

# INDUSTRIAL DWELLINGS SOCIETY

EST 1885



## Resident Engagement Strategy



Setting out our approach to involving residents

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# 2022

## Resident Engagement Strategy

Strong Roots – **Great Ambitions**

## Strong Roots – Great Ambitions

As a small Association with a great past, housing London's diverse communities within the framework of our Jewish heritage, we are now set to move ahead and deliver new homes and excellent, cost effective services to our tenants.



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# Introduction



We believe firmly that our services should be designed around the needs of our residents, working side by side to identify improvements and innovative solutions to better our performance and the communities we serve.

We use the words 'engage' and 'involve' at various points throughout this document. We see engagement and involvement as the same: somebody who is involved is engaged. What's important is that the conversation is happening and something better and different is achieved as a result.

This strategy sets out our approach to Resident Engagement, what we want to achieve, how it's going to work and what the benefits will be for our residents and the organisation as a whole.







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NAVARINO MANSIONS

# The environment in which we operate



A lot has changed over the last ten years. Shifts in housing regulation with a focus on growth have meant some tough decisions on internal investment and that has limited the amount of resident engagement in the past.

The impact of the tragic events at Grenfell, as well as a series of other high profile news stories, have placed the microscope firmly over social landlords, questioning their integrity when it comes to listening to residents and understanding what's important to them.

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The industry is reacting positively to this challenge, but exactly how we do this is complex. In the recently published White Paper 'A New Charter for Social Housing', the Government set out their thoughts on the issues and how they think they should be solved.

They want to see an empowerment of residents:

- A consideration of different operating models so that residents have a much greater say in how decisions are made
- The sector to work closer with residents in developing new opportunities to have their voice heard, and hold their Landlord to account
- Landlords create the right organisational culture and promote community leadership

This document sets out how we plan to tackle these challenges within this new operating environment.







# The purpose of resident engagement



We believe working together with our residents we can build stronger communities, design better and more efficient services as well as unlock potential in the organisation that wouldn't otherwise be possible.

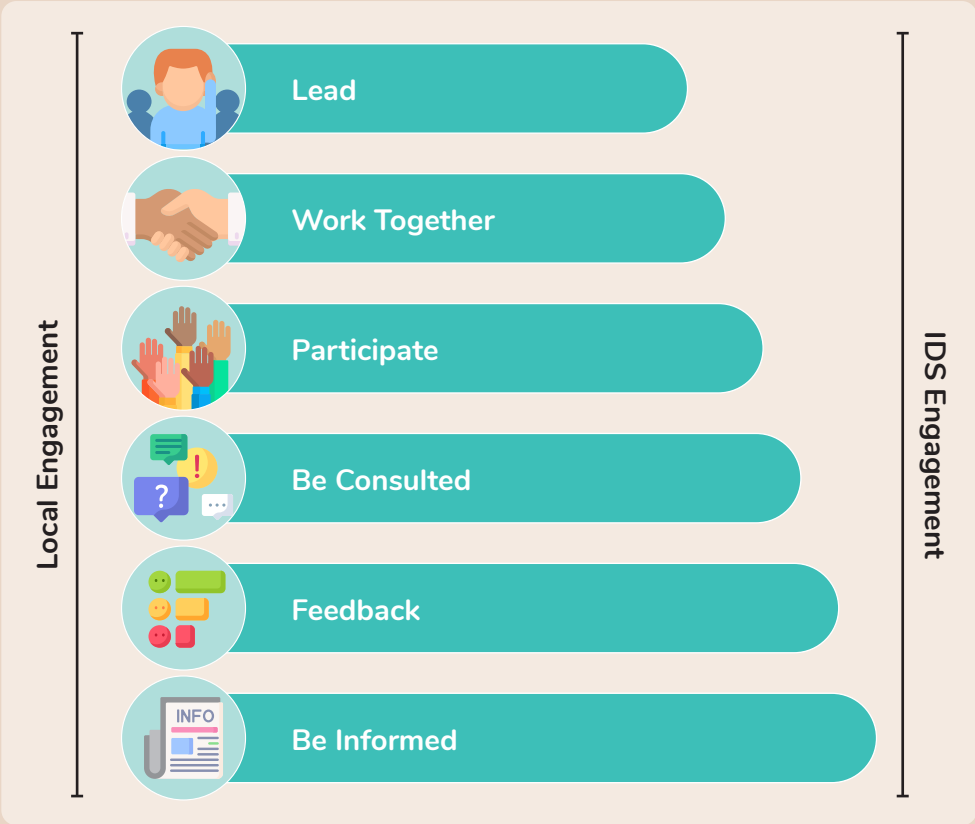
We know that engagement is important to our residents too. We've heard clearly that we need to be a better landlord. We know that residents want to be listened to and want to see positive change as a result.

We have a strong determination to improve our approach to Resident Engagement. To achieve this we have set out some clear principles, based on what our residents have said is important. These principles have shaped the strategy and how we engage in the future:

- We will make being involved accessible so that as many residents as possible can take part in the conversation.
- We appreciate that not everyone wants to be involved in the same way. We'll provide lots of ways to be involved covering our residents' home, neighbourhood, safety, additional needs, specific services, or with the organisation as a whole.
- We'll do our best to ensure that the residents who are involved are representative of our diverse range of residents. To achieve this, we'll make sure that our activities and recruitment methods consider diversity from the outset.
- We will ensure that our approach to engagement is embedded in our services and our business plans.
- We will provide opportunities for residents to hold us to account when it comes to our performance.
- We will ensure that every opportunity to be involved has a clear objective.
- We will demonstrate the impact involving residents has had on the organisation's service designs and performance.



# How residents can be involved



The diagram above illustrates how residents will be involved with IDS. Residents can be involved at multiple levels: locally where they live or directly with IDS. Each block represents how a resident can be involved. The further up the diagram, the more pro-active a resident is asked to be and the time required increases. It also reflects, through the size of the block, the number of residents who will be involved at each level.

As well as decisions that affect our residents, their safety, their home and their estate, we'll also invite residents to feed in to decisions around our business plan projects and changes to policies. As you'll see, there are now a number of ways for IDS to connect with residents on these key decisions. Each project or policy will be reviewed to determine the best approach.



## Be Informed

Being informed is the most straightforward form of engagement. When changes are made to the way we do things, we'll inform all residents affected. When we do this we'll make it really clear that we're providing information about the change and not seeking further feedback.

We'll use a range of ways to inform residents about changes. These include letters, SMS, email, our website and social media channels. We'll also highlight key changes in our localised or general Newsletters.

We will regularly publish news about how residents have shaped the way we do things. We'll include a 'you said, we did' or indeed a 'you said, we didn't because...' section in our Newsletters and will also publish this on the IDS website. This information will also be shared in the Annual Performance Report.



## Feedback

It's important that we make sure all residents have an opportunity to provide feedback as easily as possible. We use the information gathered to measure how well the organisation is performing, based on the responses our residents give us. Responses are also used to get a better understanding of what isn't working, as well as giving ideas and opportunities for improvements.

We'll ensure there are a range of ways that this feedback can be provided to us, including SMS text, letter, phone and directly through the website.

There will be times when we commission research from a third party. We'll do this when we need impartial and independent feedback, helping us to improve what we do to meet residents' needs.

Sometimes we get it wrong. Having an effective complaints process ensures that residents have a route to get problems resolved. It also helps us to identify improvements. We'll ensure we learn from our mistakes and improve services as a result.

Ways to give Feedback include:

- Respond to a survey via SMS or telephone
- Provide feedback directly through the website, by email, text or over the phone including making a formal complaint if necessary
- Taking part in our annual STAR perception survey

# How residents can be involved



## Be Consulted

We're committed to consulting with all our residents on changes that will affect them, their safety, their home or their neighbourhood. By consultation, we mean that we will contact each affected resident, providing information about the proposed change then giving a reasonable period to respond with feedback. Where we can, we will use each resident's preferred method of contact when we do this, but sometimes for legal reasons we may have to do this by post.

After the consultation period, we will review each and every comment. We will then produce a response to all residents summarising the results of the consultation, what has changed as a result of the consultation and, if applicable, the reasons why some things haven't changed.

Types of changes that fall in to this category include changes to local lettings arrangements, changes to services, changes to the way we maintain a building, alterations internally and externally to a home, and changes to the way an estate looks.

We will make it clear when we are consulting, so that residents are aware that this is their opportunity to feedback and have their say on the proposed changes.



## Participate

IDS benefits from having residents who like to get involved in things beyond simple consultation processes. There are many people who help shape ideas and thinking while also providing more regular feedback that lets us test ideas and make improvements faster.

We know it's not always possible for residents to give up a lot of time to take part in regular and formal groups.

To be able to accommodate those who either want to participate at a time that's convenient to them, or to take part in activities less regularly, activities like those listed below have been created to ensure these people are heard.

Ways to Participate include:

- Attending our Estate Surgeries or Meetings in our Sheltered Schemes
- Join IDS staff for estate walkabouts
- Examine a specific element of the organisation as a member of the Tenants' Forum
- Take part in a 'Resident Journey Mapping' session
- Come along to any Residents events we hold
- Take part in collecting resident satisfaction information





## Work Together

This is where residents work in partnership with us to achieve common goals. We're establishing some regular groups that. Include groups that concentrate on improving specific services (communal services and complaints); and groups that give residents who may experience our services in a different way a place to discuss changes. There will also be groups who can gather feedback in their neighbourhoods and be a positive voice in their community (residents' associations and Community Champions).

Ways to Work Together include:

- Member of the Tenants' Forum
- Member of a recognised Residents Association
- Member of our resident satisfaction survey team
- A Sustainability Champion
- Co-creating an estate improvement plan



## Lead

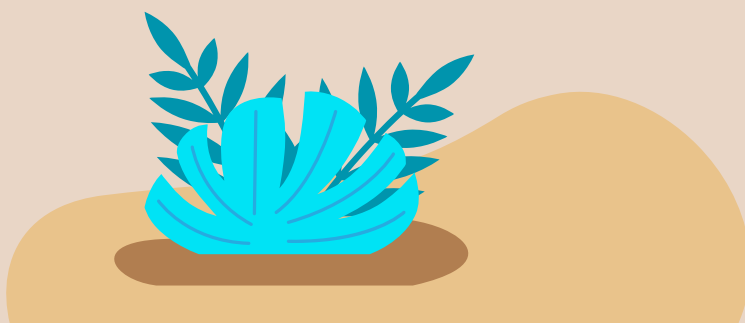
This is about being a leading force in the community or helping IDS to improve its services. Residents in these roles will be passionate about making a difference and be seen as a role model in the positions they hold.

A resident assuming one of these roles will be asked to take ownership of issues and be proactive to make a difference. An important part of these roles will be bringing people together, other residents and IDS colleagues alike.

These roles require the biggest commitment of time from those involved.

Ways to Lead include:

- As a Tenant member of our Operations Committee
- Chair of a recognised Residents Association
- Organise and support the delivery of a resident-led community service



# Different ways to get involved

## Scrutiny at IDS



Providing ways for residents to scrutinise what we do is not only a regulatory obligation, but something that we're keen to embrace.

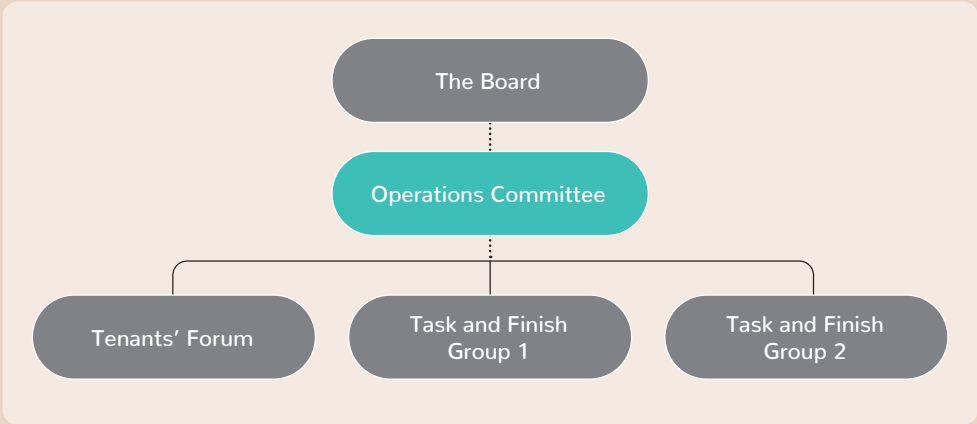
The Operations Committee is responsible for reviewing feedback from other engagement activities and the overall performance of the organisation. This Committee will work closely with the Tenants' Forum to identify areas requiring greater attention and will commission a series of scrutiny groups to complete reviews. To ensure impartiality and independence, the membership for any scrutiny function will be distinct from the operations committee membership.

Each year, The Operations Committee will publish a report to The Board

detailing the involvement activities that have taken place, what the information is telling us and the impact that these activities have had on the organisation.

Each scrutiny group will exist only for the purposes of the review they've been tasked with carrying out. Residents will be recruited for the particular task, based on skills, experience and enthusiasm in the subject matter. This means that for every scrutiny, residents with the most appropriate experience will work to produce the best possible review. The scrutiny groups will be supported by IDS colleagues, providing access to additional information, time with senior colleagues as well as facilitating workshops between IDS and the group.

We will explore whether external specialist consultants could be brought in on a temporary basis to provide expert opinion and help the group to better understand technicalities.



Suitable training will be provided to all resident members of the Operations Committee. Consideration will be given to whether residents involved in the task and finish group will require additional training.

## Board Connect

At every Board meeting there will be an item on the Tenants' Voice. This is to help ensure that the issues that matter most to residents are heard by the Board.

The Operations Committee reports directly in to the Board.

There will be different formats used ranging from personal representations, to survey results, to direct resident involvement in the Operations Committee.

## Estates Improvement Forum

The quality and safety of residents' neighbourhoods are as important as the homes in which they live. The Estates Improvement Forum is a group of residents who are interested in reviewing estate-based services and policies.

The forum is limited to 12 members selected for their skills, experience and passion for making a difference. When selecting the members we will ensure we have representatives of the different areas IDS serves.

## Complaints Forum

Feedback shows that IDS residents want to know more about how decisions are made around complaints and how the process works. We are creating this new Forum to help ensure that the process for managing complaints is open, transparent, fair and consistent. A sample of anonymised complaints will be tabled at each meeting and a consensus view will be reached on whether the complaint was handled in line with our policies and procedures.

There will be no more than 12 places available for this group and a simple skills and experience based process to join.



# Engaging with the community

## Key Estates

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IDS owns and manages many different types of homes, from more recently built properties at Mountside Walk, to larger mansion blocks built over 120 years ago such as Navarino Mansions. We know that in some of our estates a more targeted and coordinated approach is required.

We're identifying 'Key Estates' by looking at neighbourhoods where there's a high density of IDS homes in one area and where residents have told us they can be improved. Estate Managers will be appointed to work with residents to jointly create Estate Improvement Plans to improve these areas. Measures we will use to demonstrate improvements will range from resident perceptions of the area, service satisfaction levels and IDS performance information compared to other Landlords.

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In these key estate, team from across IDS will be brought together, headed by a senior leader who will be responsible for the estate. The team will work together with the local community, agree actions for improvement, ensure these are delivered and continue to work with the community to make the estate a great place to live. We will use an approach called 'asset-based community development' which has a proven track record of building and maintaining strong and sustainable communities.

Having worked with a key estate to strengthen the community, IDS will look to move resources to other communities while maintaining an on-going relationship through the local groups or residents' associations.

## Estate Caretaker Service

We are committed to our Estate Services team to be a visible presence on the estates and to improve the look and feel of the area. With a more regular on-site presence, this colleague will also play a key role in the community by representing IDS and helping to link residents with other teams elsewhere in IDS. The caretakers will be a part of any residents' associations or groups.

## **Sustainability Champion**

What came out strongly from the 2021 residents perceptions survey, was the need to do more for the environment and sustainability more generally. This is an area IDS will develop and will actively seek feedback and comments from residents who live in their neighbourhood and will share this with IDS.

They will play an active role within the resident group operating within their area, and help shape community sustainability plans.

They will also provide the estate where they live with additional information, encourage residents to take part in conversations about sustainability and provide updates on the residents' association activities.

## **Residents' Associations or similar tenant groups**

As a part of our commitment to sustainable communities and using an 'asset-based community development' model that builds on each community's existing strengths, we will establish and support resident-led groups in our estates.

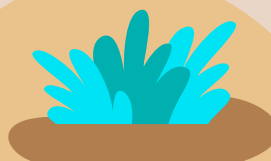
Where residents are keen for this to happen, we will help to recruit and set up groups. We will also offer training and support so these groups can become self-sufficient and genuinely led by the community they serve.

There will be continued support for these groups with regular attendance from IDS colleagues as well as access to funding.

## **Resident Led Services**

We believe residents should have a choice when it comes to how their services are delivered. Residents can apply to run their own communal services. Resident-Led services require a group to be formed who will act on behalf of the community and assume responsibility for the management of grounds maintenance, communal cleaning or other estate based services. Service charges will be reduced accordingly with quality standards inspected on a regular basis to ensure that they meet IDS's community standard.

Agreements are usually put in place that last for two years with community funding available for the initial set up.



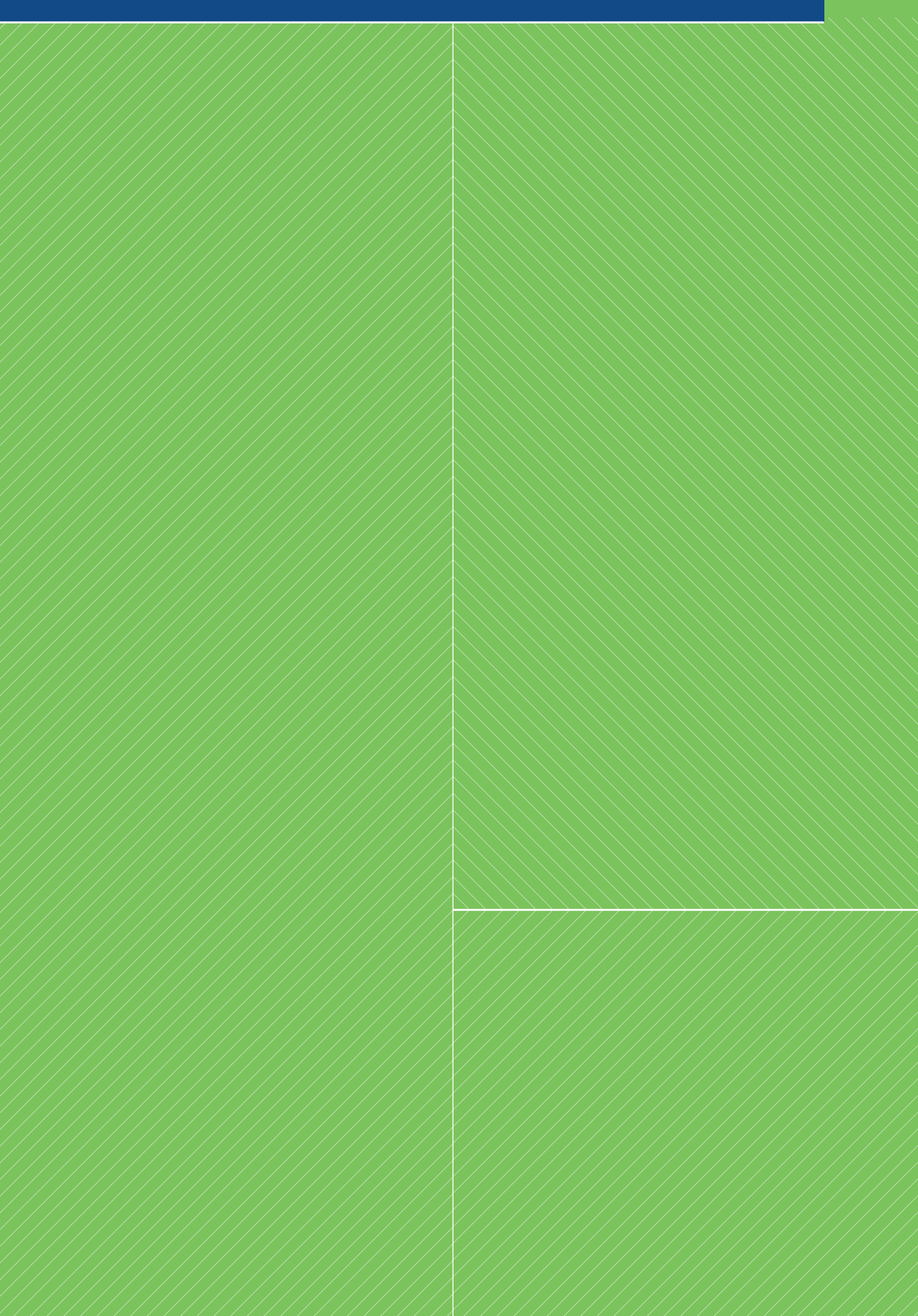
# Measuring our success

Here are the main ways we will know whether this strategy is working:

- By September 2023, we will have at least 150 residents actively taking part in a formal activity within this strategy.
- At the same time, we will ensure that the people involved remain representative of our diverse range of residents.
- We will use 'segmentation' of our resident database to monitor this and apply the percentage for each group against the 150 people we will have actively involved. For example if 50% of all our residents were woman then we would aim to have at least 75 women actively involved. Obviously any more people involved from any category would be most welcome too!
- Each year, as a part of an annual review of engagement, we will demonstrate the positive contribution resident engagement has had on the organisation and its performance.
- We will check with residents through the STAR survey and the Tenant Satisfaction Measures, to see how we are progressing
- We will ask: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that IDS listens to your views and acts upon them? We want to ensure that we remain better than average so we will ensure that we are in at least the second quartile of all housing associations in England when it comes to this measure.
- We will ask if residents feel they are being treated fairly and with respect.







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