



# Resident Engagement Strategy and Framework (2025-2028)

Lewisham Council Housing Services

# Forewords



## **Councillor Will Cooper**

Cabinet Member for Housing Management & Homelessness

I am delighted to support the launch of our Housing Service's Resident Engagement Strategy 2025-2028. This strategy marks a significant step forward in ensuring that the voices of our residents are central to shaping the services they rely on. Our housing services touch the lives of thousands of residents across Lewisham, and we know how vital it is to provide opportunities for every voice to be heard. This strategy sets out a bold and ambitious vision to enhance engagement, drive investment into communities, and improve communication. It is a testament to our commitment to transparency, collaboration and accountability.

By adopting a proactive approach to engagement and reaching out to underrepresented groups, we are making strides toward a truly representative and effective partnership with our residents.

This strategy also reflects the values of Lewisham Council: ambitious, inclusive, collaborative, accountable and trustworthy. It ensures that residents are not just participants but active decision-makers in shaping their communities and the services they receive. I encourage all residents to get involved and help us deliver the housing services that they deserve.





**Gillian Douglas**  
Executive Director of Housing

It gives me great pride to introduce our Resident Engagement Strategy 2025-2028. This strategy represents our commitment to placing residents at the heart of everything we do. It is built on the foundations of collaboration, inclusivity, and accountability – values that are essential to providing housing services that meet the needs of our vibrant and diverse community.

The creation of this strategy was a collective effort, shaped by the voices of over 700 residents, staff, and stakeholders. Their insights have highlighted the importance of listening, tailoring our engagement approaches, and ensuring that residents are empowered to influence decisions and outcomes.

Through a focus on engagement, investment and communication, this strategy is not only a roadmap for improving services but also a pledge to build trust and lasting partnerships with our residents. From amplifying seldom-heard voices to investing in sustainable community projects, this strategy embodies our vision of housing services that are both responsive and forward-thinking. We know we do not get everything right and need to improve some services. The voices of residents will help drive that improvement journey.

As we embark on this journey, I am excited about the opportunities ahead to strengthen relationships, improve services and, most importantly, ensure every resident feels heard, respected, and valued. Together, we can create communities where everyone thrives.

---

**Thanks to all the residents who joined the Resident Engagement Strategy Panel to give their input.**

*“I did not expect an instant resolution from the strategy but I have been encouraged by the experience and informed of other ways to have my say.*

*“For me the key takeaway from the experience was the accessibility one has to the local authority if able to spend the time – which feels empowering.”*

**Michael Darrell-Green**  
Member of the Resident Engagement Strategy Panel

# Contents

1. Strategy overview .....	5
a. The strategy	
b. Context	
c. Overview of consultation feedback	
2. Engagement .....	9
3. Investment .....	12
4. Communication .....	14
5. Monitoring and review .....	15
6. Developing the strategy .....	17
7. Data monitoring and equalities impact assessment .....	19
8. Related strategies .....	19



# 1. Strategy overview

## a. The strategy

This document (the strategy) sets out our strategic approach to resident engagement in line with Lewisham Council's corporate plan 2022-26, Lewisham's Strategic partnership action plan, and the building safety resident engagement strategy.

The strategy will enable us to plan and deliver inclusive and comprehensive community and resident engagement, allowing us to improve a resident's journey and help meet wider Lewisham Council objectives.

The strategy will focus on three key strands: **Engagement, Investment, and Communication**, and will be linked to Lewisham Council's values, which are:

- Ambitious
- Inclusive
- Collaborative
- Accountable
- Trustworthy



The strategy focuses on a more tailored approach to engaging residents to acknowledge different and changing priorities for residents and the communities they live in.

The strategy and framework take account of best practice across the sector, it incorporates feedback from independent tenant/ resident advisors alongside staff, internal teams and wider stakeholders, including Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs).

## b. Context

This 2025-2028 Resident Engagement Strategy (the strategy) sets out how we plan to strengthen engagement with residents who live in Lewisham Council managed homes. We need to ensure we consider the demographics of our borough and engage with a representative group of our residents.'

Implementing the strategy will ensure that resident's voices are at the heart of the services we deliver. By working in partnership with other Council teams and stakeholders we want to build strong, inclusive communities and ensure that resident engagement is understood as everyone's responsibility across housing and wider within Lewisham Council services.

We need to ensure that there is a consistent focus on putting residents' needs first, treating all residents with respect, and responding to their feedback.

The importance of resident engagement in housing is recognised nationally. The Regulator for Social



Housing (RSH) introduced new consumer standards which came into effect from 1 April 2024. Of the four consumer standards, two directly relate to resident engagement, they are:

- The Transparency, Influence and Accountability standard which requires landlords to be open with tenants and treat them with fairness and respect so they can access services, raise concerns when necessary, influence decision making and hold their landlord to account.
- The Neighbourhood and Community Standard which 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.

### Tenant Satisfaction Measures

In September 2022 the Social Housing Regulator confirmed that there would be three tenant satisfaction measures focussing on engagement:

- Satisfaction that the landlord listens to tenants views and acts upon them
- Satisfaction that the landlord keeps tenants informed about things that matter to them
- Agreement that landlord treat tenants fairly and with respect. (The Government's Charter for Social Housing, White Paper, 2020)

To improve tenant satisfaction in these areas we need to ensure the strategy and framework is based on resident feedback, preferences, and priorities.

The [Charter for Social Housing White Paper](#) sets out what every resident should be able to expect from their landlord. The charter includes the expectation that social housing landlords should enable residents 'to have your voice heard by your landlord', 'to know how your landlord is performing', 'to have a good quality home and neighbourhood to live in', and that 'residents are treated with respect'.

Meeting these expectations will require a resident engagement strategy and framework that can be embedded across all areas of the housing service, to work as a best practice guide with clear processes and procedures in place that put residents at the heart of what we do.



## c. Overview of consultation feedback

We have consulted with over 700 residents, and stakeholders, including partners and staff about this strategy. A full summary of the consultation feedback is available as an appendix to this strategy.

Our main learning points from the consultation were residents:

- felt they were not listened to enough.
- find it hard to contact the right people.
- want more varied ways that they can engage and communicate.
- want more services for their communities and sustainment of existing activities.

Based on this our focus over the next three years will be on achieving the following outcomes:

- Increased satisfaction score with the tenant satisfaction measure that we are 'listening to residents.'
- A variety of ways and methods of engagement are available that suit the resident base (the framework).
- Ensuring community projects and services supported are self-managing and sustainable.
- Increasing the amount of social value received, and establishing a clear approach to how this is allocated.



We will focus on the following objectives to enable us to deliver these outcomes:

- improve the scope of our engagement using an adapted framework, with a menu of options for residents.
- listen to a wider group of residents, representative of our overall resident demographic.
- provide effective ways for residents to influence service quality and strategic direction.
- allow residents to decide how the community investment budget is allocated and which community projects are funded.
- communicate outcomes of engagement and investment with stakeholders.



### Focus groups

We held 3 focus groups to discuss resident engagement and receive feedback on priorities. We reached over 45 residents through the targeted focus groups that were held with:

- The Young Mayors
- Vietnamese Family Partnership
- Formal resident groups

### Events and community projects

We attended fun days and meetings on estates and wider around Lewisham to offer the opportunity to discuss resident engagement.

We held events across the borough including a stall at Lewisham Market and attendance at the 4 food stores we support. We spoke to approximately 65 residents.

### Surveys

Two surveys were available. We received over 700 responses through the council's consultation platform Citizen Space (373 responses) and through a second shorter Smart Survey (351 responses)

The two approaches enabled both formal and informal feedback to be captured and a focus on key themes, to allow for more context on the feedback.

### Door-knocking

Weekly door-knocking saw the community relations team visit 8 different estates to knock on resident's doors. We spoke to over 60 residents to hear about their priorities for resident engagement.







## 2. Engagement

Engagement is a planned process of working with our residents and encouraging them to be part of decisions that affect their community and the services they receive from Lewisham Council.

We need to ensure that there is a consistent focus on putting residents' needs first, treating all residents with respect, and responding to their feedback.

We want residents to be involved at every level, actively participating in decision-making, and shaping the services we deliver.

Providing a range of resident engagement options offers varying degrees of influence and decision-making power. Residents will be kept informed about what's happening and how this might impact them, and there will be opportunities to influence services at whichever level residents choose, using their preferred approach. This enables residents to be

as involved as they want to be in shaping housing services.

The right option for engagement will depend on how residents can get involved, what they can influence and how they may be impacted.

### **Our approach to resident engagement**

Resident engagement can mean different things to different people at different times. In this strategy we have defined it as opportunities through which residents can:

- provide feedback on our services
- directly influence our services, policies, and decisions; and
- contribute to (or benefit from) the development of communities and neighbourhoods through local action or engagement.

We currently offer a wide range of opportunities for residents to engage with us, including both formal and informal options with varying levels of time commitment.

## Where we are now

We have a formal engagement structure, which includes:

- Housing management board
- TRA Chairs – quarterly meeting for Tenant and Resident Association representatives
- Resident Review Panel (RRP) – a resident panel which looks at specific issues or services and makes recommendations on possible improvements
- Tenant and Resident Associations (TRAs) – we have 27 currently. They access funding from the Lewisham Tenants' Fund

Since January 2018, we've had a dedicated Community Relations Team. Part of their role has been to support the formal engagement framework. Our Housing Management team also help to support our TRAs (tenant and resident associations).

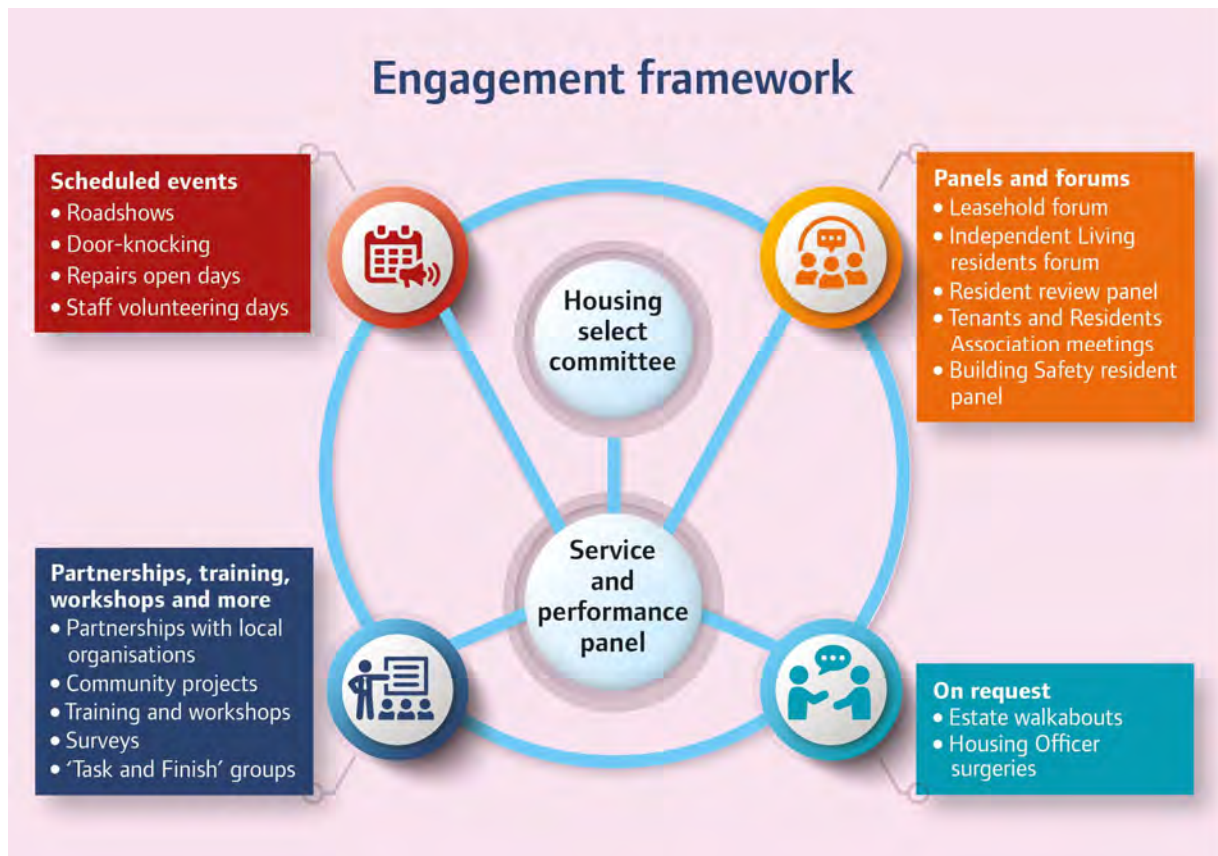
We consult with residents through regular satisfaction surveys, and carry out specific consultations in several areas including green spaces, complaints, anti-social behaviour and the annual report.

## Where we want to be

To achieve excellent services, we need to understand what matters to residents and what they would like to be improved. We need to reach out and engage with more residents, and particularly a more diverse and representative group.

We want to be a listening and learning organisation with transparent, easy to access information that allows for constructive feedback.

We will focus on improving engagement with residents with disabilities, and those with English as a second language.





## We will

- Establish and embed a new framework with more varied ways residents can engage, and an opportunity for residents to select their preference from a menu of options for engagement.
- Place a greater emphasis on promoting what we do well, and what we have improved in response to resident feedback.
- Utilise technology to host online forums/ panels and will reach out specifically to underrepresented groups.
- Increase the amount of non-statutory consultation with all residents (tenure blind) about major works and improvements to our estates.
- Have a resident engagement plan for all high-rise blocks (Building Safety resident engagement strategy).
- Review and tailor our offer to TRAs, recognising they are independent organisations. Provide information and problem-solving routes in a more cost-effective way.
- Increase the scrutiny opportunities for residents. Through the Resident Review Panel, one off workshops and task and finish groups.
- Maintain our formal engagement structures, including the Service and Performance Panel and the Resident Review Panel. These are formal strategic forums to consult and engage with residents, but we want to review how residents are part of this.
- Assess our volunteering offer for residents and staff who are interested in supporting volunteering projects that benefit residents and their communities.



### 3. Investment



Community investment is a way to support residents to add value, create positive opportunities and encourage change to build resilient communities. We want to make sure our community investments are sustainable, provide value for money and deliver the best results for residents.

Austerity and public sector cuts have affected the amount of investment opportunities available to social housing residents.

#### **Where we are now**

To support our engagement and develop positive community relations we facilitate a range of projects and programmes.

Residents told us, during consultation for the previous strategy (2019-2023), that they wanted us to focus our investment on four key themes:

1. Providing training and employment opportunities for residents

2. Delivering activities for young people, to improve life chances and reduce anti-social behaviour
3. Offering digital support to improve skills and assist with employment and benefit claims
4. Improving health and wellbeing of our residents

Residents told us they want more input in how funding is allocated, to support with this priority we:

- Created a Community Investment Fund
- Created a Resident Community Investment Panel (representative of our resident demographic) to decide how to spend the Community Investment Fund.
- Ensured social value is a key part of the evaluation of all contract tenders.
- Provided opportunities for the development of social enterprises and encouragement of new community projects in Lewisham community spaces.



- Continued to work in partnership with organisations and stakeholders to deliver projects, outcomes and provide publicity and funding.
- Bid for appropriate external funding to enable us to deliver projects that meet our corporate priorities.

All our programmes are free to Lewisham housing residents, which is especially helpful for those on low incomes.

We fund other activities through a variety of sources:

- Core funding
- Funding from Lewisham Tenant's Fund
- Funding from contractors as part of their social value commitment
- Independent and joint funding bids

### Where we want to be

Through our consultation for this strategy, residents have told us they want us to focus investment on:

- Environmental improvements
- Tenancy support

- Improved communication
- Community days

### We will:

- Ensure our projects focus on deliverable and measurable outcomes that benefit our residents with a focus on environmental improvements.
- Support resident training on housing/ tenancy by offering courses accredited by the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) free of charge to tenants.
- Review and evaluate all projects using appropriate methodologies and impact measurement tools, to ensure value for money.
- Develop a process to maximise social value and ensure residents can influence how it is spent.
- Secure external funding to provide projects/support to benefit our residents.
- Continue to ensure residents decide how the community investment fund is awarded
- Work closely to ensure any funding or support is sought and that residents are engaged with climate resilience/ sustainability initiatives



## 4. Communication

Residents are clear that they want improved communication with Lewisham Council Housing Services. This includes promotion of opportunities and support, and a commitment to ensure all residents (tenants and leaseholders) receive communication from all areas of the housing directorate on areas they can influence or that will impact them.

We want to make sure we are communicating with a diverse range of residents and improve accessibility for residents who may not speak English, and those with disabilities that affect communication.

We need to improve how we communicate with residents about housing services to help build trust, and ensure residents are kept informed and know how to get in touch with us.

### **Where we are now**

We communicate with residents through Lewisham Council's website, a weekly e-newsletter, text messages, emails, letters, door-knocking and utilising social media. We ensure projects and community engagement activities are promoted in Lewisham Council Housing's bimonthly newsletter and on social media.

### **Where we want to be**

We want to improve how we communicate with residents to ensure they feel informed and that they are consulted on housing issues. Most importantly in the feedback loop and ensuring residents are updated on areas they've fed back on.

We want to embed a focus of resident engagement across the housing directorate including a clear process for communicating and consulting both formally and informally with all residents (tenants and leaseholders) that is followed and led by all departments

### **We will use the following tools for communications:**

- A toolkit for all staff with clear processes and templates for meetings and letters to support all teams in the housing directorate to communicate and engage with residents, and commitment that this will take place.
- Monthly newsletter to all residents to update on housing services
- Text messages to promote opportunities to get involved
- Weekly newsletters on community events taking place to interested residents
- Webpages to be updated to evidence how resident feedback has helped shape services and promote opportunities to get involved.
- Social media

This approach to communication and consulting residents will also utilise the engagement framework with more targeted engagement through door-knocking, roadshows and open days utilised as an opportunity to update on services.



## 5. Monitoring and review

When done well, resident engagement can deliver a number of benefits for all stakeholders. These include:

- Build greater trust between residents and their landlord
- Ensure that decisions and policies are informed by the needs, aspirations and real-life experiences of residents
- Ensure that services are tailored to the needs of diverse communities
- Allow residents to hold their landlord to account and challenge under-performance
- Encourage innovation and drive improvements in service quality
- Help residents build their confidence and develop new skills and knowledge
- Help to build social networks and promote community cohesion

We will monitor and review to ensure the strategy continues to meet its objectives and provide improved outcomes. The table (following page) outlines how the objectives will be monitored and the outcomes that will be measured.

There will be a quarterly report on how we are meeting the Resident Engagement strategy and framework and its different components, this will be presented to the Service and Performance Panel (SPP) with details on the Lewisham council website.

Regular updates on how we are engaging residents and opportunities to get involved will be communicated to all residents through different approaches as set out in section 4 (communication)



Council value	Objective	Monitoring	Outcome
<b>Inclusive, collaborative, ambitious</b>	To improve the scope of our engagement	Clear communications plan for each engagement activity	Increased and varied use of communication tools
	To listen to a wider group of residents, representative of our overall resident demographic	Record who attends engagement activities and compares to Lewisham Housing overall demographic	Increased engagement of currently underrepresented residents
		Proactively target and advertise opportunities to underrepresented groups	Increased engagement of currently underrepresented residents
<b>Accountable, collaborative, trustworthy, ambitious</b>	To give residents a say on how the community investment budget is allocated and which community projects are funded	Targeted recruitment process for investment panel that identifies and proactively engages underrepresented residents	Panel who make decisions on how the community investment fund is spent made up of a cross section of residents
<b>Accountable, trustworthy, ambitious</b>	To communicate outcomes of engagement and investment with stakeholders	Details on the communications plan of how the outcome of the project will be shared with stakeholders	Project evaluation
	To improve tenant satisfaction on areas related to resident engagement	Directly link engagement and investment to the related TSMs (project and communications plan)	Improved results in the related TSMs for resident engagement
<b>Ambitious, accountable, collaborative, ambitious, inclusive</b>	To streamline and embed resident engagement across the council's housing directorate	Clear processes in place that include resident engagement across all teams.	Process is embedded in the housing directorate and utilised
		Networking and engaging all staff of the importance of engaging residents	Process is embedded in the housing directorate and utilised



## 6. Developing the strategy

We know residents are best placed to tell us what works well, and what could work better. This is why we developed the strategy in partnership with residents and tried to hear from as many residents as possible in developing our proposals.

### Resident Engagement Strategy Panel

- A panel of residents was set up to oversee the consultation for the resident engagement strategy.
- Over 100 residents applied to join the panel. The 10 members were selected to be representative of the variety of demographics, tenures and areas that make up our residents.
- The panel met in person and online a total of 4 times, with ongoing communication outside of meetings.
- The panel approved the approach, questions and monitored this during the consultation period.

### Approach to engagement

#### Seldom heard residents

Reaching out to seldom heard residents through local community and voluntary organisations was an important part of this work. It helped us hear from diverse voices across the

borough including young people, older people, and different ethnic and faith communities including the Vietnamese Family Partnership, Food stores, Young Mayors and Independent Living residents.

#### Formal resident groups and panels

We held a focus group for members of resident groups and panels. Members of Tenants and Resident Associations, Resident Review Panel, Service and Performance and the resident engagement strategy panel were all invited to attend

#### Online survey and door knocking

There was a survey on the council's consultation hub to gain feedback on all areas of resident engagement that was promoted to residents through a link and flyers that were delivered to residents and promoted when door-knocking. This information was also shared with partners, schools and libraries. Full details of this engagement is included in the timeline/calendar in the appendices.

#### Stakeholder engagement

We spoke to staff to understand roles, resources and ensure that what is set out in the strategy is achievable and understand any other approaches that could be considered.

This work, and the wider feedback, informed our strategic priorities and means that our proposals for change were genuinely driven by residents' feedback.

This included a shorter survey seeking residents and other stakeholders

views, seven resident roadshows on our estates to promote the strategy, and further work to reach seldom heard residents.

This strategy recognises that the way we engage needs to change. While traditional methods of engagement, such as tenant and residents' associations, provide a voice for some, they do not work for everyone.

We need to enhance our approach and offer a broader range of options reflecting the diverse needs, lifestyles and interests of our residents. This will include making more use of digital options and offering more opportunities for residents to genuinely influence our service planning and decision-making.

Addressing the wider challenges some residents face, such as poor health,

social isolation, poverty and unemployment, is an equally important priority. This will require us to build stronger partnerships with residents, other Council services, and community and voluntary groups to deliver community projects which add real value.

We hope that the proposals in the strategy will encourage more residents to get involved, help us build stronger communities, and ensure that the residents' voice is heard, understood and, most importantly, acted upon. By working together, we know we will achieve more – and deliver housing services that better meet residents' expectations.

A full summary of the engagement and feedback for this strategy can be found in the appendices for the strategy





## 7. Data monitoring and equalities impact assessment

This strategy has included an equality analysis assessment – this has found no changes in approach that would have an adverse impact on any particular group of residents. The strategy includes a broadening that we will engage with a more diverse group of residents, which should have a positive impact on groups currently underrepresented in the more formal structures.

Locally, Lewisham is a growing borough with 300,600 residents in the 2021 census.

The number of people aged 50 to 64 years rose by around 15,000 (an increase of 40.5%), while the number of residents aged 4 years and under fell by just under 2,900 (13.1% decrease). (Office for National Statistics, Census 2021). 23% of the population is under 19.

Lewisham is also a diverse borough with residents from more than 75 nationalities. In Lewisham, the percentage that did not identify with

any UK national identity fell from 20.9% in 2011 to 20.3% in 2021, while across England it rose from 8.2% to 10.0%.

In the latest census, around 187,500 Lewisham residents said they were born in England. This represented 62.4% of the local population. The figure has risen from around 176,500 in 2011, which at the time represented 64.0% of Lewisham's population.

Nigeria was the next most represented, with around 9,300 Lewisham residents reporting this country of birth (3.1%). This figure was down from just under 9,600 in 2011, which at the time represented 3.5% of the population of Lewisham.

In 2021, 7.9% of Lewisham residents were identified as being disabled and limited a lot. 84% of residents in Lewisham stated they spoke English as their main language (Office for National Statistics, Language, England and Wales Census 2021).

## 8. Related strategies

- [Lewisham Council corporate strategy](#)
- [Lewisham Strategic Partnership action plan](#)
- [Lewisham Council Building Safety resident engagement strategy](#)