Tenant Engagement
Framework 2022 to 2025

YOU and YOUR home matter

Community Wellbeing

Tenant Engagement Framework 2022 to 2025

YOUR house YOUR home

We believe that our tenants and leaseholders are at the very heart of our housing service at Guildford Borough Council. Throughout this document we have referred to tenants, this term includes leaseholders.

It is important to us that we provide housing that tenants can make their home.

To deliver the best service possible, we want to work in partnership with you, communicate effectively and actively listen to your feedback to constantly improve and develop our services and what we offer our tenants.

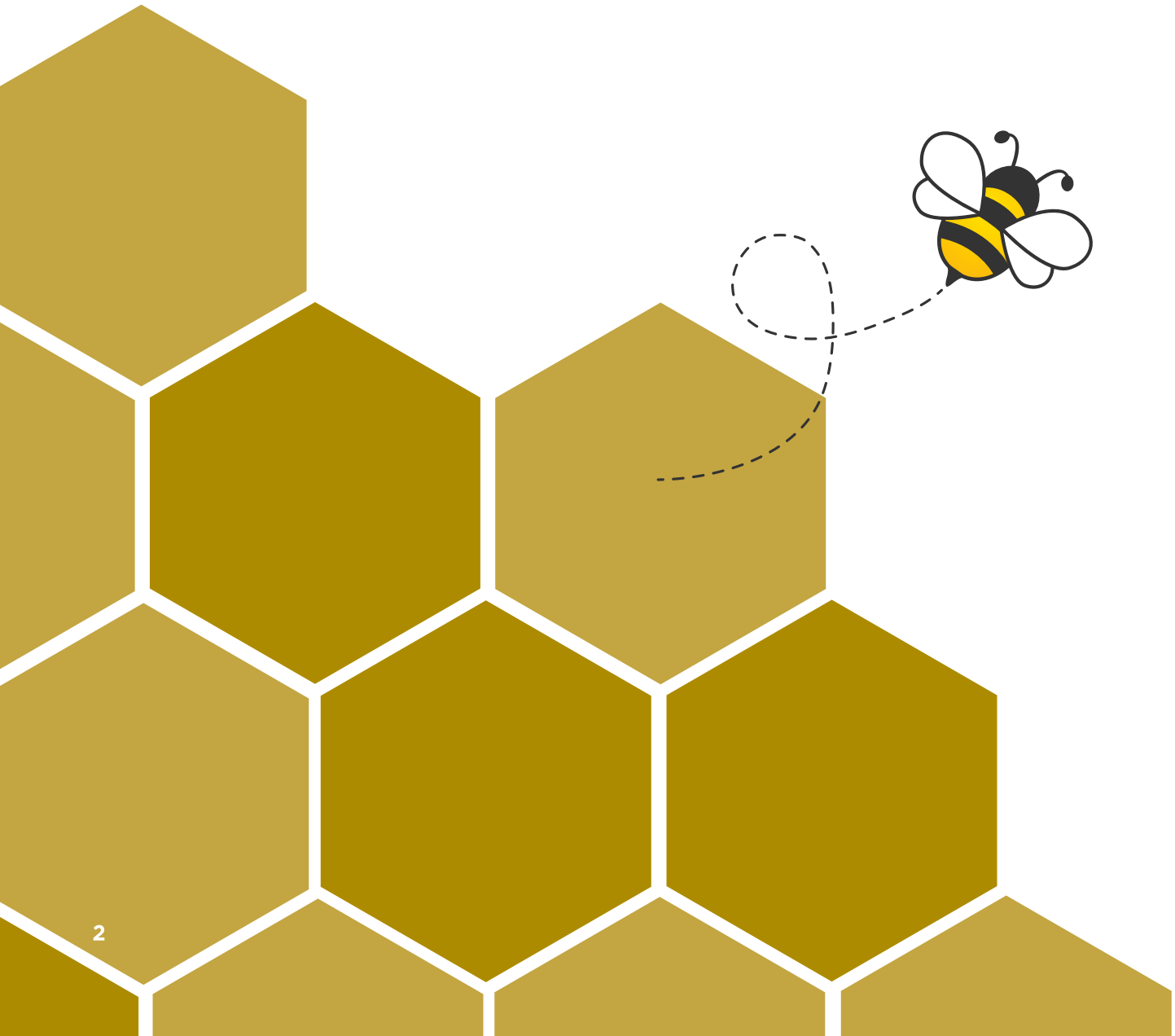
We are committed to provide good quality safe homes and help build supportive and resilient local neighbourhoods and communities.

If you want to be more involved, we will make sure that you have the support, advice and training to give you the confidence to have your voice heard.

In the next three years we want to increase the number of ways you can be involved and have your say about your homes, communities and services. We want to involve more of you in council services, and make sure that if you are interested in working with us, you can.

Tenant Engagement has never been more important. The government recently released The Charter for Social Housing Residents White Paper, which places great emphasis on making sure our tenants voices are heard.

A link to the social housing white paper can be found on the www.gov.uk website.



As a housing provider we are expected to work with tenants to design our service provision and focus on the important role we have to play within wider neighbourhoods and communities, over and above simply being a landlord.

To achieve this at Guildford, tenant engagement is facilitated by our Community Services team. Separate to Housing Services we have a dedicated team for community wellbeing and engagement. This ensures that we operate tenant engagement and scrutiny without bias.

One part of our tenant engagement focus is working with the Tenants' Group. This group is a voluntary group, who meet monthly. They scrutinise the Housing Services provided to tenants ensuring that our tenants' voices are heard.

Any tenant is welcome to be involved with the group. If you would like to join, contact us by emailing or calling our Community Wellbeing Team.

community.wellbeing@guildford.gov.uk

01483 444150.

Our tenant engagement plan (see page 15) aims to work with different demographic groups to look at policies and procedures that Housing Services are looking to implement, develop and improve. In addition various community events will be held to meet and engage with tenants on issues that are of concern to them.

Our engagement work with tenants is aligned with National Engagement Standards, which set out good practice for landlords to support tenants to develop and implement opportunities for involvement and empowerment.

As a Council, tenant engagement links into our organisational values and belief that "Every Person Matters". We are committed to:

- **delivering great customer service**
- **improving engagement opportunities so we listen to our tenants and meet their needs**
- **being accountable in providing a high-quality housing delivery service**
- **tackling social isolation and digital exclusion with the aim that no one is left behind or ignored**

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Foreword from **Tenants' Group Chair**

Our group supports this Tenant Engagement Framework 2022 to 2025 and welcomes the many opportunities it brings for tenants to have their say on how Guildford Borough Council should provide services to you and leaseholders over the next three years and beyond. We believe Guildford Borough Council are fully committed to providing the best possible service to all tenants and leaseholders.

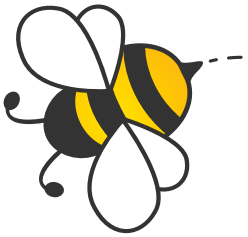
This framework clearly lays out the council's intention to:

- **provide homes that are fit for purpose**
- **provide a clean and safe environment around our homes**
- **continue to treat everyone with respect**

The framework also:

- **tells us the many ways that tenants and leaseholders can become involved and be at the heart of future decisions on services**
- **enables tenants and leaseholders to help shape the future of local social housing, by becoming involved through housing groups like the Tenants' Group, attending open meetings, completing surveys and focus groups or contacting the Community Wellbeing Team or Tenants' Group to offer suggestions or raise issues**

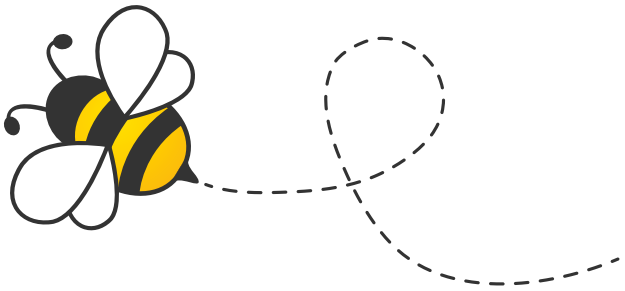
Guildford provide the accommodation we live in, but we make it our home. Let's all work together for our future and the future of our families.



Foreword from **Community Wellbeing Team**

Engagement, is one of the most important aspects of our role. Our values make sure that we always put people at the heart of everything we do. Our Community Wellbeing values embrace every single part of what we do as a team. They are interwoven into all aspects of the work we do across the borough. We pride ourselves on each value that we chose together, believing they all have an incredibly important role.

Our key priority is to listen, hear and act on what you tell us. We will support you to get answers from relevant services.



Community Wellbeing Team Values

Respect
We are respectful of all people and treat everyone equally

Positivity
We strive to be an optimistic and positive team focussing on successful outcomes

Courage
We are brave and go forward with ideas, even if they seem a little "bold", learning from every experience

Honesty
We are honest with everyone, even if that means facing difficult conversations

Dignity
We give everyone the space to feel worthwhile and valued, we all have something to offer

Empathy
We listen, without judgement, and offer a safe space to be with someone that needs us

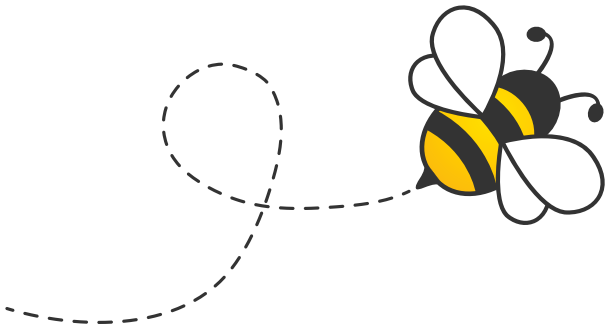
Bee Vocal

As your landlord, we need to know and understand you, your circumstances, preferences and what you think about our services, your local neighbourhood and community.

Tenant feedback is a fundamental element of tenant engagement and we will have a wealth of useful information available to us from sources such as:

- **complaints feedback**
- **compliments**
- **social media feedback**
- **survey findings**
- **customer journey mapping**
- **mystery shopping**
- **focus groups**
- **community engagement events**

We will continue to review the way that we collect this feedback and information to ensure that it is effective and representative. We will ensure that this is shared with our Housing Services and that subsequent improvements and outcomes are published.



This is a framework for colleagues to use tenant feedback and information when planning and designing new services, products or changes to existing ones.

Bee Involved

We are committed to ensuring that our framework for tenant engagement is closely linked to the overall governance of the council and that there are robust, outcome focused arrangements in place for the Tenants' Group to scrutinise Housing Services.

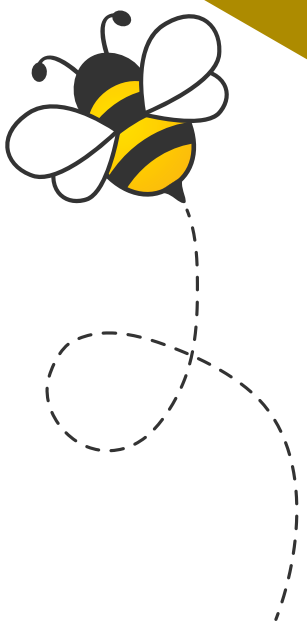
We recognise that it is in everybody's interest for us to take complaints seriously, resolve them as quickly as possible and to make sure that we learn from them. Our corporate complaints procedure is in place to ensure this happens.

Some tenants may find it challenging to raise complaints with us. As part of our tenant engagement structure, we can support tenants through our corporate complaints process to help try to resolve complaints as quickly and effectively as possible.

We need to do better at using the information we have and giving you more opportunities to share your views about our Housing Services and where we need to improve.

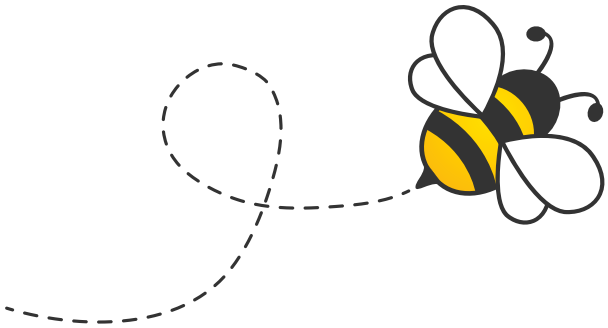
We know that sometimes, we don't always involve tenants in the solutions to the issues raised as much as we could. As part of our engagement process, we will start exploring more of a 'service co-design' approach, where we work with representative groups of tenants on specific issues to jointly explore and find solutions to service improvements and re-designs.

This is a robust and outcome focused model for tenant scrutiny, that links to the governance of our organisation.



We will develop and implement a framework for us and tenants to be able to co-design and review new and existing services.

Bee Connected



We know that we have room to improve our communications. We want you to tell us what works best and how you would like us to communicate.

As well as the variety of communication opportunities listed below, we wish to include your contributions to your Contact Point magazine and have a group of tenants to help produce it. This is a great opportunity for people to add to their skill sets and for young people to get some experience in media and communication.

- **high-quality tenants' magazine, Contact Point.**
- **community wellbeing social media pages**
- **drop in sessions**
- **community wellbeing newsletters**
- **notice boards**
- **other ways identified by our customer feedback**

We will annually review how we communicate with you.

Bee Inquisitive

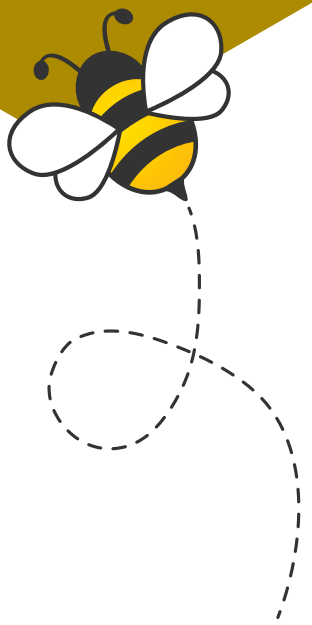
We know that some of our tenants prefer to engage with us quickly and use online services, and this will give us an opportunity for getting a wide and diverse range of views on specific issues.

The council encourages tenants to set up a MyGuildford account. This allows tenants to:

- **view council tax accounts and bills online**
- **check your bin collection day**
- **report common problems**
- **apply for or renew a garden waste subscription**

This is still being developed and other services will be added. As well as the MyGuildford account, we will look at additional digital options, including online surveys and Facebook pages.

We will facilitate an online community of tenants that engage with us on a range of issues using different digital options.



Bee Proud

There are a vast array of very different neighbourhoods and communities within our borough. Each has their own character and unique differences. It is important to us that we are more than a landlord and that the Housing Team with community services and tenants have a key role to play in creating happy and sustainable communities.

At Guildford, our corporate plan focuses on:

- **protecting our environment**
- **empowering communities and supporting people who need our help, making sure that residents have access to the homes and jobs they need**

We will streamline our tenant engagement to ensure it complements the aims of our corporate plan so that your voice is heard.

Making sure that there are a range of ways for people with an interest in their local community to engage with us and will offer a variety of initiatives including:

- **tenant community champions**
- **environmental improvement funds**
- **community walkabouts**
- **tenants' group meet and greets**
- **focus groups**
- **coffee mornings**
- **surveys**
- **consultation on environmental improvements**
- **consultation on new developments**
- **other community initiatives and partnership working**

We will provide a range of projects and activities that promote:

- **tenant training**
- **digital inclusion**
- **volunteering**
- **teen champions**
- **health & wellbeing**
- **job clubs/employment support**
- **debt recovery and support**

Ensuring all tenant engagement aligns with the corporate plan. Our current corporate plan can be found on our website www.guildford.gov.uk

Tenants are very much part of a happy and sustainable community and neighbourhood

Meet the Team
Tenants' Group

The Tenants' Group is run by tenants, and we help monitor the performance of your landlord. As a group we currently scrutinise services.

In an effort to develop the group, working with the Community Wellbeing Team, we aim to encourage greater tenant involvement, in a way that is welcoming, easy and informal.

Guildford Borough
TENANTS' GROUP

Community Wellbeing Team

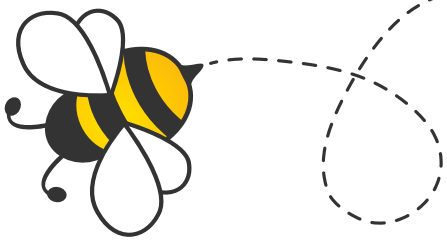
We are based and work within our local communities. Key to all the work we do is building relationships and trust, so that all voices have the opportunity to be heard. For our tenants, we facilitate conversations and feedback with Housing Services and use various ways to make it easy for tenants to be involved.

Contact us if you would like to be involved:

community.wellbeing@guildford.gov.uk

01483 444150

Our plan for **the next three years**



aim	actions	responsibility
Consult on relevant issues as identified by tenants or Housing Services	• Facilitate various methods used to provide feedback. • Report back findings to Tenants' Group and Housing respectively.	Community Wellbeing Team
Recruit Tenants' Group membership	• Encourage tenants to be involved in all aspects of engagement. • Advise of training opportunities. • Developing confidence and skills of tenants that wish to be involved.	Community Wellbeing Team
Support Tenants' Group	• Support all members of the Tenants' Group. • Advise of training sessions available.	Community Wellbeing Team
Agree Service Level Agreement	Agree the Service Level Agreement between the Tenants' Group and Housing.	Community Wellbeing Team
Inform tenants of membership of Tenant Participation Service (Tpas)	Allow tenants access to join and use the information available on the website to facilitate informed conversations around good practice.	Community Wellbeing Team
To regularly provide reports for Tenants' Group to scrutinise	• The number of formal complaints received, how many were resolved within timescales and to the customer's satisfaction? • Current timescales and standards for reletting empty homes. • The number of properties sold and how many new social housing properties have been built? • The number of repairs that have not been completed within the allocated priority timescale? • What is the standard for block inspections and how is it improved, if identified as not meeting it? • Response times for answering telephone calls. • All environmental improvements over £2,000 to be presented by the Specialist - Neighbourhood and be approved by the Tenants' Group. • Head of Housing and Housing Revenue Account (HRA) accountant to provide an annual report of spend on the HRA.	Housing
Housing staff to be available	• A member of staff to attend monthly Tenants' Group meetings on a rota basis. • Specialist - Neighbourhood staff to be available for tenant engagement meetings.	Housing
Contact Point	• To provide three Housing articles for each publication. • To provide Annual Report on performance and spend for the Summer edition.	Housing
Manage Tenant Engagement Budget	• Tenants' Group to manage the budget with Community Wellbeing Team. • Yearly accounts to be scrutinised by Head of Community Services, the Tenants' Group Chair and Guildford Borough Council Accountant.	Tenant Group and Community Wellbeing Team
Tenants' Group	• Will act to represent tenants and leaseholders and to improve the quality of life for everybody in the community. • Annually Review Tenant's Group Constitution. • Scrutinise Housing Services. • Anyone who is a tenant or leaseholder of Guildford Borough Council can become a member.	Tenant Group

Tenant Engagement Framework 2022 to 2025

Community Wellbeing