The panel will contribute to and agree to the content and format of the annual report to tenants and to review any feedback received.
18. The panel will monitor the implementation and impact of any changes instigated as a result of their involvement.

Practicalities

- The panel will have eight members who are recruited from open advertising to tenants and leaseholders. Leaseholders can only take one of the eight positions.
- Members must meet the role competencies (insert link) and or be able to demonstrate their willingness and ability to undertake training to enable them to meet these competencies.
- Initial interviews will be held by a panel of staff and future interviews will then be held by a mix of staff and existing panel members.
- The make-up of the panel will aim to be as representative of the tenant profile as is practically possible. This means actively promoting opportunities to underrepresented groups.
- Members have a term of three years with a maximum term of office of nine consecutive years. Members reaching their nine year term will be able to reapply after a 12 month break.
- The panel will select a Chair for a period of one year.
- The panel will meet monthly subject to five members being present.
- The panel will receive information to be discussed at the meeting 5 calendar days before the meeting.
- The panel will agree a forward plan of meeting activity on an annual basis. They can take referrals from managers within Berneslai Homes, other involved tenants, BMBC and other individual tenants (subject to support from 3 other tenants/residents).
- Meetings will be minuted and minutes distributed to members within 5 working days of the meeting. In the spirit of openness minutes will be shared with Customer Services Committee and Berneslai Homes SMT.

A summary of meeting activity will be published to Berneslai Homes website within 5 working days.

- The panel will make decisions based on at least 60% agreement of members present at the meeting.
- The panel will have the support of the Berneslai Homes Tenant Voice Co-ordinator and Tenant Voice Administration Officer.
- The panel will have access to an annual budget of £20,000 (subject to an annual review).
- Members must undertake required training.
- Members will only be permitted to serve on the Panel subject to an annual tenancy/rent check (Arrears due to administration of UC will not be taken into account).
- .

Member conduct

- Members are expected to attend meetings on a regular basis and if they are unable to do so, they must send apologies. If members miss two consecutive meetings, without valid apologies, then they will no longer be classed as a member.
- All members must respect and adhere to confidentiality and must sign a confidentiality agreement, code of conduct and role profile.
- All members are expected to follow the agreed code of conduct and behave in a courteous and respectful manner to each other, officers and board members.
- The Tenant voice Co-ordinator can take action should they witness or receive reports of behaviour not consistent with the code of conduct.
- Any action in respect of member conduct must be conducted by the Tenant Voice Co-ordinator or their representative and agreed prior with the Chair of the Panel and one other member. Action could be an official warning about their behaviour or dismissal for gross misconduct or serious or persistent behaviour for which they have received at least 2 warnings.
- If it is the Chair of the Panel who is acting outside of the code of conduct, then action must be agreed with at least two other members of the panel.
- If a member is dismissed from the group they will not be able to reapply.
- Any member who receives any sanction for their behaviour can ask for a review of the decision. Any review will be undertaken by a panel of three involved tenants which should include one tenant board member. The decision of this panel will be final.

Training and support

Members will be expected to undertake training that is necessary to enable them to perform their role. This may include but is not limited to:

- understanding regulatory requirements;
- understanding co regulation and governance;
- team working;
- understanding performance information; and
- understanding policy.

Consideration will be given to personal circumstances and every effort will be made to deliver training in a way which suits the individual's needs.

Ongoing training and support will be given to individual members through an annual development review which will be conducted by the Tenant Voice Co-ordinator.

Expenses

Members will receive a £5 voucher as a thank you payment for participating in the panel. Members will not receive more than £40 of thank you vouchers per month.

A taxi may be arranged and travel expenses will be reimbursed if the member comes by car or public transport.