

Tenant Engagement & Communication Strategy



Opportunities Connect Help Inform Learn



At Ochil View Housing Association, we believe everyone has a role to play in shaping and delivering the services we provide.

Tenants have the power to highlight areas for improvement, suggest solutions and help staff implement them.

Staff will work with tenants, listen to their feedback, provide information, and support and deliver on what has been agreed.

This strategy sets out how we will achieve this together.



INTRODUCTION

This Tenant Engagement & Communication Strategy has been designed as a guide for tenants and staff to utilise in developing and supporting engagement opportunities and how we communicate with each other within the organisation.

An Action Plan sits alongside this strategy which sets out these goals in more detail. This will be continually reviewed, revised, and updated as it progresses. A complete review of the Strategy will occur every 3 years.

What is Tenant Engagement & Communication?

Tenant engagement involves a range of processes designed to encourage tenants to become actively involved in how Ochil View delivers its services. This can include things such as informing tenants, listening to their thoughts and ideas, seeking input from them, and supporting empowerment.

Communication is as it sounds – how do we talk to one another? This can be anything from a quick update on the phone, meeting tenants at their home, newsletter updates, letters, social media...the list is endless really.

What are the benefits of good Tenant Engagement & Communication?

Engaging helps provide an understanding of tenants' perspective, what they feel is working well or could be improved. For Ochil View Housing, it helps us continually improve our services and introduce new initiatives to enhance a tenancy.

There are also many personal benefits for tenants getting involved. It can be an excellent way to learn new skills. Being an active participant can also help increase confidence. It can also help them understand how Ochil View works and how they can make a difference to how services are delivered.

Communication is key in any area of work. At Ochil View Housing, the aim is to provide a range of communication methods, all designed to ensure that the tenant receives the relevant

OUR TENANT ENGAGEMENT & COMMUNICATION VALUES

We have set up the following 5 'Ochil' values when it comes to tenant engagement and communication:

Opportunities

We want to ensure tenants have as wide a range as possible to engage with their landlord. This can be something simple like completing a short survey to more detailed involvement, such as being a representative on our Board.

All tenants will be given the opportunity to engage, regardless of how they wish to do so and to what extent.

Connect

We want tenants to feel truly connected to their landlord and vice-versa, so it is vital that we continue working together to achieve our objectives and deliver better, more responsive services.

This comes through strong communication and respect for each other.

Help

We always aim to be there to help tenants with information and advice when they need it. In turn, we look for tenants to help us as we strive to deliver the best possible performance and services. We will also provide training and support for tenants getting involved, as well as for staff to help build an ethos of engagement throughout the Association.

Inform

We want to ensure that every tenant, regardless of their health and wellbeing, receives information and guidance in a way that suits them.

This includes documents, such as this Strategy, being readily available in a range of formats.

Learn

We always look to learn from what we have done previously, be it with tenant meetings, information updates or large-scale projects. We can learn as much from what went well as to what could be improved. Through engagement, tenants can also learn and be involved in how Ochil View Housing operates and sets standards and goals for the future.

WHY DO WE ENGAGE?

The Housing (Scotland) Act in 2010 introduced a Scottish Social Housing Charter that set the standards and outcomes social landlords, such as Ochil View Housing Association, should aim to achieve when performing their housing activities. The Charter establishes what tenants should expect from their landlord and how to hold them to account. It also sets out how landlords should focus their efforts on achieving outcomes, with 16 different outcomes within the Charter itself. For tenant engagement and communication, there are two specific outcomes that we need to focus on:

Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.

Social landlords manage their businesses so that tenants and other customers are offered a range of opportunities that make it easy for them to participate in and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.

To assess us for how well we are doing with these, the Scottish Housing Regulator reviews how our tenants respond to the following two questions:

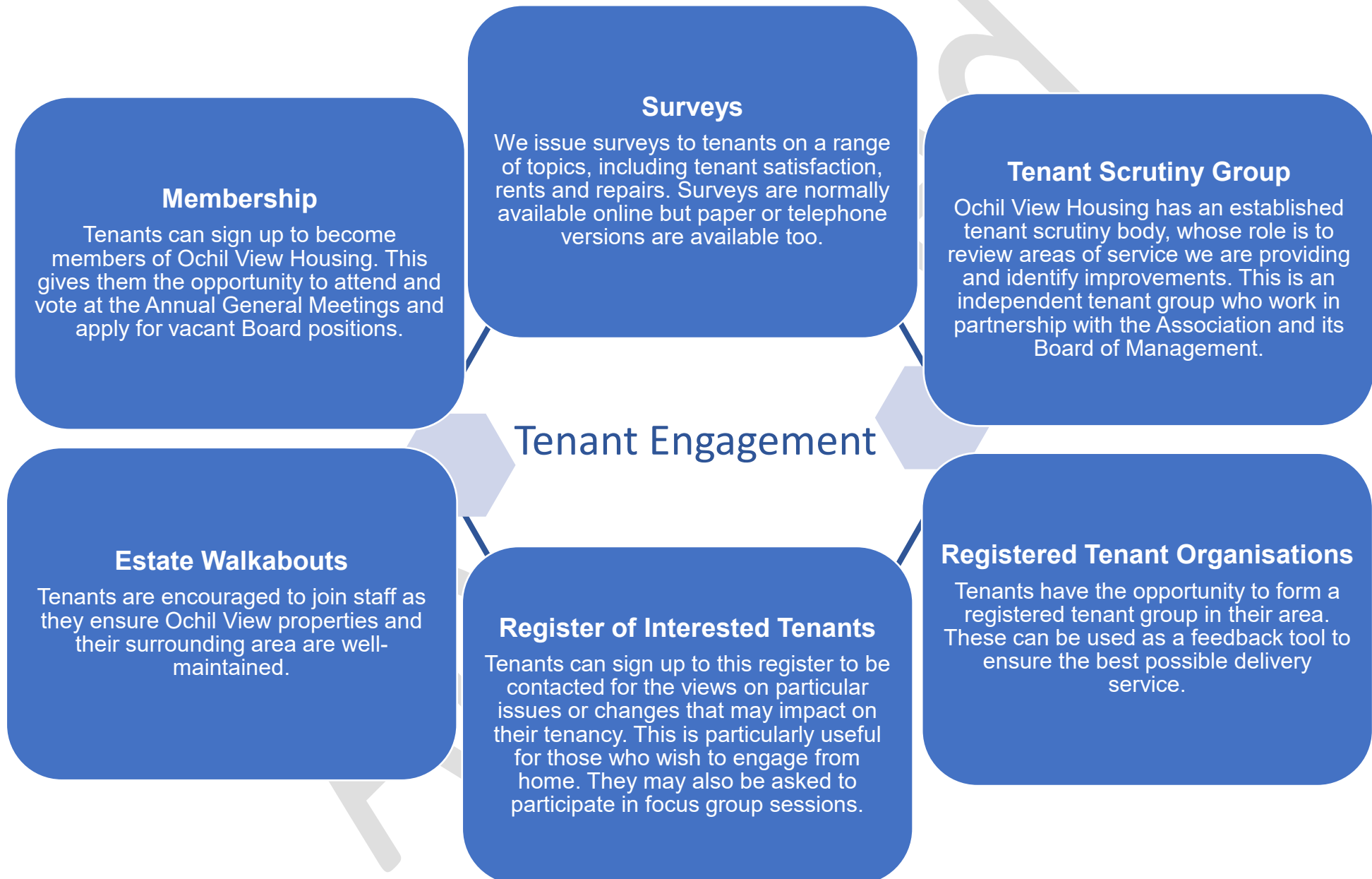
How good or poor do you feel Ochil View is at keeping you informed about their services and decisions?

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with opportunities given to you to participate in Ochil View's decision-making processes?



HOW DO WE ENGAGE?

At Ochil View Housing, we have a range of engagement opportunities available for tenants to have their say:



Tenant Engagement

Membership

Tenants can sign up to become members of Ochil View Housing. This gives them the opportunity to attend and vote at the Annual General Meetings and apply for vacant Board positions.

Surveys

We issue surveys to tenants on a range of topics, including tenant satisfaction, rents and repairs. Surveys are normally available online but paper or telephone versions are available too.

Tenant Scrutiny Group

Ochil View Housing has an established tenant scrutiny body, whose role is to review areas of service we are providing and identify improvements. This is an independent tenant group who work in partnership with the Association and its Board of Management.

Estate Walkabouts

Tenants are encouraged to join staff as they ensure Ochil View properties and their surrounding area are well-maintained.

Register of Interested Tenants

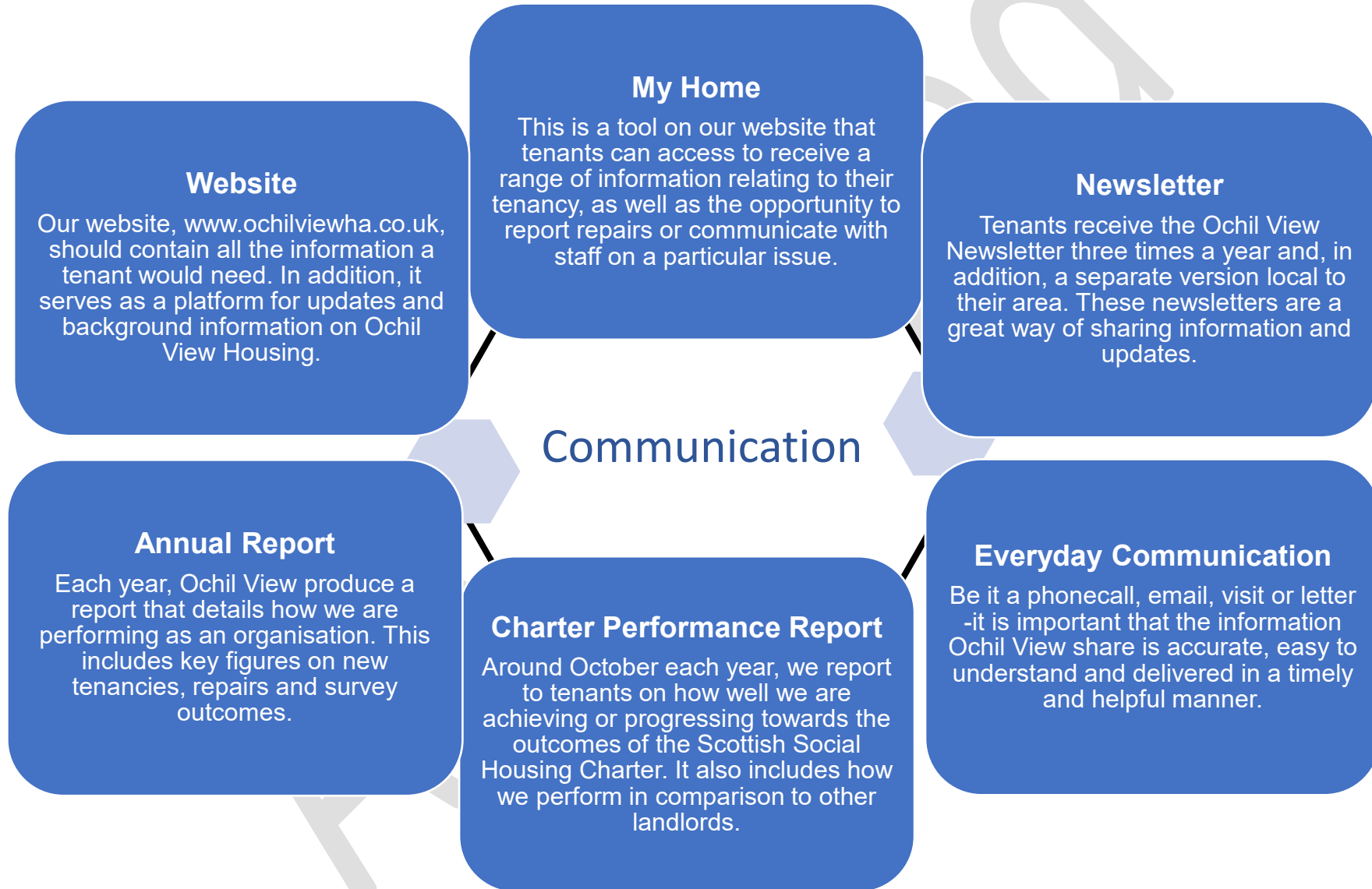
Tenants can sign up to this register to be contacted for the views on particular issues or changes that may impact on their tenancy. This is particularly useful for those who wish to engage from home. They may also be asked to participate in focus group sessions.

Registered Tenant Organisations

Tenants have the opportunity to form a registered tenant group in their area. These can be used as a feedback tool to ensure the best possible delivery service.

HOW DO WE COMMUNICATE?

Here are just some of the different methods Ochil View Housing use to communicate with tenants:



ENGAGING & COMMUNICATING THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA AND DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY

Utilising social media and technology is now vital in delivering successful engagement and communication. At Ochil View, we have Facebook and other social media platforms, all which help us to:

- **Improve the customer service for our tenants**
- **Increase awareness of the work we do**
- **Highlight important updates or changes within the Association**
- **Help to encourage engagement and communication through the reply options and private message inboxes**
- **Reflect well on the Association and its ethos of being open and transparent when sharing information**

Our social media platforms contain the following:

- **News and information on upcoming projects and events being organised by the Association**
- **Headline details of available properties, with a link to our 'These Homes' page for more information**
- **Engagement opportunities arising within the Association, directing tenants on how to get involved**
- **Job opportunities**
- **Links to stories and information out with Ochil View Housing. This can be items such as local events, support groups, relevant national information, awareness days etc.**
- **Links to new documents produced by the Association, such as the Annual Report or our Newsletter**
- **Good news stories and photos from events**
- **Details of upcoming estate visits**

Technology is playing an increasingly important part in how we engage and communicate with one another. At Ochil View, we will utilise this technology to broaden our range of engagement opportunities. This includes meetings through Microsoft Teams, online surveys, and one-to-one

consultations with tenants. In doing so, this will make it easier for some tenants to participate in helping Ochil View deliver the best possible services.

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TRAINING AND SUPPORT

It is absolutely vital that tenants are given all the guidance and support they need in order for them to be confident in bringing their knowledge and skills when engaging with us.

Ochil View Housing will ensure that training and skills development opportunities will be available to tenants. This training could be for tenants wishing to establish their own tenant body or for those who wish to be more involved working in partnership with the Association to deliver the best possible services.

We want to ensure that there are no barriers to engagement within Ochil View Housing. This includes, among others:

- Arranging transportation to meetings where necessary
- Making meeting or event venues fully accessible
- Providing hearing loops when needed
- Providing large print documents
- Providing text in different languages or formats

We have a budget specifically for developing and promoting tenant engagement and communication within the Association.

Tenants can also get in touch with our partner body, Tenants Participation Advisory Service, for independent engagement advice.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

Everyone is equal at Ochil View Housing.

We do not discriminate on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, language, political beliefs or social class. We respect all tenants' rights to privacy and confidentiality.



REVIEWING OUR STRATEGY

Reviewing the Strategy and attached Action Plan will be a continuous task as we progress with developing our engagement and communication processes. A complete review of the Strategy will occur at least every 3 years, with tenant input.

If you require any further information relating to this Strategy, its Action Plan, or Tenant Engagement and Communication in general, please contact:

Email: tenantengagement@ochilviewha.co.uk

Phone: 01259 722899

Website: www.ochilviewha.co.uk

You can find out more on the Association's performance and how we compare to other landlords across Scotland by visiting the Scottish Housing Regulator website:

<https://www.housingregulator.gov.scot/>

The Scottish Social Housing Charter can be read in full here: <https://www.gov.scot>

Survey on Draft Strategy Issued to Tenants & Staff	September 2024
Final Draft, including Survey findings, issued to Management Team	November 2024
Draft Strategy Recommended by Customer Services Committee	12 th December 2024
APPROVED BY BOARD OF MANAGEMENT	30th January 2025
Date of Next Review	December 2027

Action Plan for Tenant Engagement & Communication at Ochil View Housing Association: 2024-2027

Objective One: To build and strengthen opportunities for tenants to be actively involved in Ochil View's service delivery.

Task	Objective	Stage of Progress	Progress
Utilise and develop the current Register of Interested Tenants for engagement projects.	In doing this, we can build a strong body of tenants who are keen to engage on a range of issues.	Completed	At the last review of the Strategy, we wanted to work on communicating with our Register of Interested Tenants and engaging with them for feedback. As of November 2024, we have 102 tenants on the Register of Interested Tenants. We have utilised this list to gather opinion on topics such as the review of the Tenant Engagement & Communication Strategy. This Action is now completed but will continue to be developed.
Explore and develop the opportunities to engage with tenants who have signed up to 'My Home'.	A substantial number of tenants now have access to this online portal, and this can be used to	Completed	We have increased engagement with those signed up to My Home, particularly through our Digital Champions initiative.

	engage with tenants on a large scale, gathering a wide-ranging perspective on issues.		<p>We also conducted a survey on My Home and gathered useful feedback from those who use and don't use the service.</p> <p>Registered tenants on My Home have increased from 700 in December 21 to 962 in December 2024. Although this Action is completed staff will continue to promote My Home.</p>
Develop tenant engagement via text messaging.	This would provide us with a means to quickly gather thoughts and opinions on particular issues. It may also help as we look to engage with younger tenants.	Completed	<p>Through using the CX-Feedback system, we have greatly increased engagement through text messaging and emails.</p> <p>The system has also allowed us to send push notifications via text or email – a way for us to quickly and directly engage with tenants.</p>
Engaging with tenants on surveys – how they are issued, what we ask, what we learn and how we feedback.	With tenants' help in ensuring we maximise our use of surveys, we will be able to appropriately identify issues that need surveyed, how these are structured and how we build the responses into the work.	Completed	<p>We have now established the creation of Outcomes Reports from each survey we carry out. These help us share with tenants the responses received, as well as additional feedback. The reports also allow us to identify key areas that require further review/development.</p> <p>All the outcome reports from our surveys are publicised on the website and shared on social media.</p>
Review and, if necessary, revise and update the process for tenants' becoming Members of the Association.	This will help to create better awareness of the benefits of becoming a member and improve the level of tenant attendance at AGM's and, potentially, tenant representation on the Board.	In Progress	<p>The Chief Executive has met with the Tenant Scrutiny Group to discuss membership and how we can improve on the current number, as well as tenant representation on the Board. We have also done some promotional work on social media and will look at a wider approach to improving this area.</p>

			Further work on this will likely occur in the future.
Introduce informal drop-in engagement sessions at the office and local community centres	Inviting tenants to visit us in the office helps to strengthen an open and transparent approach to working with tenants, as well as an opportunity for information sharing. At community centres, it will give tenants from that local area the chance to meet staff and hear about future project work and initiatives relevant to them.	In Progress	<p>We are re-evaluating our previous approach to these drop-in sessions.</p> <p>We have also held Meet, Heat and Eat events across all our areas, which were well attended by tenants. Although these were primarily to provide energy efficient products, they were also an excellent platform to engage with tenants in general.</p> <p>We will review our Brew at Ochil View sessions that were previously held to more focussed events. We will also look at attending community cafes in the areas that we have stock and also one-off events.</p>
Develop and promote an engagement training programme for tenants wishing to be more actively involved in Ochil View's governance.	This programme will give tenants the confidence to engage at any level within the Association. It will be particularly useful for tenants who are perhaps a little apprehensive about getting involved due to lack of experience in this environment.	Not Started	This is a long term goal however, with the now established Tenant Scrutiny Group the Association can look at training requirements for the group and then roll this out to a wider group.
Liaise with tenants on our current rent setting process and implement any agreed changes.	Rent setting is a critical process and one where we need to demonstrate consultation with tenants. When liaising with tenants, we will be able to shape how this process is carried out and its	Not Started	We will look to build this in in the longer-term. This will be a significant task and therefore needs to be planned accordingly.

	outcomes relayed back to tenants.		
Develop a method for engaging with tenants on our complaints process and how we learn from the issues raised.	By working with tenants on how the complaints process is delivered and its objectives met, we can identify any areas for improving the service.	Not Started	We can utilise our Tenant Scrutiny Group or a one-off tenant focus group to carry out this task. This should be completed within the next three years.
Create a mechanism that provides tenants with the opportunity to scrutinise Ochil View's performance.	In developing this, we will be empowering tenants to review our service delivery and identify any areas of improvement. It should also help to strengthen the working relationship between tenants and their landlord, as well as reflect positively for the organisation.	Completed	The Tenant Scrutiny Group is now firmly embedded within the Association. The group have completed two reviews, on Repairs and on Anti-Social Behaviour, and we have shared their success with the wider tenant population. Work continues to promote the group and strengthen tenant membership.
Develop range of digital engagement methods, including virtual meetings.	With an increasing reliance on digital technology for engagement, developing these methods will be an attractive opportunity for tenants to get involved without the potential obstacles of physically attending meetings or information sessions.	In Progress	The recent Tenant Engagement Survey has highlighted that a significant percentage of our tenants are happy engaging digitally, so we will look to continue developing methods around this going forward. We already offer tenants to join meetings remotely, but greater work needs to be done around different methods of digital engagement. This will be progressed over the next three years.

<p>Create and support an engagement mechanism for evaluating day-to-day repairs and longer-term replacement and upgrade programmes.</p>	<p>Having this in place will give tenants a better understanding of how the Property Team work and deliver on long-term projects. In turn, it will aid the team in how they can best shape future service delivery in this area.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>The Tenant Scrutiny Group have carried out a detailed scrutiny exercise on the life of a repair and put forward several recommendations to the Board.</p> <p>Tenants who have had repair work carried out can also complete a survey to share their feedback on the service.</p>
<p>Develop a range of regular competitions for tenants to participate in.</p>	<p>By having this range of competitions, we can engage with tenants on a broad scale, through the likes of a survey, to targeting more specific groups, such as children, keen gardeners etc.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Competitions continue to be an important source of engagement, and we have been able to deliver a substantial number of these over the past 12 months. A lot of our focus with competitions has been around energy-saving products. This will continue.</p>

Objective Two: To develop engagement opportunities and partnership working within a community setting.

Task	Objective	Stage of Progress	Progress
Promote, encourage, and support greater tenant involvement in estate walkabouts.	Increasing tenant involvement in this process will give them a better understanding of the challenges faced in maintaining properties and their surrounding area. In addition, it will hopefully give tenants an increased pride in looking after their area.	Not Started	<p>With the staff restructuring now complete, we can begin to encourage and support greater tenant involvement in the estate walkabouts.</p> <p>We will aim to promote this over the coming 3 years.</p>
Increase awareness of community initiatives around matters such as social activities and events.	This will help tenants create a stronger bond with the community around them and, in turn, may give them the confidence to organise and facilitate events themselves.	Completed	We are encouraging tenants to share local events that we can then promote on social media or in our Newsletters and we re-post/tweet relevant local events when they appear on our social media feed. Staff also play a role with this, identifying local information for the 'Lochill' editions of the newsletter.
Build a partnership of information sharing with local and national community groups and services around health and wellbeing.	Tenants face a range of challenges – health issues, poverty, domestic abuse to name a few. By opening up to these local and national bodies, we can engage with tenants and provide suitable guidance.	In Progress	<p>We are building up a partnership with local charities/projects to explore and promote available services and support. We also do several social media posts each week, highlighting national bodies who can assist.</p> <p>We have also helped to re-establish the Forth Valley Network, a group that represent various housing associations/councils in the area. These will be beneficial in helping share and promote good practice.</p>

<p>Utilise, support, and develop local initiatives to create a range of engagement opportunities for younger tenants in their area.</p>	<p>Engaging with younger tenants is often a challenge. Offering a suitable environment, such as social clubs or activities, should allow increased engagement opportunities.</p>	<p>In Progress</p>	<p>We have attended a couple of school events, which has helped share awareness of the work Ochil View do.</p> <p>We have also been part of the Career Ready programme, offering internship placements for a school student each year.</p> <p>In 2024, we held our first summer event in partnership with Clacks Council, Kingdom Housing and Paragon Housing. This was an opportunity to engage with younger people in the Clacks area.</p>
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Objective Three: To foster a positive engagement ethos within Ochil View Housing Association

Task	Objective	Stage of Progress	
<p>Hold monthly Engagement & Communication Meetings within the office.</p>	<p>These meetings will be held with a rotation of all staff. This allows everyone to gain an understanding of the ongoing engagement and communication work, as well as give them the opportunity to put forward their own thoughts and ideas.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>We have adopted a new approach to sharing tenant engagement practices within the Association's office.</p> <p>The Tenant Engagement & Communications Officer is now part of the Staff Representatives Forum. Information is also provided through regular team meetings and through email updates to all staff.</p>
<p>Encouraging and supporting use of social media for engagement and communication.</p>	<p>All staff can feed into this process by highlighting key action areas that tenants need to be aware of, as well as upcoming news and information and useful feedback received from tenants.</p>	<p>In Progress</p>	<p>We have dedicated pages on Facebook. Our social media presence has increased significantly in the past 12 months, and we are now able to produce a wider variety of content and in different styles. All staff are encouraged to either suggest items or post their own.</p> <p>We would now like to explore other social media engagement through channels such as Instagram or Tik Tok. This will progress over the next year.</p>
<p>Provide a training service for staff around engagement and communication.</p>	<p>By making this available to staff, they can further increase their knowledge and understanding of why we engage and how best to utilise this.</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>Staff in general are regularly informed of what engagement work is taking place and how this is helping shape our services. Staff are asked to get involved and working groups have been established with support given to carry out tasks.</p> <p>The Tenant Engagement Officer has attended networking meetings, conferences and training events to enhance their knowledge. This will continue as part</p>

			of the Associations commitment to training and development.
Liaise with national tenant advisory support bodies on techniques to encourage and support tenant engagement across the organisation.	Working with the likes of TPAS allows us access to what engagement initiatives are taking place elsewhere and of any Governmental changes or reviews that could impact on tenant engagement. They also provide independent support on engagement to tenants.	Completed	<p>TPAS came along to meet with tenants prior to the Scrutiny Group being formally established. This helped give tenants a clearer understanding of the roles and responsibilities when it comes to tenant scrutiny.</p> <p>The Tenant Engagement & Communication Officer attends regular TPAS events to broaden their knowledge around tenant engagement opportunities.</p> <p>The Association will also attend wider online and in person engagement meetings/events, such as the SFHA Communications Group.</p>
Support and maintain the use of a Tenant Engagement calendar & inbox through Outlook.	Having a specific calendar for tenant engagement means we can easily identify ongoing work and projects. The inbox will be useful for separating the engagement information from other work and having a separate email address reflects well on how important this is within the organisation.	Completed	This has been set up and now used regularly for various tenant engagement activities.

Objective Four: To strengthen and develop communication methods within the organisation.

Task	Objective	Stage of Progress	
Enhance the tenant role in production and content of the Ochil View Newsletters.	The newsletters are an excellent source of communication, and it will reflect well on the organisation to have greater tenant input. This will also be of benefit to the tenants themselves as it will likely serve as encouragement to be more actively involved.	In Progress	<p>The Tenant Engagement and Communication Officer has lead responsibility to produce the Newsletters and there is a rotation of staff on a working group from each Department to help in the production. This helps bring fresh insight and ideas to each edition.</p> <p>Consultation will be held with staff and tenants in 2025 on how the newsletters are produced, their content, cost etc. Any identifiable measures for changing the current approach may be implemented thereafter.</p> <p>The newsletters will also be reviewed by our Tenant Scrutiny Group and/or Register of Interested Tenants.</p>
Developing use of social media for communication, including tenant input into what is shared.	By utilising tools such as Facebook and other social media channels, we can quickly share information across a wide spectrum. Getting tenants involved with this will mean more tenant-focused content and help to encourage tenants to develop their IT skills.	In Progress	<p>As previously mentioned, we have significantly increased our social media presence. We are encouraging tenants, via competitions, to share and like our posts and we regularly receive messages following recent posts.</p> <p>We have well over 3,000 Facebook followers.</p> <p>During the coming year we will explore other social media channels to engage with a wider audience such as Instagram or Tik Tok.</p>
Explore potential for an Ochil View YouTube channel.	Having our own YouTube channel means we can share information in a modern, attractive way. It	Not Started	This is something that we would like to explore in the longer term. We have utilised CANVA over the years and we have used this to produce some short information videos.

	can also be of benefit to visualise how Ochil View Housing works as a landlord and the services it provides.		
Create a format for tenants and staff to work in partnership for reviewing Ochil View's communication channels.	It would be useful to get tenant input into the documents we send out, such as letters, reports, updates etc. This way, we can ensure the information is being presented in a clear, precise, and readable manner.	Not Started	This is a long-term goal for the future.
Produce monthly updates on tenant engagement to all tenants signed up to 'My Home'	In doing this, we will be able to regularly communicate with tenants on what engagement work is taking place, what is coming up soon and their opportunity to feedback or get involved.	In Progress	We have set up regular communication with those on My Home and will look to develop this further going forward.
Produce an annual report to all tenants and staff on tenant engagement and communication over the past year.	This will help to give an overview of what has occurred over the past 12 months and what we hope to achieve in the year ahead. Tenant input into how this is designed, and its contents is essential.	Completed	These are now part of the tenant engagement schedule, and we have now produced 3 Annual Reports which, were presented to Customer Services Committee and publicised on our website and social media channels.
Promote good engagement and communication practices within the Association.	It is important that we share our successes, particularly when it involves satisfactory outcomes for tenants.	Completed	This is something we are now doing regularly via our social media channels and website.

	Communicating this through various media strands will reflect positively on Ochil View.		The Tenant Engagement and Communication Officer also sends update emails on engagement activity to all staff and provides an update at team/staff meetings.
Explore potential for possible future Webinars.	These could be a useful tool to share information and advice with tenants. There is a plethora of topics that could be discussed, with the opportunity for tenants to have questions answered and gain some knowledge.	Not Started	We will keep this as long-term goal for now.
Create, produce, and manage information postcards.	This may be particularly useful for new tenants. Each postcard could relate to a specific topic – i.e., ways to get involved, repairs, health support information, benefits advice etc.	In Progress	We have produced a few short postcard information cards for specific events i.e. Scottish Housing Day or our Meet, Heat and Eat events. We would like to progress this into providing more general information.

Last Updated: November 2024