



NLM Housing Association

Resident Engagement Strategy 2025 - 2028

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1 About NLM

NLM is a not-for-profit organisation which seeks to provide outstanding customer service. Managing over 1000 homes in 5 Local Authority areas across Northeast London, we build thriving neighbourhoods and work tirelessly to transform the lives of our residents. We are also an outstanding developer and consistently build new affordable homes for a diverse range of people.

NLM operates in the capital's most vibrant cultural and artistic places, as well as being on the doorstep to central London. The Association has a Board with wide range of expertise, including a number of housing professionals. The Board is responsible for the overall policy and strategic direction of the Association and approves policies. NLM is one of the top performing Housing Associations within its peer group. Our Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) place us on the top quartile among all Housing Associations operating in London.

NLM has always been at the forefront of engaging tenants in consultation and empowerment programmes.

1.1 Our Mission and Values

Our Vision

To transform the lives of our communities through the provision of high quality, affordable homes.

Our Mission statements.

Empowering our communities through the provision of safe and secure affordable homes and services.

Our Values

Valuing people:

We put our residents at the centre of our approach with compassion and fairness. We build trust and confidence by being honest and sincere in what we do.

Taking Responsibility:

We show accountability for finding speedy resolutions and do what we say we will. Ensuring that all voices from our stakeholders are heard and valued in decision-making.

Acting with integrity:

We practice workplace integrity embracing strong principles, values and ethics, which we demonstrate through our conduct in the work environment.

Working together:

We work closely with all stakeholders, our effective teamwork contributes to our success, morale and the retention of staff.

Being Innovative:

We think consistently of ways to improve and add value to NLM's operations, business model and work culture which focuses on making systems more efficient and enhancing service quality.

2 Our Commitment to Tenant Engagement

One of our Corporate Objectives is to 'Be truly customer driven by placing residents at the heart of all we do'. This is only achievable if we become a listening organisation, so we have created mechanisms for tenant feedback to influence our decisions.

We recognise that good Resident engagement can bring benefits not only to our tenants and residents but also to our organisation. Resident engagement ensures that we develop policies and services that meet the needs and aspirations of tenants and residents, creating genuine opportunities for them to influence decisions and increase levels of satisfaction.

It is widely acknowledged that when tenants and residents know that they can genuinely make a difference, influence decisions and feel listened to that they feel valued and more willing to be involved. This in turn leads to better working relationships between staff and tenants helping to promote positive two way communication and respect between NLM, tenants and residents.

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 sets out the requirements that Registered Providers must meet in relation to engaging with customers. NLM has embraced the regulators requirements and gone further in incorporating resident engagement in all areas of the association.

2.1 Principles for Resident Engagement

NLM is committed to promoting meaningful tenant engagement and improving the service our customers receive. Our principles reflect the following aspects

- Trust, respect & partnership
- Sharing information and ideas
- Setting the agenda together
- Openness and accountability in decision making
- Allowing adequate time for consideration
- Recognition of Tenant Organisations
- Good working relationships
- Providing resources for Tenant and Resident Groups
- Encouraging engagement

2.2 Benefits of Resident Engagement

Resident engagement is a way for NLM and residents to share information, ideas and work together to improve NLM's services. There are many benefits to getting involved with shaping the service residents receive e.g.

- Influencing decisions that affect housing services;
- Promoting better communication between tenants/residents and staff;
- Developing skills and knowledge of the services residents can expect to receive;
- Meeting new people, sharing ideas; and
- Increase satisfaction levels within residents homes and communities.

2.3 Regulatory Context

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 provides the regulator with powers to set standards relating to consumer matters that Registered Providers must meet. The Regulator for Social Housing has introduced revised Consumer Standards:

- The Safety and Quality Standard – requires landlords to provide safe and good quality homes and landlord services to tenants.
- The Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard – requires landlords to be open with tenants and treat them with
- fairness and respect so that tenants can access services, raise complaints when necessary, influence decision making and hold their landlord to account.
- The Neighbourhood and Community Standard
- requires landlords to engage with other relevant parties so that tenants can live in safe and well- maintained neighbourhoods and feel safe in their homes.
- The Tenancy Standard – sets requirements for the fair allocation and letting of homes and for how those tenancies are managed and ended by landlords.

These standards are designed to drive change and improve the quality of life for residents of social housing.

In addition, the regulator introduced a standardised set of Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) that landlords must report against. It gives residents the ability to hold their landlord to account, which promotes transparency and builds trust.

The Better Social Housing Review published seven recommendations to Housing Associations to drive improvements in the quality of social housing. Amongst the recommendations it states, “Housing associations should work with all tenants to ensure that they have a voice and influence at every level of decision making across the organisation, through both voluntary and paid roles”. The Action Plan describes the growth of Together with Tenants to support achieving this. Another recommendation says, “Every Housing Association, and the sector as a whole, should refocus on their core purpose and deliver against it”. Ensuring that all Housing Associations see the need for equality, diversity and inclusion as a strategic priority is included in the Action Plan.

The Building Safety Act 2022 makes radical reforms to give residents more rights, powers, and protections. It doesn’t just look to address the safety and quality of housing, but also how residents are engaged in relation to building safety by their landlord. The focus of the Building Safety Act 2022 is on high-rise residential buildings (including student accommodation), hospitals and care homes that are at least 18 metres or seven storeys high.

The Housing Ombudsman Service’s Complaint Handling Code aims to enable a positive complaints culture across the social housing sector. Compliance is demonstrated through the Code being embedded in policy and practice, and a learning from complaints culture. Landlords must report back to residents and stakeholders on wider lessons learnt.

3 Consultation on 'Tenant Engagement Strategy'

3.1 Consultation

NLM is keen to build upon the strong and successful tenant participation. Ongoing consultation with our tenants will take place, inviting all tenants from our tenants groups and tenants associations. We will review the outcomes of these consultations and understand the issues which matter to our tenants most.

3.2 Key Feedback received from tenants

Key feedback from our consultation during the last five years

- Scrutiny panel is interested in monitoring performance further.
- Accountability is essential. Tenants are pleased to note the commitments of a senior member of staff attending scrutiny panel meetings.
- Tenant Representatives are essential in our communities and we should work to recruit more.
- Communication is important and they would like more information through emerging technologies and social media.
- Working together and linking with other Tenant Groups to ensure that what they are doing is considered and taken on board as relevant by NLM..
- Keep promises and ensure that actions agreed at meetings are completed.

3.3 Our Vision for Tenant Engagement

Improving services by developing and influencing how NLM's services are provided in a meaningful two way process between NLM and tenants/ residents.

To achieve this NLM will:

Improve:

The culture and practice of tenant engagement across our services.

Promote:

The range of options available for engagement ensuring tenants and residents know how they can get involved.

Develop:

The current tenant engagement structure already in place and implement new ways to engage with one another.

Consult:

Effectively with tenants and residents in a way that suits them and on issues they care about.

Support:

Tenants to participate in tenant engagement roles and opportunities.

Communicate:

Effectively in a way which suits tenants and residents. Listening to their feedback and suggestions to improve services and how NLM engages with them at all levels.

Demonstrate:

The value of tenant engagement and the effectiveness of NLM's approach through periodic reviews of our methods and outcomes achieved.

4 Engagement Opportunities

Below displays our current tenant engagement opportunities which will be maintained and developed over the period of this Strategy:

4.1 Tenant Engagement Register

This is a register of tenants who have expressed an interest in engaging with NLM to shape the service they receive.

4.2 Tenant Representatives

These are tenants in our communities who have been identified to represent their community or estate. They are an essential link between NLM and residents keeping us informed on issues that matter to their community and striving to improve the service they receive.

4.3 Estate Walkabouts

Dedicated time for each NLM estate during which tenants can meet with their Housing Officer, Maintenance Officer and Resident Engagement Officer on site to discuss their area and encourage tenant engagement.

4.4 NLM Foundation

NLM offers small grants from £250 to £1,000 to fund local community projects. This grant supports a wide range of projects contributing to the wellbeing and development of our communities.

4.5 Satisfaction Surveys

NLM carries out tenant satisfaction surveys annually to establish the satisfaction of our tenants. These are published in NLM's Residents Newsletter and Annual Report.

4.6 Tenant/ Resident Associations & Groups

There are both formal and informal groups and associations across NLM . They represent their local area and its interests. Those setting up a group or association are eligible to apply for a £100 set-up grant alongside support from NLM staff.

4.7 Scrutiny Panels

A panel of tenants acts as critical friends looking at the services received by our tenants with a view to suggesting improvement. Areas for scrutiny are discussed and prioritised by the Area Panels. Panels meet with senior staff on quarterly basis

4.8 Touch Point Surveys

These touch point surveys will scrutinise specific areas of service through online polls, text surveys, telephone, face to face and post. Areas of service to be discussed and agreed with tenants and staff. Results will be used to establish satisfaction levels, bring about recommendations for improvement and are published in the Resident Newsletter.

4.9 Housing Committee Engagement

NLM has a tenant representative from the Scrutiny Panel attending the Housing and Assets Committee to ensure the link of engagement between Board of Management Committee members and our tenants; from the front door to our Boardroom.

5 Training and Support

We will support and encourage our tenants in their journey with NLM to shape the services they receive. It is important to build on skills and knowledge to ensure effective participation. This support includes:

- Bespoke training for Scrutiny Panel, Tenant Associations, and Tenant Groups.
- Support and advice for tenants and residents who want to form or maintain a group or association.
- Enabling networking and support between tenants, staff, stakeholders and external agencies.
- One to one advice.

6 Accessibility

NLM aims to make all engagement opportunities available to all our tenants in a way which works for them. Through our engagement structure we aim to create opportunities suitable for all. NLM will also assist with transport for tenant engagement events, provide refreshments when required and ensure that all tenants are able to shape the service they receive.

7 Dedicated Staff

NLM currently has one dedicated Resident Engagement Officer within the Housing Department to monitor and ensure the actions required are completed in this Strategy. NLM aims to continue to develop this role providing opportunities to network, promote tenant engagement with tenants & colleagues, share ideas, attend relevant training and conferences and link with external agencies to support this role.

Tenant Engagement is core to improving the services we deliver to our tenants and residents. We will continue to promote this among NLM staff to ensure a consistent culture of engagement between staff and tenants. We will ensure good links between departments to ensure that engagement is effective alongside support from the Tenant Engagement Officer. Staff will be provided with relevant training & support, be kept informed and be given opportunities to give their comments and suggestions on business improvement in correlation with tenant engagement opportunities.

8 Evaluation and Monitoring

8.1 Action Plan

NLM will continually monitor and review the progress and content of our Tenant Engagement Strategy and put in place a realistic and measurable Action Plan which is effective, relevant and achievable. The needs of our tenants, staff and stakeholders may change within the period, therefore the Action Plan may also change.

Tenants, staff and stakeholders are central to the development, implementation, and review of this Strategy.

8.2 Monitoring Results

NLM will continue to report progress to tenants, staff and Board through quarterly reporting, ongoing surveys will measure success and identify how to strengthen engagement opportunities.

NLM carries out independent Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSM) surveys on an annual basis, as well as in-house transactional surveys after repairs jobs are carried out.

8.3 Working in Partnership

NLM will continue to work in partnership with local authorities, other Registered Providers, local community centres and agencies geared to providing support in the community.

NLM is also a member of the Tenants Participation Advisory Service (TPAS), which provides guidance, standards, support and training for housing associations and their residents to ensure effective participation.

9 Action Plan 2025-2028

This Action Plan has been created in line with NLM's Vision and aims to achieve meaningful and effective Resident Engagement for the period 2025-2028.

9.1 Embed a culture of Resident Engagement in NLM

<u>What do we want to achieve?</u>	<u>How are we going to deliver?</u>
Measurable service improvement achieved through delivering the Resident Engagement Strategy.	Consistent engagement offer across services Review of Procedures, Policy, work instructions, guidance, and templates to identify engagement opportunities.
Resident led scrutiny.	Specialist staff, structures and budget to lead engagement and coordinate delivery.
To include resident engagement in every aspect of 'the job'.	All staff inductions will include a focus on why resident engagement and customer insight is important and how it is delivered at NLM.
To make improvements to initial TSM results.	Residents engagement at all levels including reporting to the Housing and Assets Committee. TSM's relating to resident engagement delivery will form part of regular resident satisfaction surveys.
Positive complaints culture.	Clear and accessible complaints process with transparent reporting and performance monitoring.

9.2 Deliver inclusive engagement with fair access

<u>What do we want to achieve?</u>	<u>How are we going to deliver?</u>
<p>Inclusive resident engagement projects and activities built on a true understanding of residents, and designed through consultation taking into consideration particular protected characteristics</p> <p>All service standards are fit for residents' needs and set collaboratively.</p> <p>Increase in the number and diversity of residents engaged.</p>	<p>Reaching all residents through different medium, catering to individual needs, creating new opportunities where required.</p> <p>In-person, online, hybrid, flexible and remote methods of engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Set agreed definitions for resident engagement and develop standards together with residents• Provision of translation, sign language, braille and other communication services.• Accessible venues.• Bespoke activities to meet diverse faiths, cultures and target under-represented demographics.• Provision of welcoming and safe environments which support vulnerabilities and promote positive mental health.

9.3 Deliver resident engagement that is high quality and value for money

<u>What do we want to achieve?</u>	<u>How are we going to deliver?</u>
<p>Collaborative engagement methods focused on areas of influence and change.</p> <p>Partnerships and community investment that achieves sustainable outcomes.</p> <p>Community engagement that supports service delivery and outcomes.</p> <p>Prioritisation and allocation of resources to be informed by customer insight.</p>	<p>Review of policies, services and strategies through resident consultation.</p> <p>Publicise how residents can be engaged in service improvement and their communities.</p> <p>Project based approach for community engagement to enable delivery across all services and stock locations. Projects will prioritise neighbourhood improvements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • asset refurbishments • environmental/community enhancements • neighbourhood plans (incl. localised consultations) • cohesive communities <p>All tall buildings will have a bespoke engagement strategy in relation to building safety.</p> <p>Provide support and guidance to Residents' Associations and community groups to start and flourish.</p> <p>Work in partnership with agencies and organisations with shared objectives, who bring resources into the community and enable residents to influence local decision making.</p> <p>Provide support through the NLM Foundation for inclusion activities across the wider neighbourhood.</p>

9.4 Provide training and support that empowers residents

<u>What do we want to achieve?</u>	<u>How are we going to deliver?</u>
<p>Bespoke resident learning offers that fit residents' aspirations, including employment, life skills and tenancy skills.</p> <p>Building skills for residents engaged in community projects and groups.</p> <p>Building knowledge and skills within NLM services to support resident involvement in the organisation.</p>	<p>Provision of a flexible resident learning programme which is designed with residents.</p> <p>Delivery will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Online knowledge and skills training• Tenancy and service-related modules• Sustainability, energy efficiency and decarbonisation• Resources and training for community groups• Bespoke training to enable involvement in resident engagement activities• Signposting and funding to external courses and qualifications <p>Access to IT and broadband in the NLM office or by signposting to local low cost or free broadband and IT services.</p>