

INNISFREE HOUSING ASSOCIATION

TENANT INVOLVEMENT ACTION PLAN 2007/8

TENANT INVOLVEMENT INITIATIVE/ACTIVITY	WHAT DO WE WANT TO ACHIEVE/ DEVELOP	ACTION PLAN FOR 06/07 OUTCOMES AND COMMENTS	ACTION PLAN FOR 07/8
<p>1) Committee membership</p> <p>Housing Services and Finance Committees (HSC)</p>	<p>We have 2 seats reserved for tenants on both Committees. We hope to develop a list of tenants for all future vacancies.</p>	<p>We identified one tenant who attended the October Housing Services Committee and was co-opted.</p> <p>An information sheet is compiled and available for tenants interested in these roles.</p>	<p>We shall continue to seek potential new recruits to both HSC and Finance Committee during the coming year.</p> <p>Support and training will be given to any tenant wishing to transfer between the respective Committees.</p>
<p>2) Tenant Seats on the Board of Management</p>	<p>To ensure that both seats reserved for tenants are filled.</p>	<p>The Tenant Involvement campaign in March 2006 publicised vacancies for both the Board and Committees.</p> <p>Information sheets in respect of all three roles are now available for interested tenants</p>	<p>We shall continue to identify tenants who might be interested in and suitable for joining the Board, either directly or through escalation from the Committees.</p> <p>Induction, training and support will be provided to assist tenants gain experience and knowledge in these roles.</p>
<p>3) Set up a General Needs Tenants "Sounding Board"</p>	<p>To give us regular feedback on services and input into policy reviews, monitor services. This would be made up of tenants from different areas.</p>	<p>An ASB Focus Group was undertaken in June following feedback from tenants prioritising ASB as an area of interest.</p> <p>Support for the setting up of a tenants group at Westfield Close has been an outcome.</p> <p>Postal consultation was completed following the approval of amendments to the Rent Arrears Policy in November.</p>	<p>New Policies and changes to existing policies will include some publicity launches where all tenants will be invited to attend. This will be in conjunction with the schedule for policy review for 2007/8.</p> <p>Also see Incentives – section 12</p>

<p>4) Set up Supported Housing Tenants Forum</p>	<p>To give us regular feedback on services, input into policy reviews, monitor & review services. This would be made up of tenants from different supported houses</p>	<p>Tenant Reps for most schemes identified. The first Supported Housing Forum was undertaken in April, to consider changes to the Supported Housing policy and provide feedback on the results of the Supported Survey. The Forum planned to meet at six monthly intervals. Due to staffing resources and the Supporting People review the October Forum was postponed till February 2007</p>	<p>As the 2006 survey highlighted Move On accommodation as an area of most concern to residents, the Forum planned for February will include an open workshop for all supported housing residents.</p> <p>At this Forum we also aim to recruit new house representatives for 2007/8, now some have moved into independent accommodation.</p> <p>We will continue to consult tenants on any policy or changes to services over the next 12 months.</p>
<p>5) Set up a Tenant Forum at Clochar Court Sheltered Scheme</p>	<p>To seek tenant volunteers to lead on organising a minimum of 4 meetings per year</p>	<p>Quarterly Forum meetings have been undertaken throughout 2006/7 with a tenant representative in place.</p>	<p>Forum Meetings will continue to be quarterly, commencing March/ April and linked to the induction of the new Scheme Manager.</p>
<p>6) Block or area representatives for schemes</p>	<p>We already have some tenants who assist us with monitoring services such as cleaning, gardening, communal repairs where they live but we would like to have a representative for every block and need more volunteers.</p>	<p>As part of the programme of Block Meetings, officers encouraged tenants to become representatives for their block. There has been hesitance on the part of tenants to be any more than an “unofficial” tenant contact at this stage.</p>	<p>Block representation will continue to be an action point and an agenda item for all Block Meetings planned for the year. We will use incentives (Section 12) to help us achieve success with this action point</p>
<p>7) Block Meetings</p>	<p>We have a few block meetings but will aim to do this for all schemes on a programmed basis</p>	<p>The comprehensive approach to Block Meetings undertaken this year, has allowed for a total of 19 locations to be visited during 2006/7. All households were provided with a feedback newsletter.</p>	<p>Block Meetings will continue for 2007/8 with more focused timetabling and planning which is relevant to the scheme size and management issues.</p> <p>In order to encourage more tenants to participate. Officers will be researching local venues with refreshment facilities, to hold Block Meetings, or occasional coffee mornings in the office.</p> <p>A list of standard agenda items needs to be agreed, in addition to local items, to ensure consistency across all relevant Innisfree tenancies.</p>

			Feedback for all Block Meetings will include scheme specific newsletters, advising of proposed courses of action.
8) Scheme Inspections	We will invite tenants to attend our scheme inspections when undertaken.	Scheme inspections were undertaken as part of the Block Meeting programme. Tenants were encouraged to accompany officers on a "scheme walkabout" We have continued to advertise this initiative in quarterly newsletters	Scheme inspections are now an established part of the part of the Block Meeting agenda.
9) Focus groups	If there are any proposed changes to services or policy we will aim to run a focus group meeting with tenants-run by an independent chair. We will consider the use of incentives to achieve high tenant attendance rates	This action point was consolidated with Action point 3 - above.	In the January 2007 newsletter we have requested 10 tenants to volunteer to help us review our Customer Care Standards and Policy. We await responses.
10) Surveys	We will continue to carry out full Tenant Surveys every 3 years to assess tenant satisfaction. We will also send out questionnaires when we are reviewing our services to ensure we get tenants' views.	The results of the Supported and Sheltered Tenants Survey were fed back to the Supported Housing Forum as detailed above.	The results of the general needs Tenants Survey 06/7 will be reported as a separate information sheet in the April newsletter (or sooner if possible.) An Action Plan will be produced based on the findings and we will use this information to prioritise future Service Reviews –and we will seek tenants to assist us with prioritising and reviewing. See appendix 1 attached

<p>11) Mystery Shopping</p>	<p>We plan to train tenants to be able to undertake “mystery shopping” to assess how well we meet our own targets for customer care. This is a medium term goal.</p>	<p>Articles publicising this initiative have appeared in newsletters throughout the year.</p> <p>We have identified one tenant who has agreed to assist us in peer group reviews</p>	<p>We will continue to advertise for additional mystery shoppers in the quarterly newsletters, at Block Meetings and by using other methods of procurement.</p>
<p>12) Tenant Incentives</p>	<p>When we urgently require feedback and views from tenants on specific subjects we will offer them incentives to participate.</p>	<p>Gift voucher incentives were provided for those tenants attending the ASB Focus Group in June.</p>	<p>As this proved to be popular it will be offered for all forthcoming focus groups and other key consultation processes.</p> <p>We will ask tenants what they would like to see offered as incentives to participate in service improvement work. We will also research what other organisations currently offer</p>
<p>13) Gardening Competition and the Going Greener Project</p>	<p>Continue to hold an annual gardening competition and encourage entries from as many tenants as possible.</p> <p>To encourage groups of tenants to participate in garden projects to enhance their environment and control service charge costs</p>	<p>Over the past 6 years the gardening competition has proved to be an area where tenants have shown participation with enthusiasm. This year has provided some excellent results.</p> <p>This new initiative was published in the latter part of the Block Meeting programme for this year. Tenants from one block have expressed an interest and the viability will be progressed.</p>	<p>The competition will be run again mid 2007.</p> <p>Officers will re-launch this Project at all Block Meetings with communal gardens during 2007/8 to ensure full funding take up.</p>

<p>14) Newsletter and direct mail outs</p>	<p>We will continue to send out quarterly newsletters and will aim to get tenants involved in writing articles for it.</p> <p>We will also do direct mail outs to tenants as we recognize that newsletter articles do not always get read or may be overlooked.</p>	<p>Invitations to contribute along with prizes have so far failed to attract a response from tenants this year.</p>	<p>A full review will be undertaken of the Tenant Newsletter format and content</p> <p>Tenant Committee Members will be asked whether they would like to produce articles for each of the quarterly newsletters this year.</p> <p>Once approved this document – the Tenant Involvement Action Plan 2007/8 will be sent to all tenants with a response questionnaire for feedback</p>
<p>15) Organising Social Activities</p>	<p>We regularly hold social events and activities for our tenants, which include: weekly lunches, annual St Patrick’s Day party, Christmas party, outings and summer garden party, competitions, Irish themed events & AGM. We shall continue to arrange events that will be of interest to tenants each year</p>	<p>We held a well attended joint St Patrick’s Day / 21st Birthday party for Innisfree in March this year.</p> <p>We have continued to organise other social events at our sheltered scheme and tenants were invite to our AGM held in Hammersmith.</p>	<p>If there is enough interest from tenants a St Patrick’s Day event will be organised in March 07.</p> <p>We will use one off events and fun days to engage with tenants families in a more socialised environment.</p>
<p>16) Friends of Innisfree funding</p>	<p>If enough funds are raised through “Friends of Innisfree” we will continue to pay for certain worthwhile items and activities for tenants and their children. Summer club places for tenants’ children Scheme funding</p>	<p>In addition to the summer play scheme funding we also launched the Teen kicks project for youngsters between 14-17 to train in a leisure activity of their choice.</p> <p>Individual hampers for vulnerable tenants were delivered to tenants at Christmas.</p> <p>Friends of Innisfree funds have been used this year to meet one off grants, where hardship</p>	<p>We will continue to arrange activities with funding provided by the “Friends of Innisfree”</p> <p>We will consider funding one off minor improvements to enhance the environment of blocks and communal areas.</p> <p>With limited funding available, officers will continue to make applications to Friends on behalf of vulnerable tenants.</p>

		and other social criteria exist.	
17) Irish related issues Launches of research projects Representing the Association externally	We will continue to ask tenants to represent us at functions and launches of many Irish related events eg, research about the Irish.	The Tenants Newsletter has contained information in connection with this action point as and when available	We will ensure that tenants are kept informed on any issues affecting the Irish community and on any work we are doing in relation to it.
18) Service Reviews	We will seek tenants help with reviewing services on an annual basis.	Review of the Cleaning Service was deferred. Tenants will be invited to contribute to the Cleaning Service Review to be held in February 2007	Once we receive the results of the imminent Tenant Survey we will develop a programme of service reviews and seek tenants' views with all reviews.
19) New initiatives with other Housing Associations which involve tenants	We are working more closely with other HAs to tackle issues such as anti social behaviour. We will encourage tenants to become involved where they live.	There have been difficulties in communication with RSL partners in relation to this initiative, but this remains an ongoing priority. Initially Innisfree took the lead in supporting the Westfield Close tenants set up a Tenants Group in the summer.	We will contact each RSL where Innisfree is part of a consortium, to ensure that community development opportunities for Innisfree tenants on these shared schemes are not disregarded.
20) Funding for tenants	We will support our tenant forums by providing training, financing fares to meetings, paying for any administration costs incurred, eg postage for correspondence to us and other tenants, telephone calls to office, stationery, financing venues for meetings.		We will provide seed funding for the Innisfree Tenants Group at Westfield Close We will continue to make funds available to support Tenant Representatives or Block Representatives in their role
21) Training for tenants	We will offer training to tenants who become involved in our sounding board and tenant forum – to develop their skills and experience		Tenant Representatives are investigating training opportunities with TPAS Funding is available to train tenants for the Mystery Shopping project and also on being a tenant representative/committee member.

<p>22) Consultation</p>	<p>We will continue to feedback to tenants on matters raised with us and seek tenants' views on an ongoing basis to achieve continuous improvement in our services. We will consult with tenants on any issues affecting their homes or tenancies.</p>	<p>Consultation is due to be undertaken in relation to the Service Charge Review – February/March 2007</p> <p>Existing tenants have been invited to choose paint colours for cyclical decoration</p>	<p>We will continue to consult tenants in relation to all policy reviews planned for 07/8</p> <p>The outcome of the Customer Care Standards peer group inspection due February 2007 will be communicated to tenants. Resulting Action Plan to have a tenant input.</p> <p>Consultation with tenants in respect of the Service Charge Review due to commence Feb/March 07.</p> <p>We will continue to feedback to tenant's information on the work we are doing to involve our tenants.</p> <p>We will also look into the possibility of increasing "tenants' choice" for new tenants so they are able to be more involved with the design/decorative aspects of developments, although this may not be easy to achieve.</p>
<p>23) Keeping tenants informed</p>	<p>We will inform tenants about decisions we make; the outcome of any service or policy reviews our targets and performance for the year any changes at Innisfree</p>	<p>An ongoing commitment. As detailed above</p>	
<p>24) Customer Care and Complaints</p>	<p>We will respond positively to complaints and use them as an opportunity to learn, improve services and involve tenants in helping us rectify problems.</p>	<p>All staff received Customer Care & complaint handling training on 13th January 06. This exercise will be repeated during the course of the coming year.</p>	<p>Officers wish to develop a "Day in the Office" so tenants who may be interested in our work can get a better insight in how we operate.</p> <p>As above, the outcome of the Customer Care Standards peer group inspection due February 2007 will be communicated to tenants. Resulting Action Plan to have a tenant input.</p> <p>We will ensure that all future newsletters contain information on our progress with tackling anti social behaviour.</p>

<p>25) Communication</p>	<p>We will seek to engage with all tenants and will use many different methods.</p>	<p>We are reviewing the needs of our tenants and will use this to inform our future communication with tenants.</p>	<p>As noted above a full review will be undertaken of the Tenant Newsletter format and content.</p> <p>Priority will be given to the development of the Innisfree website to improve two way communication with tenants and provide more readily accessible information regarding services.</p>
<p>26) Contact with family members</p>	<p>We will explore how we might involve family members and not just approach the “Head of household”</p>	<p>This year housing plus activities were offered to tenants households as noted in 16) Friends of Innisfree funding - above</p>	<p>Particularly where ASB is effecting an estate we will encourage and support activities involving children and youths i.e. youth forums and projects which engage young people.</p>
<p>27) Diversity</p>	<p>As part of the diversity strategy Innisfree will make very effort to involve and meet the needs of those with literacy or language difficulties, sight or hearing impairment and tenants with disabilities. Whilst implementing this strategy we will take into account equality needs of all tenants to ensure they can access services and enable opportunities for involvement.</p>	<p>A full tenant profile review is in progress to ensure Innisfree is aware and can plan for any equality requirements.</p>	<p>Following the completion of the profiling exercise a full Equality Impact Assessment can be undertaken to ensure that diversity requirements are integrated into the tenant involvement strategy.</p> <p>An outcome of the above action point may require research into an appropriate translation service.</p>