

Resident Involvement Agreement



Our Agreement:

This agreement sets out the Standard for delivering Resident Involvement at Wherry Housing Association. The Agreement has been made in consultation with residents at our Resident Involvement Review Day and has been signed off by Way Ahead with Wherry, our landlord wide residents' group.

2011 - 2014

The Wherry Resident Involvement Agreement

Wherry Housing Association has made a formal agreement with residents about involving them in all aspects of the Association. This Agreement, developed with input from staff, contractors, Board Members and residents sets out what we want to achieve and how we will put our commitment to resident involvement in practice. This Agreement sits along side our Resident Involvement Strategy. A full copy of the Strategy can be obtained from our Resident Involvement Manager, Sally Greetham.

Our Vision for Resident Involvement

We want to be a leader in the field of Resident Involvement, continuing to make sure that residents are at the heart of our decision making process, providing solutions to housing issues at a local level.



Mark Jones, Managing Director



Peter McLaughlan, Chair of WAWW



Brian Stewart, Chair of the Board

1: Our Vision for Resident Involvement

We want to be a leader in the field of Resident Involvement, continuing to make sure that residents are at the heart of our decision making process, providing solutions to housing issues at a local level.

2: Our Objectives

To support the achievement of this overall aim, we will strive to seek the following outcomes:

- Enable residents to influence the quality of their homes and communities that they live in.
- Enable residents to play an active part in their community.
- Enable residents to take opportunities that could potentially enhance their life chances.
- Ensure that residents are involved and part of the decision making process if they want to be.
- Enable residents to influence the strategic planning and running of the organisation.
- Ensure that residents believe that we are delivering the best we can for them, offering value for money services that are efficient and effective.
- Ensure residents respect Wherry as a leading housing provider and will wish to remain loyal.

3: Opportunities for Resident Involvement

Wherry Housing Association will offer residents as many opportunities as possible to get involved in developing, monitoring and reviewing our housing policies, strategies, and services, and to get involved in wider activities for the benefit of residents and the Association.

4: What Residents can get involved in?

Key areas for consulting and involving residents will include:

- Neighbourhood and local services (landscaping, grounds maintenance etc)
- Policies and procedures relating to the way homes are let including ensuring the needs of people with disabilities are met.
- Preventing and tackling anti-social behaviour.
- Regeneration and housing renewal and improvement programmes.
- Sustainability including affordable warmth and sustainable energy.
- New housing development including design of new homes.
- Development of budgets and finance including options for housing investment and capital programmes.
- Development and improvement of services including support services.
- Arrangements for monitoring and reviewing services and performance,

addressing shortcomings and taking remedial action.

And residents will be offered opportunities to get involved at various levels in setting, monitoring and reviewing policies, procedures, and service and performance standards including:

- Customer care.
- Informing, consulting and involving residents, including handling collective complaints and taking remedial action.
- Environmental work and improvements.
- Repairs & maintenance.
- Neighbourhood issues and tackling anti-social behaviour.
- Neighbourhood and estate management.
- Allocations and lettings, including choice-based lettings, the 'letting standard' and dealing with empty homes.
- Policies and procedures for collecting rents and service charges, tackling arrears, providing debt advice, and debt recovery procedures.
- Terms and conditions of tenancy, tenancy management including enforcement of tenancy conditions, and helping residents to sustain their tenancies.
- Equality and diversity policies and procedures, including race equality policies and policies on preventing and tackling racial harassment.
- Procurement, partnering and contractors' performance.

5: How can residents get involved?

The widest possible range of opportunities to get involved will be offered to as many residents as possible to encourage people to get involved as much or as little as they want, when, and how they want. Particular attention will be paid to making sure that no-one is excluded or prevented from getting involved. Arrangements will continue to be developed to make sure traditionally excluded or under-represented sections of our communities. For example, residents living in more remote rural areas and residents with disabilities or learning difficulties are reached and encouraged to take part in ways that suit their needs and priorities.

In addition to encouraging the development of Resident Representatives, Tenants and Residents Associations and other forms of formal representation including Patch Panels, and Way Ahead With Wherry (the recognised Wherry-wide residents' group), a wide range of less formal methods will be offered landlord-wide and locally to get residents' views and to involve our residents in all aspects of improving our performance service delivery.

Wherry wide Resident Involvement

As part of our planned approach we will consult and involve residents by:

- Newsletters, surveys and questionnaires.
- Open Days, Fun Days and social events
- Specific interest groups e.g. Property Partnership Board, Sheltered Housing

- Advisory Panel, Leaseholder Panel, Energy Efficiency Groups.
- Online discussion forums including social networking sites.
- Focus Groups
- Readers Panel and Editorial Groups
- Mystery Shoppers, Property and Estate Inspectors
- Resident Led Scrutiny Panel.
- Contract, Service, and Performance Review Groups
- ‘Way Ahead With Wherry’ - the recognised Wherry-wide representative residents’ group

Local-level resident involvement

Specific ‘tailor-made’ methods and arrangements will be developed for involving residents at a local level in different areas and neighbourhoods.

The methods will include:

- Local ‘Patch’ newsletters and small local surveys including door-to-door surveys
- Estate or neighbourhood ‘walkabouts’ and inspections
- Recognised Residents’ Associations
- Local ‘Resident Representatives’
- Neighbourhood ‘Patch Panels’ in each Neighbourhood Patch

6: Core standards for information, consultation and involvement

We have agreed these ‘core standards’ to make sure that our commitment can not only be seen to be being delivered but also to make sure residents, staff and Board members can monitor how effectively it is being done and propose changes and improvements if needed.

Timely information and feedback

- Information about local meetings, events and activities will be given to residents at least 7 days in advance and a monthly up-date will be placed on the website
- Feedback from meetings, events and activities given to participants within one month and to all residents via newsletters no less than 4 times a year
- Individual requests for information will be responded to within 10 days
- Information about performance and any proposed changes to policy/standards/performance etc will be given no less than 4 times a year to all residents.

Standards for meetings and discussion events

1. Publicity and feedback. Meetings and discussion events will be publicised via:
 - i. information in newsletters
 - ii. Wherry’s website
 - iii. posters in communal areas
 - iv. flyers to individual homes and by letter or leaflet to all recognised residents’ associations and groups

- v. telephoning resident representatives when necessary
- vi. text messaging
- vii. giving no less than 7 days notice of meetings including details of the agenda for the meeting (agreed in advance with the Chair) unless exceptional circumstances require an urgent emergency meeting to be called

2. Feedback will be given via:

- i. minutes of meetings within 10 working days to all participants and recognised resident associations, groups and representatives including details of what action will be taken, by whom and by when
- ii. summary information in local newsletters where appropriate

3. Accessibility: In order that as many residents have the opportunity to take part:

- i. meetings and discussion events will be held at different times of day and in accessible venues agreed in advance with residents
- ii. staff will assist with arranging premises to make sure these are accessible to people with disabilities
- iii. crèche facilities will be provided free of charge where there is sufficient demand or an allowance will be paid for child care/other care costs as necessary
- iv. payment will be made to cover transport costs or transport will be provided as necessary
- v. signers, interpreters, and induction loops will be provided as necessary

4. Effectiveness:

- i. Training will be provided for Residents, Staff and Board Members on making meetings work, with specific training for people Chairing meetings.
- ii. All meetings will:
 - 1. have clear objectives and an agenda agreed in advance with tenant representatives and the Chair of the meeting
 - 2. be run in a fair and democratic way so that everyone gets a chance to have their say
 - 3. have feedback identifying details of what action will be taken, by whom and by when
 - 4. be monitored and reviewed to check effectiveness, levels of satisfaction and input from traditionally under-represented sections of the community

7: Standards for Resident Consultation

These standards aim to provide the widest possible range of opportunities and choice for residents to put their views forward and to get involved. All residents will be given formal and informal opportunities to put their views forward about services and performance and will be consulted before changes are made to policies, procedures, strategies and services.

Informal consultation	Residents will have opportunities to put their views forward via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local discussions with officers and staff • Fun Days' and social events • Contact with local staff and those working on behalf of Wherry HA
Formal consultation	Residents will be involved in formal consultation via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surveys and local postal, telephone or face-to-face surveys to sample residents' views randomly throughout the year. • Estate, Area or Neighbourhood Inspections or 'walkabouts' held no less than 3 times a year • Patch Panels, Residents Associations, recognised residents' representatives, focus groups and formal local consultation meetings • Working Groups, Resident Led Scrutiny Groups and Leaseholder Service Panel
Content	Residents will be consulted about proposed changes and development of policies, procedures, strategies and services and wider community issues that affect them where they live including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local estate and neighbourhood management • Regeneration, housing renewal and improvement programmes • New housing development including design of new homes • Options for housing improvement & investment • Capital and renovation programmes • Development of budgets including budgets for local improvements, and • Arrangements for monitoring and reviewing services and performance, addressing shortcomings and taking remedial action
Timeliness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents, including recognised representatives and groups, will normally have at least 3 weeks to respond to any formal consultation
Feedback	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All residents will receive feedback from formal consultation via Newsletters sent to all residents no less than 4 times a year • Feedback from formal consultation will be included on the website • All residents participating in specific local consultation will be given feedback within one month via local newsletters or letters or personal contact as appropriate
Reaching everyone	Arrangements will be put in place to ensure that any residents from traditionally under-represented or excluded sections of our communities can make their views known as necessary via: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support workers and/or carers • Interpreters • Telephone or face-to-face with staff • Specific local discussion groups and/or Focus Groups and Forums

7: Standards for Resident Involvement

Residents will be offered opportunities to get involved in what interests them, in ways that suit them. This will include opportunities to get involved in policies, strategies, services and wider community issues. Residents will be encouraged to become actively involved at all levels including the governance of Wherry and the Circle Group.

Options for involvement	<p>Residents will be involved in an annual review of progress against the Wherry Residents Involvement Strategy and will be offered opportunities to influence and be involved in developing, monitoring and reviewing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all relevant policies, procedures and strategies • service and performance standards • regeneration, housing renewal and improvement programmes • new housing development including design of new homes • options for housing improvement & investment and capital and renovation programmes • budgets and finance • in identifying and agreeing remedial action where this is needed
Arrangements for involving residents	<p>The widest possible range of opportunities will be put in place to enable as many residents as possible to get involved in ways that suit them. Resident involvement criteria and structures will be put in place to ensure that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all residents are represented by recognised structures and arrangements for consultation and involvement including Panels, Forums, Group and Residents' Associations • at local (estate/neighbourhood/area) and landlord-wide levels representative, democratic, accountable arrangements for representation are in place • formal and informal mechanisms for involvement are available for all residents including Fun Days, Road Shows, Sounding Boards, Focus Groups, Working Groups, Service Review Groups, Neighbourhood Patch Panels, etc • opportunities are available at local, area, and landlord-wide levels for recognised groups to have control of budgets where appropriate and to ensure Wherry HA can be challenged and held to account by residents • at landlord-wide level the 'Way Ahead With Wherry' group acts as the recognised, democratic and accountable residents' group on behalf of residents across Wherry • residents from Wherry have representation at Group-wide level via the Residents and Service-users Panel ('RASP')

<p>Involving all sections of our community</p>	<p>Wherry is committed to trying to reach and involve traditionally excluded or under-involved residents in our communities, including young people and young parents, residents with literacy or learning difficulties, residents in supported or sheltered housing, people from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities and other residents who have been traditionally under-involved. Standards have been agreed to help ensure that this commitment is put into practice including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mapping the make-up of our community and keeping up-to-date records against the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010 and we will use the information gained to tailor our approach to involvement • making specific arrangements to consult with and involve all under-represented sections of our community for example through specific Focus Groups, Community Groups, and specific groups such as the ‘Youth Group’ • Ensuring that information is available face-to-face, in accessible formats and in languages other than English to meet needs • Ensuring that under-represented sections of our community including residents in more remote areas, are aware of how they can be involved in arrangements for consultation and involvement for example, ‘Mystery Shoppers’, and via Residents’ Associations, Community Groups, Focus Group etc • Working with recognised Residents’ Associations and Groups to help them represent the views of under-represented residents in their community • Linking in to the work of other local networks for specific sections of our community to reach the people from whom we might not otherwise hear
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8: Standards for Resident Representation

Residents are encouraged to take part in the arrangements for consultation and involvement and ensure they are represented by recognised Groups, Residents’ Associations or individual Resident Representatives/Voices through the Resident Representative structures.

1. ‘Friends of Wherry’ (resident contacts, people willing to take part in surveys, join discussion groups etc)

‘Friends of Wherry’ is the data-base containing details of residents willing to respond to requests for information and feedback, take part in surveys, respond to questionnaires, take part in discussions and focus groups etc. Residents may be identified by the area they live in, by age group, whether or not they are from a Minority group or if they have disabilities, in order to help Wherry make sure it is hearing from all sections of the communities served. Residents may specify whether or not they are interested in particular services and their input will be tailored to their preferences.

Role of ‘Friends of Wherry’:

- To help monitor and give feedback (via questionnaires etc) on any particular policies, procedures, performance and/or services (for example: estate cleaning, grounds maintenance, improvement work)
- To help keep staff informed about any local or Wherry-wide issues

- To meet from time to time with staff and take part in ‘walkabouts’ and ‘estate/area inspections

Requirements:

- Any tenant or leaseholder who is:
- Willing to provide information and feedback to Wherry HA
- Willing to check service delivery against set service standards in information provided

2. ‘Resident Representatives’ (Block/Neighbourhood/Street/Area etc)

Individual tenants or leaseholders may be elected or nominated by other tenants and leaseholders to act on their behalf in any dialogue, representation and negotiations with Wherry HA and/or the Circle Group. Resident Representatives are eligible to be members of the landlord-wide residents’ group ‘Way Ahead With Wherry’

Role of Resident Representatives

- To act as the formally recognised representative of other residents in negotiations and formal dialogue with Wherry, including meeting as necessary with the Board or Board Members
- On behalf of other residents to help monitor and give feedback on services: for example: neighbourhood/estate management, grounds maintenance, improvement work
- From time to time: to check with other residents on repairs carried out: (e.g. was an appointment made and kept, was the work completed satisfactorily, did the resident receive full information about what work would be done and when?) and other maintenance or improvement work
- To be a ‘contact point’ for other residents to help pass information to Wherry
- To help exchange information and feedback between residents and Wherry
- To take part in arrangements for consultation and involvement
- To pass on any local issues of concern to Officers and other staff
- To meet from time to time with staff, residents and Board members and take part in ‘walkabouts’ and (as relevant) estate/block/street inspections

Requirements:

Any tenant or leaseholder who:

- **is willing to act as a representative on behalf of other residents**
- agrees to follow the formal ‘Code of Conduct’ and ‘Code of Confidentiality’
- and either
- has signed support of no less than 10 Wherry households or half, whichever is lower number, where up to 30 homes are involved, or no less than 30% where over 30 homes are involved) (Wherry will assist with this where necessary)
- or
- has been elected by other Wherry tenants and leaseholders to act as a representative on their behalf in formal arrangements for consultation and involvement as per agreed procedures

3. Residents’ Associations and Street or Block Groups

Groups can be organised by tenants, leaseholders and other residents to act as formal representatives on behalf of residents living in a defined area in any dialogue or negotiation with members of Wherry, the local Council and other organisations as necessary. These recognised groups are entitled to nominate a resident as their representative to the landlord-wide residents’ group ‘Way Ahead With Wherry’

Role of Residents' Groups/Association

- To act as the democratically accountable, representative body on behalf of other residents
- To canvas residents' views on service delivery, performance, improvement work, priorities for action or improvement etc
- To monitor performance and service delivery on behalf of other residents
- To nominate representatives to other Wherry resident consultation and involvement groups as necessary
- To appoint a representative on behalf of the group to Way Ahead With Wherry
- To give information and feedback to Wherry and to other residents
- To take part in local consultation and negotiation with Wherry, and as necessary from time to time, with other bodies including the Council
- To meet with Wherry staff and contractors and other residents to take part in 'walkabouts' and estate or neighbourhood inspections
- To represent the views of residents in discussions and negotiations with other statutory and voluntary organisations
- From time to time, to work with other partners e.g. Local authority, health authority, police etc

Requirements:

- To act as formal representatives on behalf of other residents
- Adoption of a formal constitution agreed with Wherry and residents
- To follow a formal 'Code of Conduct' and 'Code of Confidentiality'
- Membership open and offered to all Wherry tenants and leaseholders living in the area covered by the Association
- To promote equality of opportunity and to seek to reach and involve traditionally excluded or under-involved sections of the community
- To show evidence of support from other residents of no less than 30% of relevant households as agreed with Wherry
- To hold no less than two meetings a year (including an AGM) open to all residents in the defined area (these may be combined with 'social events')

4. Neighbourhood Patch Panel

In each of Wherry's Neighbourhood areas, the Neighbourhood Officer (NO) is responsible for setting up and maintaining a 'Patch Panel' of between 12 and 15 Wherry's residents. Recognised Tenants' and Residents' Associations and 'Voices' and other recognised Wherry resident representatives will be included within the membership of the Panel.

The Panels will be 'profiled' to match the overall make-up of the community in relation to the proportions of Wherry residents of different ages, people from different ethnic groups, residents with disabilities etc

Role of the Neighbourhood Patch Panel

- To involve residents in the provision of housing and related services and to assist in improving services and performance
- To assist the Neighbourhood Officer in monitoring and reviewing services, performance, and value for money, including performance of contractors and other relevant service providers to Wherry's residents and to assist the Neighbourhood Officer in developing standards and action to improve performance and service delivery
- To receive and provide information and feedback to and from residents including recognised groups and representatives, and to assist in providing two-way communication between Wherry and residents in the Neighbourhood
- To liaise with Tenant Inspectors over any inspections to be carried out in the Neighbourhood, to request specific inspections, to receive reports from Tenant Inspectors, review findings and agree priorities for action with the NO

- To receive, consider and comment upon service and performance reports including reports about estate and neighbourhood inspections and reports from Mystery Shoppers and Tenant Inspectors
- To report findings and make recommendations for service and performance improvement to Neighbourhood Officers, to any relevant Service Improvement Panels/Groups and to Way Ahead With Wherry
- To take part in relevant consultation about policy and strategy and to influence the development of policies and strategies
- To identify wider community issues and propose priorities for action
- To be responsible for deciding spending priorities for specific neighbourhood and environmental improvement projects

Requirements

- Neighbourhood Patch Panels shall be made up solely of Wherry residents profiled to match the overall make-up and geography of the specific Neighbourhood in relation to proportions of younger and older tenants, tenants with disabilities, tenants living in more remote or isolated rural homes, and tenants from Minority Ethnic communities
- Patch Panels are expected to promote equality of opportunity and to seek to reach and involve traditionally excluded or under-involved residents
- Any Wherry resident is eligible to put themselves forward for consideration for membership of the Neighbourhood Patch Panel. However, Neighbourhood Officers are responsible for setting up and maintaining the Panels. Recognised Tenants' and Residents' Associations and recognised 'Voices' and Representatives shall be asked to fill a specified number of places on the Forum as agreed with the Neighbourhood Officer and may choose to do this using an election process
- Neighbourhood Officers will be responsible for ensuring that details of performance and inspections reports for the Neighbourhood are summarised and given to the Neighbourhood Patch Panel for discussion and comment
- Meetings of the Panel will fit into performance monitoring cycles with agendas jointly agreed between the Neighbourhood Officer and members of the Panel. Meetings will be held in venues that are accessible to residents and at times and locations to meet residents' needs
- Development and support will be provided for each Panel by the Neighbourhood Officer with assistance as necessary from the Resident Involvement Officer. Training will be arranged and co-ordinated for all members of the Patch Panels by the Resident Involvement Officer. A Manager known as the Patch Champion will oversee the functioning of the Patch Panel to ensure that progress in the area is maintained.
- Relevant Officers and Contractors will attend Panel meetings in response to any formal request from the Chair or Neighbourhood Officer. Officers and Contractors may also attend any Panel meetings providing this is agreed in advance with the Chair of the Panel
- Officers, including members of the Senior Management Team, and the Board of Wherry will provide feedback to each meeting of the Neighbourhood Patch Panel as required detailing responses to any matters raised and action taken
- All Panel members will be expected to abide by the formal 'Code of Conduct' and a 'Code of Confidentiality' as agreed by Way Ahead With Wherry

5. 'Way Ahead With Wherry' (Wherry-wide residents' group)

The landlord-wide representative body on behalf of Wherry's tenants and leaseholders provides a democratic, accountable two-way link between tenants, leaseholders and the Board, Senior Management Team and other officers, staff and contractors of Wherry HA

This body is made up of recognised Resident Representatives and representatives from each recognised Tenant and Residents' Association (TRA) and/or representatives from each of the 'Neighbourhood Patch Panels' and any particular forums to provide representation for young

people, people with disabilities, the BME community and Supported Housing and Sheltered Housing

Role of Way Ahead With Wherry

- To act as the strategic consultation body on behalf of residents for Wherry
- To act as the 'challenge' body to help make sure that Wherry HA is accountable to residents
- To help represent residents' views and to influence decision making by the Board of Wherry HA
- To act as a two-way channel for information and feedback between residents and Wherry Housing Association
- To help build the confidence, capacity, knowledge and skills of residents
- To nominate representatives to any Forums, Panels or Working Groups, including groups at Circle level or external groups (e.g. RASP) to help monitor, review and improve services to tenants
- To assist with resident consultation and to take a key role in the development of successful mechanisms for resident participation and empowerment at all levels
- To consider and help prioritise issues relating to housing, estate and neighbourhood management that are of general or landlord-wide significance and to provide information, advice, feedback and recommendations to Officers and the Board of Wherry
- To identify and consider wider community issues and propose initiatives for action for referral to the Wherry Board
- To assist with setting, monitoring, reviewing, and scrutinising service and performance standards and targets for the delivery of the Property Improvement programme, customer focussed housing and related services, and sustainable communities
- To meet with Wherry to have input to the details of any contracts and to be involved in selection of contractors who will carry out work for Wherry's residents
- To help monitor and review policies and strategies for resident involvement and involvement across Wherry, including the 'menu' of options for involvement, this agreement and any Action Plans.
- To work in partnership with relevant Wherry staff to develop and agree a rolling programme of training for residents and residents' representatives and relevant training including resident involvement for staff and contractors
- To meet with Wherry to negotiate and agree levels of financial support for TRAs and recognised Resident Representatives

Requirements

- To develop and abide by a formal constitution developed with input from resident representatives and officers of Wherry
- To maintain links with tenants and leaseholders at local level and to represent their interests and concerns to Wherry HA
- To abide by policies relating to Equality and Diversity and strive to represent and involve all sections of the community
- Abide by the agreed 'Code of Conduct' and 'Code of Confidentiality' at all times
- Take part in quarterly performance monitoring with Wherry and to agree recommendations for action
- Ensure that feedback from any meetings and events involving the Wherry-wide group are reported to residents including Neighbourhood Patch Panels, TRAs, and other representatives
- Monitor and evaluate different approaches to resident participation, looking particularly at the scope for changing approaches (including Way Ahead With Wherry itself) to make sure that this remains effective and efficient

9: Standards for Resources for Resident Involvement

Wherry will ensure that resources are provided to make sure that residents have the support they need to get involved in whatever ways that suit them. Resources are available to assist development of new structures and arrangements and to sustain existing ones. Resources for resident involvement will be reviewed annually in consultation with residents' representatives to ensure any necessary uplift is provided.

Finance	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Annual grants to recognised groups <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. An annual grant of £250 for all recognised groups including WAWW 2. Additional Funds <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Support to access funding from other sources. 3. Newsletter production <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assistance will be given to recognised groups including WAWW to help with newsletter production 4. Transport expenses for attending meetings & events approved by Wherry <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Full reimbursement of public transport costs or a mileage rate for use of own car. Amounts payable will be in line with Circle guidelines which are in line with Inland Revenue mileage rates. In addition, taxis may be provided by Wherry to enable representatives and other residents to attend meetings, training, events etc 5. Other expenses for recognised representatives <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Recognised representatives including Mystery Shoppers, Tenant Inspectors, and members of recognised groups, can claim the cost of necessary telephone calls and any photocopying of reports, information etc or be given High Street Vouchers to cover costs. 6. Child care/care facilities <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. A Childcare and Carers' Allowance is available for residents involved in any consultation groups, meetings or events set up by Wherry
Facilities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Access to venues and equipment <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Wherry will cover the cost of hiring venues and/or provides access free-of-charge to venues such as lounges in sheltered accommodation 2. Photocopying <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Photocopying for specific purposes, e.g. posters to advertise meetings 3. Help in producing and distributing newsletters <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Assistance may be provided at local level where possible

<p>Support and Advice</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Independent advice <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Wherry subscribes to TPAS to enable residents to have access to independent advice b. The resident involvement budget may also be used to enable residents to have access to other independent advice 2. Support to local residents' groups <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Officer support and information available upon request 3. Support to Way Ahead With Wherry <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Administrative support will be provided to WAWW
<p>Community development support</p>	<p>Provided as part of the resident involvement strategy for Wherry, community development support will be provided for wider community activities.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with local networks and other partnerships and agencies <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Links will be developed at local levels to promote and develop wider community activities and initiatives with residents 2. Support to build confidence and capacity of residents <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Support will be provided by Wherry and in partnership with other organisations to promote responsibility and independence amongst residents, especially residents in sheltered, supported and temporary housing
<p>Training</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Training for staff & residents <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Training needs of staff and residents relating to involvement will be monitored and reviewed annually and included in an annual training programme b. Training will be arranged and delivered as necessary in-house or via external organisations c. Accredited training will be made available for resident representatives and in-house accreditation will be developed 2. Free training for recognised groups and other recognised representatives <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Way ahead with Wherry will be provided with a free-of-charge rolling training programme for all members b. Training needs will be evaluated and reviewed annually and a training schedule will be drawn up in consultation with residents and officers c. In-house training will be provided by Wherry staff d. Joint training will be provided in house on an ad-hoc basis for staff, tenants and leaseholders, and Board members e. External courses (where training cannot be provided in-house) will also offered to residents' representatives

Staff Resources	<p>All staff working for Wherry HA will be expected to support and promote resident consultation and involvement as part of mainstream work. In addition, some staff will have specific responsibilities:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Assistant Director of Business Excellence Strategic responsibility for resident involvement across Wherry HA. Specific responsibility to deliver an innovative customer focused service with increasing levels of satisfaction through positive engagement with customers 2. Resident Involvement Manager To lead on Resident Involvement for Wherry ensuring that residents have the opportunity to actively participate in the management of their homes and the improvement of services delivered by Wherry Housing Association 3. Resident Involvement Officer To provide practical support to individual residents, Residents Associations, WAWW and other groups
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10: Standards for Monitoring and Measuring Performance

These standards aim to ensure residents are involved in monitoring and measuring all aspects of services and performance relating to Wherry's services to residents including resident consultation and involvement. Residents will be involved in annual reviews of resident satisfaction with delivery of the Strategy.

Performance Monitoring Arrangements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. All residents will be given opportunities to get involved in monitoring and evaluating performance by taking part in arrangements including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. providing feedback via questionnaires and surveys b. Focus Groups c. Mystery Shopping d. Property Inspections e. Estate Inspections f. Service Improvement Groups e.g. Property Partnership Board. g. Resident Led Scrutiny Panel 2. Details of resident consultation and involvement will be included on all reports to the Board in relation to any relevant items on which the Board is being asked to take decisions 3. Performance against standards, targets and PIs for consultation and involvement (including consultation and involvement of traditionally excluded or under-involved sections of the community) will be reviewed quarterly with resident representatives 4. Feedback will be given to all residents via the Newsletters
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Outcomes and value for money	<p>1. Benefits and outcomes will be reviewed and assessed annually by resident representatives in partnership with staff</p> <p>2. Value for money of different approaches to involvement will be monitored and evaluated annually with resident representatives</p> <p>3. Findings from reviews and evaluation will be reported annually to the Board and in the Newsletter to residents</p>
Standards and targets	<p>1. Service standards, targets, and Performance Indicators for consultation and involvement will be set and monitored no less than twice a year with resident representatives and findings will be reported to residents and the Board</p> <p>2. The Board will receive progress reports and will carry out an annual review of progress against standards and targets set</p> <p>3. Recognised representatives and residents' groups will be monitored annually against agreed standards and targets for input from traditionally excluded or under-involved sections of the community</p> <p>4. Findings will be included in reports to the Board and the Wherry-wide recognised Residents' Group 'Way Ahead With Wherry'</p> <p>5. Findings will be reported annually to all residents via the Newsletter</p>
PI's for Resident Involvement	Residents and staff will be involved in monitoring and reviewing performance against the Group PIs and any specific Wherry PIs for Resident Involvement through quarterly reports to WAWW.
Impact Assessment	All staff and residents will be consulted and involved in producing the annual Impact Assessment
Compliance	<p>1. Compliance with agreed standards and procedures for consultation and involvement monitored no less than twice a year by residents</p> <p>2. Findings will be reported annually to all residents via the Newsletter and will be included in reports to the Board</p>
Resident satisfaction	<p>1. Sample surveys of levels of resident satisfaction with delivery of the resident involvement strategy, using a variety of different methods, will take place at least once a year</p> <p>2. One-off sampling of resident' views about delivery of the agreed standards in the strategy, including focus groups and surveys of views of specific sections of the community, will take place at least once a year</p>
Remedial Action	Where performance or service standards and targets for information, consultation and involvement are not met, remedial action will be agreed with residents' representatives.

11: Resolving Disputes and Remedial Action

Wherry Housing Association wants to ensure that any collective disputes and grievances from residents' representatives, groups, and/or associations, are resolved speedily via fair and structured internal procedures to the satisfaction of all concerned. The internal procedure includes an in-house 'Tribunal' and arrangements for in-house Mediation. We agree that independent external mediation or adjudication via the Housing Ombudsman Service will only be used when all other avenues are exhausted.

1: Complaints Procedure

(NB: Individual complaints from residents will be made and dealt with via the Complaints procedure)

1.1: Individual Complaints or Grievances

Residents with any individual grievances or complaints about service delivery or the performance of any Wherry HA employees or contractors should use the 'Complaints' procedure. Residents who believe that their complaint has not been dealt with in a satisfactory manner or according to the agreed procedures may progress through the various stages to a final hearing by the Board

1.2: Collective Complaints or Grievances

Any recognised Residents' Association, Group or Representative may raise a collective complaint or grievance on behalf of the residents they represent if they believe the standards and commitments given in the Resident Involvement Strategy are not being adhered to as promised, including undertakings given in this Resident Involvement Agreement. They should do so in the first instance with the Officer concerned. If the matter is not resolved to the satisfaction of the representative, association or group, they may then take the matter to 'Way Ahead With Wherry' (the recognised landlord-wide residents' body) who will seek to resolve the issue by mediating between the parties or by taking the issue to the Board who will seek to ensure that the issue is resolved to the satisfaction of the residents concerned.

Where Way Ahead With Wherry believes that the issue remains unresolved they may decide to refer the matter to a Tribunal or Critical Friend following the agreed 'Remedial Action' procedures detailed below

2: Remedial Action

Where issues raised by Way Ahead with Wherry, recognised Residents' Associations, Resident Representatives or Groups, in relation to resident consultation and involvement and services to residents, are not resolved, Wherry HA will use a Tribunal to objectively consider and seek to resolve the issue.

2.1: Tribunal:

The Tribunal shall be composed of five members: two representatives on behalf of residents, two representatives on behalf of Wherry staff not from the section subject to the complaint or, where this is not possible, from another member of the Circle, and an independent Chair. These individuals shall be drawn from a pool of 12 people, 4 members including 2 residents and 2 staff or Board members, nominated by each party, with the proviso that any individual with a direct personal interest in the grievance is barred from sitting on the Tribunal.

The role of the Tribunal is to:

- Hear and investigate the collective grievance or complaint
- Examine and make recommendations to resolve the issue speedily and in-house wherever possible

- The Tribunal can choose only one of two options:
- That they feel the issue has been resolved. Where this is the case, the Tribunal must set out their reasons for coming to this conclusion based on the information and argument presented by the parties concerned.
- That the issue has not been resolved and what their recommendations are to resolve or improve the situation. Any recommendations should be time-limited to a period not less than 21 days and no longer than three calendar months from the date of the hearing. The Tribunal may recommend the use of a 'critical friend' to assist the parties.

2.2: 'Critical Friend':

Wherry staff and residents' representatives can agree to appoint an individual or a Panel to act as a 'critical friend'. The individual or a panel could be drawn from a neighbouring council, housing association or from another member of the Circle. The role of the 'critical friend' is to review the dispute and make suggestions about how to reach an amicable solution.

2.3: Independent Mediation:

In unresolved or serious cases, an *independent mediator, chosen by Wherry and resident representatives will be hired to work with the parties involved to find a compromise with which all parties can agree (*The Housing Ombudsman Service may be used for this purpose)

2.4: Independent Adjudication:

Where all other measures have failed to reach a satisfactory conclusion or where Wherry staff, Board or 'Way Ahead with Wherry' considers that the resulting recommendations have not been implemented, the matter can be referred for adjudication to the Housing Ombudsman Service to review the case and arrive at a conclusion. This conclusion is binding and must be adhered to by all parties involved. It is envisaged that this final stage will be used very rarely.

To find out more about getting involved contact the Wherry Resident Involvement Team on 01603 703500 or 0800 6964 0165 or you can email us on wherryinvolvement@circle.org.uk