

Let's talk about...

RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

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**Chester
& District
Housing
Trust**

Here at the Trust, we work with residents in partnership, to make sure we provide high quality services, that meet their needs and that provide value for money

HAVE YOUR SAY

Here at the Trust, we work with residents in partnership, to make sure we provide high quality services, that meet their needs and that provide value for money. We also want to make a difference in our communities by doing the right thing and are therefore committed to listening and providing residents with opportunities to challenge what we do and the way we do it.

We want to provide a variety of ways residents can get involved at different levels, involving different time commitments and meeting different needs.

We want to provide opportunities for residents to monitor, comment, challenge, scrutinise and make decisions on our performance, policies and services.

We will let residents know how and when their involvement has made a difference

We offer a wide range of ways you can have your say on a whole range of topics. Even if you can only spare a small amount of time every now and again, come and get involved in shaping our services.

HAVE YOUR SAY ON THE RESIDENTS' BOARD

The Trust is one of the first organisations to hand over decision making power and a budget of over £12 million to residents when it set up a Residents' Board.

The Board has delegated authority to provide repairs, maintenance and improvements to homes, with the intention of extending their responsibility to other landlord functions such as anti-social behaviour, estate cleaning and lettings, as time goes on. The Board looks at operational procedures and oversees the budget spending, and determines the use of any savings. Board meetings are held monthly and whilst it takes up a fair amount of time and hard work, you will also find it rewarding and satisfying.

HAVE YOUR SAY AND JOIN A NEIGHBOURHOOD PANEL

We have set up a Neighbourhood Panel in each of our 6 housing management areas. The Neighbourhood Panel has responsibility for an annual Community Intervention Budget of £8,000 which is used to support community initiatives in the area. Panel members are provided with information about repairs, vacant properties, anti-social behaviour and any other aspect of our services to scrutinise and challenge.

The Panel also determines information we provide to the neighbourhood in the form of a community contract. They also comment on our policies and procedures.

Meetings are once a month. They are friendly, informative and can be fun.

HAVE YOUR SAY IN TRUSTNEWS

You can write or comment on articles, photographs, the layout and design for our residents' magazine TrustNews. It is produced quarterly by residents and staff who work together to make it a 'must read' magazine.

HAVE YOUR SAY AND JOIN OUR SCRUTINY PANEL

This is for residents who will scrutinise the performance of all resident involvement activities and more. This group will get a full report of all performance information, recovery plans, complaints and resident inspector activities. The Panel will also choose an area of service that needs closer scrutiny. Training will be provided as required.

HAVE YOUR SAY AND BECOME A RESIDENT INSPECTOR

After two days training you will be a Resident Inspector checking on our services. This could mean mystery shopping, checking the quality of our empty properties before they are let, or reporting on the cleaning standard in the 3 storey blocks. If you prefer, you could just telephone to check on repair satisfaction or even after improvement work. The Inspector reports will provide a snapshot of the service and provide valuable information on what is going well and what needs improvement. The Scrutiny Panel can also request inspections to be conducted. Being an Inspector is interesting and socially enjoyable.

HAVE YOUR SAY AND JOIN THE CUSTOMER SERVICES CHALLENGE GROUP

This group monitors our front line services, whether we can provide them differently and whether they are the right services. The group checks on facilities, the way we deal with all our customers, always working to improve satisfaction and that we meet our legal requirements. This group determined our office signage, changes in the reception area and the new telephone system.

HAVE YOUR SAY IF YOU LIVE IN SHELTERED ACCOMMODATION

If you are living in sheltered accommodation you might like to have more of a say in the services provided. This group is called GOSH (Group for Older people living in Sheltered Housing). They also produce a magazine twice a year, arrange events and days out.

HAVE YOUR SAY IN THE WAY WE DEAL WITH ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR (ASB)

This group, led by our Community Safety Co-ordinator, discusses initiatives and options for dealing with ASB. The Trust takes this very seriously and works with other agencies such as the mediation service and Police to tackle the problem. This group has designed an action pack to give to residents who report ASB to ensure a consistent approach. If you want to find out more come along to a meeting.

HAVE YOUR SAY IN LOOKING AT INCOME COLLECTION REVIEW GROUP

You will look at financial inclusion and other options to maximise income and reduce rent debts. The group meets every quarter and receives reports on levels of rent arrears. Regular group members say it is very informative.

HAVE YOUR SAY AT THE DOCUMENT APPROVAL PANEL

This group gives the 'Resident Approval' stamp and authorises all documents. It not only looks at whether the document is in plain English, it also decides whether the leaflet or letter is necessary. All publications you receive from the Trust are checked by the Panel. Many of you will find this Panel interesting.

HAVE YOUR SAY ON AN ESTATE WALKABOUT

A timetable of estate walkabouts is advertised in TrustNews. You are invited to walk around your neighbourhood, along with your Community Housing Officer, the Trust's grounds maintenance and repairs staff, representatives from the Cheshire West and Chester Council, local councillors, residents' representatives, Police and Community Enforcement Officers. This gives you the opportunity to show officers responsible areas of concern. Feedback about the action taken to address issues is sent to you and discussed at the Neighbourhood Panel. You can arrange with your Community Housing Officer to visit any part of the estate.

HAVE YOUR SAY AS A GROUNDS MAINTENANCE INSPECTOR

If you like being outside, this is the one for you. Inspectors check on grass, hedge cutting and weed clearance carried out in your area. There is a short tick list and room for your comments, which you return to us, we then know how our grounds maintenance teams are doing. If you are housebound, you can still check on the grounds maintenance near to you. We need your comments, so do try and help.

HAVE YOUR SAY AT A YOUNG RESIDENTS' FORUM

If you are aged between 16 and 22 and you want to influence the way our services affect you, come along to this forum. Your views are important to us and if you don't tell us, we will never know if we are getting it right.

HAVE YOUR SAY AT OUR DIVERSITY GROUP

If you have an interest in ensuring our services meet the diverse needs of our residents, you may enjoy meeting with other residents and colleagues to share your views

HAVE YOUR SAY AT THE LEASEHOLDERS' FORUM

We meet with Chester & District Leaseholders Association and discuss issues of concern. We have jointly developed a policy and procedure for improvements. If you are a leaseholder do come along.

HAVE YOUR SAY AT ONE OF OUR FOCUS GROUPS

From time to time, we need to ask residents their view about a particular aspect of our service, e.g. reviewing access to accommodation. We will set up a focus group purely just for that purpose.

HAVE YOUR SAY AND COMPLETE A SURVEY

They might appear a little boring and sometimes a nuisance, but to us the information we receive is invaluable. So please have your say!

HAVE YOUR SAY AND BECOME A BOARD DIRECTOR

These are formal meetings with the Trust's Executive Management Team and involve the decision-making that affects the whole company. Formal appraisals are regularly undertaken and comprehensive training is provided.

HAVE YOUR SAY FROM YOUR LIVING ROOM AND JOIN THE ARMCHAIR GROUP

From time to time, policies, strategies, leaflets and any other service related documents are posted to residents who have asked to be involved in this way. Any comments, views or opinions can then be sent back to the Trust by email, telephone or letter. If you choose to provide comments by letter, the Trust will provide pre-paid envelopes so that you are not out of pocket.

HELPING YOU TO GET INVOLVED....

Funding to help you set up a residents' association, practical advice and support from Trust officers are just some of the ways we can help you to get involved. We can also:

- Provide transport or expenses to help you to attend meetings
- We can provide training to help you to build your skills and knowledge
- Provide job shadowing opportunities
- Give you feedback and information on decisions made
- Provide assistance with caring responsibilities
- Provide opportunities to obtain Chartered Institute Housing accreditation

HAVE WE MISSED ANYTHING?

If there are any other ways in which you would like to get involved or if you would like to know more about how you can have your say, please call the Resident Involvement Team on **0808 100 7701** or **01244 305573** or email us at residentinvolvementteam@cdht.org – we are even on Facebook www.facebook.com/cdht.org for more information.

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW MORE, PLEASE CONTACT US:

Online

Web: www.cdht.org
Email: info@cdht.org

By phone

Freephone: 0808 100 7701

Lines open

Monday to Thursday
8am—6pm
Friday 8am—5pm

Fax: 01244 305690

Minicom: 01244 305500

BY VISITING US AT:

Registered Office

Centurion House
77 Northgate Street
Chester, CH1 2HQ.
Monday to Friday
9am—4.45pm

RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT

We know it makes sense to involve our residents to help improve housing services. Here at the Trust we take every opportunity to give residents **a say!**

Interested? Find out how your views can make a change to the way we do things by contacting the Resident Involvement Team on Freephone 0808 100 7701.

Also available in

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