

# Tenant & Customer Participation Strategy 2025 – 2030



# Foreword

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Welcome to Falkirk Council Housing Services' Tenants and Customer Participation Strategy. This has been written following extensive consultation, and is based on what you, our tenants, and customers, have told us. Thank you to all those who took part!

We recognise that listening to our tenant and customers' views and involving them in the services we provide is an essential part of shaping housing services to meet their needs and aspirations. We will continue to engage with tenants and customers in ways that suit them and at a level they feel comfortable with to influence services that meets their needs. This includes the introduction of a Digital Housing Strategy for those who wish to engage in that way.

We want to encourage a closer working relationship that is effective in improving Falkirk Council's Housing Services and hope that this strategy will provide a framework to make that happen.

Kenny Gillespie  
Head of Housing & Communities

**“ We value the views of people who use our services, so we can continually improve what we do to serve our communities, making sure services meet their needs. Housing Services' Tenant & Customer Participation Strategy (2025 – 2030), which is written in partnership with tenants & customers, provides a variety of ways for people who use the service, to express their views and make suggestions on what we could do better. I hope people will take up the opportunities to get involved and work with us to make the Housing Service the best it can be. ”**

Councillor Bouse Housing Convenor

**“ The Tenant & Customer Participation Strategy has enabled me to work as a tenant volunteer with Housing Services. This means that I can scrutinise, influence and make recommendations on how the Council can improve its services to tenants. The Strategy also means that others can get involved in a way that suits them, and at a level that suits them. The more tenants' views that are heard and acted on, means that Housing Services will get better for all of us. ”**

Claire Malcolm: Tenant

# Introduction

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## Tenants' Rights To Consultation

The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 means we must involve tenants in shaping services they receive and enable them to participate in the running of services.

The Scottish Social Housing Charter, introduced in 2012, also puts tenants and customers at the heart of social housing. This Charter outlines a set of standards and outcomes, established by the Scottish Government for all social housing landlords in Scotland. It aims to improve the quality and value of services provided by social landlords and is measured by the Scottish Housing Regulator.' The Charter states that 'tenants and other customers are offered a range of opportunities to make it easy for them to participate and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.' This means we:

**1.** Consult tenants on any proposed increases in rent or charges payable under the tenancy; consider their views and to provide four weeks' notice of any increase.

**2.** Publish a Tenant Participation Strategy containing an assessment of resources.

Resources are used to remove barriers to participation. This means we:

- use venues that are accessible
- use a mix between face to face and virtual online meetings. The online option could help tenants who have travel or time pressures because of work, or caring commitments
- pay for the provision of transport for tenants and customers to attend tenant participation meetings and events
- enable access to grants through 'Community Choices'
- fund tenants to attend Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) and Tenant Information Services' (TiS) Conferences.
- Provide training, information and development opportunities to learn more about how the Housing Revenue Account is managed

**3.** Publish a list of Registered Tenant Organisations (RTOs).

**4.** Carry out a large-scale Tenant Satisfaction Survey

**5.** Notify tenants and RTOs of any proposals that would significantly affect tenants for example policy on housing management, repairs, maintenance, standards of service, the tenant participation strategy.

We have also engaged with tenants on strategic issues such as the Local Housing Strategy, Allocations Review, Empty Homes Plan for private sector housing.



# Legislative Framework

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The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 introduced a legal framework for Tenant Participation.

This means tenants have the right to:

- form independent representative associations.
- access information about housing policies.
- be consulted on issues that affect them.
- participate in decisions that affect the services tenants receive and be given adequate time to fully consider proposals.

The Council has duties to:

- produce a Tenant Participation Strategy which complies with equal opportunity requirements
- set up a Register of Tenant Organisations (RTOs) which follows Government guidance, considering feedback made by individual tenants and RTOs.
- inform tenants and RTOs of proposals for housing management, standards of service and the Tenant Participation Strategy.

# National and Local Influences

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Key national influences include the Scottish Housing (Scotland) Act 2001 and Scottish Social Housing Charter (2012). Consideration has been given to Scottish Government - Guide to Successful Tenant Participation (2018)

Local influences include the Falkirk Plan (2021 – 2030, Community & Engagement Strategy (2025 -2028) and Local Housing Strategy (2023-2028).

Appendix 2 sets out further detail on national and local influences.

# What the Strategy will Achieve

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By involving our tenants and customers in shaping Housing Services, we will be able to make sure the services we provide will meet the needs of those who use them. This should increase satisfaction and reduce dissatisfaction.

This Strategy follows four themes concentrating on tenants' rights relating to communication, engagement, participation and scrutiny.

# What Do Housing Services Do?

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Falkirk Council Housing Services' teams and functions include

- **Housing Needs** - oversee the Council allocations policy. Deliver Homelessness services and manage supported accommodation.
- **Housing Operations** – manage Council properties, estates around them, carry out welfare benefits advice, manage rent arrears. Provide services to people living on the Travelling Persons site. Deliver Factoring Services to owners in the high-rise flats.
- **Property services** – work with the Building Maintenance Division (BMD) and contractors to repair and maintain Council housing. BMD also carry out Gas Safety and Fire Safety Checks and provide adaptations to Council properties to meet peoples' physical housing need
- **Asset and Investment teams** – develop and deliver the Housing Investment Plan to maintain current Council housing stock to a high standard meeting statutory requirements and progress Council new build.
- **Conflict resolution** - manage anti-social behaviour.
- **Private Sector team** - oversee the registration of Private Landlords and work with the Health and Social Care Partnership around disabled adaptations in private properties.
- **Community Engagement** - carry out Tenant and Customer Participation ensuring tenants and customers can express their views on housing services, ensuring these views are used to shape and improve services.
- **Strategy and Development** - carry out statutory housing strategic functions such as developing the Local Housing Strategy and Housing Need and Demand Assessment. - Also develop and monitor the Strategic Housing Invest Plan to access Scottish Government grant to build and buy back former social rented housing.

Housing Services work in partnership with internal Council services and external agencies.

Housing Services liaise with the Health and Social Care Partnership. Also, Housing Services liaise with other internal Council services e.g. waste collection, roads, footpath and street-lighting, grass-cutting, and maintenance of open spaces on land belonging to Housing Services.

Falkirk Council Housing Services work with the external agencies e.g. Police Scotland, Scottish Fire & Rescue Service and Forth Valley NHS.

We also work with other Registered Social Landlords also known as Housing Associations, through the Strategic Housing Group to help meet housing need and reduce homelessness

# Who Uses Housing Services?

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Housing Services serves a wide range of groups.

The core group is made up of Council tenants. Customers include those using the following services.

- People who use homelessness services;
- People applying for housing;
- People who live in our supported accommodation;
- Travelling people who use the site provided by Housing Services;
- Owners who have bought an ex-council home and live in a shared block with Council homes. These owners may be subject to communal repairs, or those who use our factoring services;
- People affected by anti-social behaviour by a Falkirk Council tenant or are acting in an anti-social way that is affecting a Falkirk Council tenant.
- Other customers include businesses like Private Landlords who must register with Falkirk Council if they rent properties in the area,
- Other local registered social landlords (Housing Associations) who work with us to provide housing and/or develop communities.

This strategy also takes account of tenants and customers and how we involve them in improving and delivering the services we offer.

# How Did We Develop This Strategy?

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Engagement & consultation with tenants, customers, staff, other social landlords and other professional bodies took place when preparing this strategy. These included:

The large-scale **tenant satisfaction survey** was carried out in 2024 by an independent organisation with a representative, random sample of tenants. This involved a face-to-face interview of 1002 tenants.

We also invited all our tenants to complete the same survey online, by sending them a letter with a link to the online survey.

The tenant satisfaction survey asked about satisfaction with our existing services, preferred options for involvement and methods of keeping tenants informed about services. The results of the survey have helped us understand how tenants feel about the options for them to express their views, and their interest in each option. We have listened to what tenants have told us and used the results to shape this strategy.

We also asked broader, supplementary questions of our **Registered Tenants' Organisations** and the wider tenant population, by advertising an additional online survey in the Autumn/Winter edition of our tenants' magazine, 'Tenant Talk'. These questions centred on barriers to involvement, incentives to become involved and ideas for ways Falkirk Council housing services could do more to encourage more involvement. Understanding what prevents tenants from becoming involved, has helped us understand what we need to do to remove any barriers to involvement. These include building trust through more open and transparent feedback and offering incentives.

In addition, **we asked our staff** who will be delivering the strategy, for their views on their understanding of tenant & customer participation, what they thought worked well and what we could do better. We did this by having discussions with housing teams who support the delivery of this Strategy.

From these discussions it was established that most officers had a good grasp on what tenant participation is, and the benefits of involving tenants in shaping the service we provide them. Most felt that communication and information sharing with tenants worked well, however there were some concerns around accessing the correct member of staff quickly. A few concerns were raised about online engagement by officers who felt a reluctance from some tenants to engage online. We will explore how these comments can be mitigated by continuing to promote all officers sharing their work mobile numbers, monitor if online engagement improves through the roll out of housing online and explore training and incentives which may assist online engagement.

A lack of interest in estate walkabouts was expressed in the Tenant Satisfaction Survey. During consultation with staff, officers also stated that there was a lack of interest, from tenants, in estate walkabouts, which requires time and resources to arrange. We therefore plan to make estate walkabouts 'demand-led' by tenants, with officers arranging them where and when there is a request from tenants to do so. Housing Services will therefore continue to promote and advertise estate walkabouts as an option for tenants to get involved, encouraging anyone who wishes to arrange one, to contact their local housing team and work in partnership with them to arrange.

Some officers raised concerns about the demographics of those who actively participate.

As a housing service we are aware of this issue. The tenant participation team have been proactive and have used the following methods to engage with younger people:

- Sent a letter to all tenants under 25 years old, detailing opportunities to participate
- Engaged with the Champions Board on Housing Consultations



- Recruited a young person to write a Young Persons Blog for Tenant Talk
- Worked with local High School pupils around communication and engagement with young people who may be our future tenants
- Engaged with Forth Valley College Students on Housing Consultations and Tenant Participation
- Worked with the Employment Training Unit to sponsor young people to do TPAS Certificate Qualification
- Sent young people to the TIS Conference

Some comments were also made around the clarity of the role of a Registered Tenants' Organisation. To address this issue, the Tenant Participation Team visited each Housing Operations Team Meeting to outline the role of RTOs and answer any questions or concerns officers had. We will also explore featuring an article in Tenant Talk that gives an overview of RTOs.

A further comment was considering how best to consult, who we consult with and what we want to achieve through consultation. We will explore how to develop further with tenants' representatives.

The strategy also takes account of **other views**, drawing from a variety of consultations carried out over the last 24 months, and the feedback gathered from the various consultations listed above.

To make sure this strategy is robust, we considered **other social landlords' strategies**, learning from others' examples of good practice. These included North Lanarkshire Council, West Lothian Council, Kingdom Housing Association, Stirling Council, Perth & Kinross Council, Highland Council, Paragon Housing Association and Ochilview Housing Association.

Finally, we asked **independent experts on tenant participation**, the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS Scotland) and Tenants' Information Service (TiS), for their views. Their feedback is reflected throughout the strategy.

The final draft of the Strategy was made available on Participate+ in June 2025 with a survey asking tenants for feedback. Greater publicity engagement was recommended which has been included within the Strategy Action Plan.

# What Has Been Achieved Since The Last Strategy?

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Since our last strategy, we have:

- Provide RTPs with annual running grants
- Embedded the Scottish Social Housing Charter and Tenant Participation into staff induction training.
- Raised awareness of the Tenant Participation Strategy amongst staff in Housing & Communities and our colleagues in the Building Maintenance Division.
- Started the roll-out of Housing Services' digital portal, Housing Online.
- Continued to review, develop and offer our tenants a variety of methods for our tenants and customers to participate at a level they feel comfortable with, and in a way they feel comfortable with.
- Conducted a large-scale Tenant Satisfaction Survey, providing every tenant the opportunity to complete the survey.
- Increased satisfaction amongst our tenants to 99% satisfied with the opportunities given to participate in Housing Services' decision-making process.
- Increased satisfaction with keeping tenants informed, from 85% to 98%
- Produced three Landlord Reports to Tenants, each year, in consultation with tenant representatives.
- Involved tenants and customers in approving the Annual Return on the Charter each year.
- Introduced a 'Performance' page on the Falkirk Council website, where tenants and customers can view and scrutinise our performance.
- Offered and provided training to tenants on the Housing Revenue Account (how their rent money is spent).
- Offered and provided Committee Skills training to our Registered Tenants' Organisations and other groups or individuals, who felt they needed training.
- Funded tenant representatives to attend Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) and Tenant Information Services' (TiS) Conferences.
- Funded and supported three tenant volunteers through their Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) Certificate qualification.
- Supported and trained volunteer tenants to set up the tenant-led 'Tenants' Voices' forum to host events where they choose the topic and invite speakers. This is a move towards co-production rather than a Council led Tenant Forum.
- Worked in partnership with the Tenants Information Service (TiS), to train and support our tenants' Scrutiny Panel, through independent scrutiny of various aspects of the service.
- Worked in partnership with our colleagues in Children's Services, and the Schools Champion Board, to build bridges for engaging with young people.
- Expanded the role of the Editorial Panel to approve web content and digital information.
- Aligned the 'Make a Difference' project award scheme with the Council's participatory budget initiative, 'Community Choices – Tenants Choice'.
- Encouraged engagement, participation, and scrutiny informally through competitions, 'Good Neighbour Awards', community projects etc.
- Carried out proactive work with young people

# What have We Consulted on Since the Last Strategy?

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Since the last Strategy tenants have been involved in, and given views on, a wide range of issues. Some of which are below:

- Setting priorities on how rent is spent in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan.
- Commenting on increasing rent to deliver housing investment and improvements.
- Providing a valuable “critical eye” on our Local Housing Strategy survey
- Advising on the introduction of Housing Services’ online portal ‘Housing Online’.
- Advising on the development of a strategy for tackling anti-social behaviour.
- Working collaboratively with the Tenant Led Scrutiny Panel and our colleagues in Waste Services and Environmental Health. This is with a view to improving our estates, linking with the changes to bin collection services.
- Commenting views on close cleaning services.
- Commenting on a review of the Allocations’ Policy.
- Advising on satisfaction with various aspects of Housing Services, in line with the Scottish Social Housing Charter.
- Designing and assisting with the annual Landlord Report to Tenants. This shows how Housing Services has performed against the Scottish Social Housing Charter each year.
- Advising on the layout and format of the Customer Involvement (Tenants) pages on the Falkirk Council web site.

# What are the Benefits of Participation?

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Benefits to participation for our tenants, customers and staff include:

- Our tenants and customers are more satisfied because we have designed services to reflect their needs.
- Our tenants and customers are less likely to make a complaint because we listen and learn from their feedback.
- Higher staff satisfaction because we get more positive feedback from tenants and customers.
- Higher quality services because our tenants and customers can hold us to account.
- More efficient and effective services because resources are targeted at what matters most to our tenants and customers.
- Tenants and customers have opportunities to get involved in shaping housing services
- Tenants and customers are enabled to develop their skills through training and experience on housing or housing-related topics.

# Aims Of The Tenant & Customer Participation Strategy (2025 – 2030)

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As we progress this Strategy, we have the following aims:

- Adapt to the changing needs of our tenants and customers.
- Embed tenant and customer participation within Falkirk Council's housing services
- Continually develop and improve our customer relations through communication, engagement, participation, and scrutiny across a broad range of housing and housing-related services
- Update tenants and customers on progress on the action plan for this strategy on an annual basis, using Participate +. This will be shared with RTOs, Housing subgroups, and the Housing Consultation Register. The progress of the Tenant and Customer Participation Strategy Action Plan is included in the Local Housing Strategy annual update which is considered by the Housing Executive.

We will have the following key performance indicators for the Tenant Participation Team.

- % response to surveys sent out by the Tenant Participation Team
- Number of younger tenants engaged with by the Tenant Participation Team
- Number on the consultation register.

A comprehensive action plan is set out in Appendix1 detailing how we will deliver the above aims under the following headings:

- What we will do.
- How we will do it
- How we will evidence
- What our timescales are
- Who is responsible within housing services
- How we are progress



# Pillars Of The Tenant & Customer Participation Strategy (2025 – 2030)

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**The large-scale Tenant Satisfaction Survey carried out throughout the summer of 2024, involving a representative sample of 1,002 Falkirk Council tenants. They were interviewed face-to-face.**

**We recognise that 99.2% of tenants are satisfied with the opportunities given them to participate in the Housing Services' decision-making process. Also, that 82.4% of tenants are not interested in getting involved to shape the housing service.**

This Strategy is built on four pillars, (i) communication, (ii) engagement, (iii) participation and (iv) scrutiny.

## **i. Communication**

Appendix 1 to this Strategy sets out tenants' preferences around communication set out in the Tenant Satisfaction Survey.

There has been an increase in willingness of tenants to engage digitally compared to three years ago when the last large-scale Tenant Satisfaction Survey was carried out. This relates to the changing tenant profile over time and the COVID19 pandemic which led to increased use of social media/digital connection. We will continue to give tenants and customers equal opportunity to access digital services and have skills and confidence to participate securely online.

Housing Services' want to keep their customers informed and make sure our services and information is accessible to our tenants and customers. We recognise that tenants and customers may not be aware of the differences in costs of communication (e.g., the cost of sending a letter verses the cost of sending an email) and the impact this may have on rent levels. We will begin to have these conversations with our tenants. Throughout the duration of this strategy, we will raise awareness of cost comparisons and provide tenants with information to make an informed choice of their preferred method of communication via the new housing IT system. We considered these issues through the Equality and Poverty Impact Assessment we will carry out for this Strategy.

We recognise that information should be consistent in terms of content and style. For example, any leaflets on a housing topic, should be consistent with our website, Tenants' Handbook and articles in tenant's magazines etc.

We also recognise that digital communication can be updated in real time, whilst there can be time a lapse in the production of printed information. For this reason, printed information will contain a QR code directing readers to our website for the most up-to-date information.

Our methods of communication with our tenants and customers:

- Telephone
- Email
- Personal Letter
- Publications (including leaflets, handbooks and magazines etc)
- Text Messaging (will be used for some surveys Online and Postal Surveys)
- Website
- Online meetings using Microsoft TEAMS
- Face-to-face

## The large-scale Tenant Satisfaction Survey carried out throughout the summer of 2024, involving a representative sample of 1,002 Falkirk Council tenants who were interviewed face-to-face, told us...

- 99.5% of tenants believed information they receive from Falkirk Council as their landlord is very or fairly accessible
- 98% of tenants are very satisfied or satisfied with Falkirk Council's Housing Service is good at keeping them informed about their services and decisions.

To find out more about how you can get involved, please scan the QR code below with your phone.



### ii. Engagement

Tenants and customers can engage in the following ways;

- Housing Online
- Surveys: paper surveys posted to tenants or online surveys
- Corporate Complaints Scheme
- Customer Comment Cards
- Housing Consultation Register
- Falkirk Council's Peoples' Panel
- Specific Issue, Transactional Satisfaction Surveys
- 'Drop-in' Sessions.

## The large-scale Tenant Satisfaction Survey carried out throughout the summer of 2024, involving a representative sample of 1,002 Falkirk Council tenants who were interviewed face-to-face, told us...

- 16.1% of tenants are interested in engaging with Housing Services by answering customer satisfaction feedback questionnaires.
- 2.4% of tenants are interested in online questionnaires or discussion forums.
- 1.2% of tenants are interested in being on Housing Services Consultation Register, and happy to be consulted on a range of things.

### iii. Participation

Our tenants and customers can participate in the following ways.

**Registered Tenants' and Residents' Organisations (RTOs)** - RTOs are designed to work in partnership with Housing Services so that we can improve services together. They are led by a committee, made up of tenants and residents who live in the area they cover. The role of these organisations is to represent their community on issues related to housing. As they are a registered housing group, Housing Services has a statutory obligation to consult with them on decisions that will affect tenants. To find out if you have a group nearby or would like to form a group, please visit the customer involvement page at [www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/homes-property/council-housing/customer-involvement](http://www.falkirk.gov.uk/services/homes-property/council-housing/customer-involvement) or scan the QR code at the back of this document with your phone.

**Housing Consultation Register** - We have over 450 tenants on our Housing Consultation Register, who have expressed interest in feeding back on areas of the service, without giving up time to attend meetings and events. Housing Services use this register on a regular basis to consult with and gain

insights into the experience tenants have with the service. When tenants join the register, we will send occasional surveys asking for views on services we provide. We may also send information on events of interest for people on the register to attend. If a tenant would like to join this register, they can speak to their Housing Officer or email [tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk).

**Groups** -The following groups are open for all tenants to join and participate in.

**(a) Tenants' Voices** - This is a tenant-led panel who host and chair public meetings throughout the year. The panel invite tenants to submit questions about a chosen topic area within housing. These questions help them set the agenda. Meetings are held in various locations throughout the district. The meetings are advertised in Tenant Talk. All tenants are welcome to join the conversation.

**(b) Editorial Panel** - The panel consist of officers and tenants, who give us their views on communications with tenants. Our Housing publications are 'Tenant Approved'. This means that the Editorial Panel have seen and given us feedback on the document before it goes to print. In addition, they may review information on the Falkirk Council website and letters sent to tenants, The panel also help put the tenants' magazine, 'Tenant Talk', together. The purpose of the Editorial Panel is to make sure that all our communications are clear.

**(c) Housing Asset Management Plan (HAMP) Group** - This group discusses how we invest in current Council homes and the progress of our new build programme.

In relate to current Council homes this includes new windows, doors, kitchens and bathrooms as well as central heating, roofing, roughcasting and estates.

Selling land owned by Housing Services and buying land for housing is also discussed, along with information on the number of properties we buy back from owners.

**(d) Service Improvement Scrutiny Group** - This group checks housing services performance by making sure that what we report to the Scottish Housing Regulator is accurate and evidence based.

They also look at how tenants' rent money is spent, and whether tenants are getting value for money. Group members are trained and supported independently by organisations like the Tenants' Information Service (TiS) and Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS); to make scrutinise processes, procedure and budget spend and make recommendations on how to improve Housing Services.

Most of the work they undertake is research-based, looking at processes, procedures and budget spend. Any final reports they produce in relation to their work is made available to public. They have all undertaken training in relation to the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and were consulted on the HRA Business Plan (2023 – 2053).

**Estate Walkabouts** - Housing Services carry out estate walkabouts, where members of the public are invited to join local officers to identify areas of their estate that need attention or action taken, to make improvements. Going forward, these will be demand-led and arranged when a group of two or more tenants ask for one in their area. Housing Services work in partnership with various services to maintain the estate. Services that may be involved include Waste Management, the Roads Maintenance Service, Area Estates Officers or the Police. Having tenants and residents lead on Estate Walkabouts means that they can decide who is best to come along and when and where the walkabout should take place. If you would like to organise an estate walkabout, please speak to your local Housing Officer for more information.

**Tenants' Choice** - Tenants' Choice is a strand of the Council's Participatory Budgeting initiative, 'Community Choices' and consists of a budget of £35,000.00. Funded by Council rents, it provides for communities to apply for up to £5000.00 to fund local projects identified by them, that would benefit tenants. Examples include a wide range of projects like community gardens, refurbishing common rooms, community murals, providing digital equipment to Registered Tenants' Organisations, a cycleway, noticeboards and benches in local parks etc. As the £35,000.00 is underspent each year, Housing Services will relax the process followed by Community Choices to encourage more applications. Relaxation of the process includes allowing applications to be submitted throughout the year; an assessment on whether successful applications are required to be put out to public vote; increase the maximum amount of funding to £5,000.00 per project.

## The large-scale Tenant Satisfaction Survey carried out throughout the summer of 2024, involving a representative sample of 1,002 Falkirk Council tenants who were interviewed face-to-face, told us...

- 0.3% of our tenants said they would participate by going along to the Tenants Forum (now known as Tenants Voices)
- 0.2% of our tenants said they would participate by being part of the How Your Rent Money is Spent Group (now known as the Service Improvement Scrutiny Group)
- 0.1% said they would participate in estate walkabouts, where tenants can identify areas of concern on their local estate

### iv. Scrutiny

Tenants and customers can scrutinise housing services in the following ways.

**Annual Return on the Charter 'Sign-off'** - Each year, along with every other social landlord in Scotland, Falkirk Council reports to the Scottish Housing Regulator on how they are performing against the Scottish Social Housing Charter, by 31 May. The performance information provided to the Regulator, is drawn from a variety of sources, following guidance provided by the Regulator. Before the information is sent to the Regulator, Falkirk Council tenant representatives are invited to check what is being sent and given the opportunity to ask questions of Senior Officers from Housing Services. Once approved by them, the information is sent to the Regulator and published on their website, along with the performance information provided by every other social landlord in Scotland, so that our tenants can compare Falkirk Council's performance against other social landlords.

**Landlord Report to Tenants** - In addition to the information provided to the Scottish Housing Regulator, every social landlord in Scotland is required to produce an annual Landlord Report to Tenants. Falkirk Council's Landlord Report is written in consultation with our tenants, who have a say in what information is provided, how it is presented and how it can be accessed. The Landlord Report to Tenants is published by 31 October each year and provides information on where our tenants can access the Scottish Housing Regulator's website, to compare performance with other social landlords in Scotland.

**Performance page on FC Website** - Housing Services has a page dedicated to performance, on the Falkirk Council website. Information provided includes:

- Contact details for the Scottish Housing Regulator
- The Scottish Social Housing Charter
- Our Engagement Plan
- Results of the Tenant Satisfaction Survey
- Various strategies & plans, including the Strategic Housing Investment Plan and the Housing Revenue Account Business Plan etc.

**Service Improvement & Scrutiny Group** - Working with independent, external organisations like the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) and/or the Tenants Information Service (TiS), this group are supported to scrutinise areas of Housing Services. TPAS and TiS train and support tenants to carry out scrutiny exercises, check performance and produce reports with recommendations on how Housing Services could be improved.

**Information in Tenant Talk** - Each edition of the tenants' magazine, 'Tenant Talk' features a section on performance. This is entitled 'Keeping an eye on...' and provides a short summary of performance relating to a particular area of Housing Services. It is designed to entice readers to think about our performance and encourage them to check out more. For this reason, the article also provides details of the performance page on the Falkirk Council website, and who to contact if readers want more information on how we are performing as their landlord.

- 0.3 % of our tenants said they would scrutinise housing services by going along to Tenants and Residents Forum (now Tenants Voices)
- 0.2 % of our tenants said they would scrutinise housing services by being part of the How Your Rent Money is Spent Group (now Service Improvement Scrutiny Group)

# Statement Of Resources

Our previous Tenant & Customer Participation Strategy (2022 – 2025) was supported by an annual budget of £125,000.

## Table 1 Tenant & Customer Participation Budget Spend

The table below provides an overview of how the budget that supports tenant & customer participation was spent, to deliver the Tenant & Customer Participation Strategy (2022 – 2025):

Falkirk Council Housing Services currently spends £7.58 per tenant, per year on Tenant Participation. Scottish Housing Network annual indicators figures for 2023-24 showed that:

- Local Authority average spend on Tenant Participation per tenant was £5.70
- Registered Social Landlord Average Spend per tenant was £17.82
- Average spend per tenant in Scotland (all landlords) was £12.47

Category	2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		Total		Average		Future years
	£	%	£	%	£	%	£	%	£	%	Annually
In-house Printing	£17,073	17%	£23,383	23%	£6,364	7%	£46,820	16%	£15,607	16%	£20,273
External Printing	£0	0%	£60	0%	£0	0%	£60	0.02%	£20	0.02%	£26
Publicity & Communications	£30,445	30%	£31,344	31%	£20,166	23%	£81,954	28%	£27,318	28%	£35,486
Tenant Participation Scheme	£38,600	38%	£38,300	38%	£50,660	59%	£127,560	44%	£42,520	44%	£55,233
Transport	£297	0%	£817	1%	£1,365	2%	£2,479	1%	£826	1%	£1,074
Training	£5,926	6%	£2,760	3%	£5,055	6%	£13,741	5%	£4,580	5%	£5,950
Venue Bookings	£1,385	1%	£115	0%	£723	1%	£2,222	1%	£741	1%	£962
Independent Support	£7,050	7%	£4,724	5%	£2,073	2%	£13,847	5%	£4,616	5%	£5,996
<b>Total</b>	<b>£100,776</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£101,503</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£86,405</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£288,684</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£96,228</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>£125,000</b>

# Removing Barriers To Encourage And Enable Tenant & Customer Involvement

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- Continuing to offer a variety of dates/times and locations when conducting consultation events.
- Build trust and confidence by listening & responding to tenants' views and providing open and honest feedback on outcomes of consultations.
- Offering free transport (or help with transport costs) to and from events.
- Use shopping vouchers appropriately to incentivise attendance at consultation events.
- Offer free training & support to groups or individuals who want to get involved, to build confidence and capacity.
- Advertise and raise awareness of consultations and consultation events widely, using various forms of communication including social media.



# Conclusion

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This Tenant and Customer Participation Strategy reinforces Falkirk Council housing services commitment to meaningful engagement, transparency and joint working. By actively involving our tenants and customers, we want to improve services, strengthen communities, and ensure housing meets current and future needs. This is an ongoing process, and we will continue to listen, adapt and work with tenants and customers to create a stronger and more responsive service.

In conclusion it is vital that tenants and customers play a key role in shaping housing services.

This Strategy is based on comprehensive review and based on a wide range of sources. These include 1002 face to face interviews through the tenant satisfactions survey, writing to all tenants advising how they could complete the survey online, consulting with Registered Tenant Organisations, consulting with housing teams and building maintenance, considering best practice in other social rented landlords' Tenant and Customer Participation Strategy and taking advice from the Tenant Information Service.

# Housing Services

*Working Together*



# Appendices

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1. Action Plan
2. National and local influences

## **Appendix 2 – National and local influence**

1. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2001
2. Scottish Government - Guide to Successful Tenant Participation (2018)
3. The Scottish Governments' Housing 2040 plan
4. The Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002
5. The Housing (Scotland) Act 2010
6. Equality Act 2010
7. Scottish Social Housing Charter (Scottish Government, 2012)
8. Scottish Government -Digital Participation: A National Framework (2018)
9. The Scottish Government's Connecting Scotland programme
10. Frontline Futures: New Era, Changing Role for Housing Officers (Chartered Institute of Housing, 2014)
11. Guidance on the Operation of Local Authority Housing Revenue Accounts (HRAs) in Scotland (Scottish Government, 2014)
12. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015
13. National Standards for Community Engagement Review (Scottish Community Development Centre, 2015)
14. How Social Landlords Consult Tenants About Rent Increases: A Thematic Inquiry (Scottish Housing Regulator, 2016)
15. The Falkirk Plan (2021 – 2030)
16. Community & Engagement Strategy (2025 -2028)
17. Locality Plans
18. The Council Plan (2022 –2027)
19. Falkirk Council's Digital Strategy (Digital Falkirk)
20. Falkirk Council's Local Housing Strategy (2017 – 2022). This Strategy links to the priority in the LHS of Creating Sustainable Communities which will be developed further in the Equalities and Poverty Impact Assessment to be carried out for this Strategy.
21. Housing Revenue Account Business Plan (2023 – 2053)
22. Annual Landlord Report to Tenants
23. Digital Housing Strategy (2024 – 2027)

If you would like this document in Braille, LARGE PRINT or another language, please contact the Tenant Participation Team by email at [tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk) or by telephone on 01324 590796/590858.



To find out how you can help us to improve your Housing Service, or how to get involved, please scan here.

Find out more about Housing Revenue Account management. Let us know if you would like to attend an in person or online information session to be better informed on budget setting and how your rent money is spent. You can do this by emailing [tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk](mailto:tenant.participation@falkirk.gov.uk) or by telephone on 01324 590796/590858.



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