

Service User Involvement & Empowerment Policy

1. Our Approach

Providence Row Housing Association is committed to empowering our service users and tenants and supporting their independence. Our empowerment approach is enshrined in all working practices. This is to ensure that every individual service user from the onset of access to PRHA is not a passive recipient of support rather is enabled to learn and gain skills to influence both individual support outcomes and the running and delivery of services.

We believe that by ensuring all tenants are well informed so they can communicate their needs and views to make informed choices is key to empowerment. We commit to consult with service users about the services we provide and offer a menu of choices to be involved in the running of both individual services and the management of the organisation.

PRHA believes that a robust policy, procedure and practice framework is the cornerstone for achieving meaningful service user involvement & Empowerment.

PRHA's framework has been developed around 3 key methods of participation.

PRHA's Service User Involvement & Empowerment Framework

Service User Involvement and Empowerment Policy, Procedure **CS61**

Consulting and Involving Service Users Policy, Procedure **CS62**

Informing Services Users Policy, Procedure **CS63**

As an organisation we see service user involvement and empowerment as a fundamental right of all services users. We are committed to providing choice and ownership to all service users in regards to methods of empowerment and involvement and so thus our menu and choices of involvement will be regularly reviewed to ensure relevance to our service users.

PRHA sees commitment to User Participation from the board to front line staff member as key in delivering this User Involvement & Empowerment Framework.

This commitment is underpinned by PRHA's Strategic Plan and core values. PRHA will always recognize it is in a position of 'Power' by virtue of being the landlord and/or support provider to its service users and will keep this issue in mind through all of its activities in order to facilitate full user empowerment.

2. Key Principals

PRHA will refer to the ladder of service user employment in all support and consultation work. This will ensure we are at all times aware of the level of power sharing, decision and actions service users are able to influence.

Ladder of Service User Involvement & Empowerment

Full Control	Service users control decision making at the highest level.
Sharing Power	Service users share decisions and responsibility, influencing and determining outcomes.
Participation	Service users can make suggestions and influence outcomes.
Consultation	Service users are asked what they think but have limited influence.
Information	Service users are told what is happening but have no influence.
No Control	Service users are passive consumers.

3. Policy Aim

Through the introduction of this policy we will further imbed our commitment to empowering all our service users to become involved both in the running and delivery of services within the organisation and externally within the wider community.

PRHA believes that this process of empowerment is central to the ethos of support within the organisation. From the onset of access service users are encouraged to 'do things for themselves' rather than staff taking the lead.

PRHA believes that by coming from this point that meaningful involvement can take place. Individual and groups of service users are then provided with clear information on opportunities to become involved both in the delivery of services but also within the wider community.

As an organisation we have a fundamental focus to provide service users with the tools to meet their individual aspirations. This framework is called our 'Live Your Dream' programme and has the focus of empowering every single service users to achieve their dreams and aspirations.

PRHA's Mission statement is that PRHA is a 'place where service users and staff work together to improve lives'. PRHA will continue through the Involvement and Empowerment Framework to be committed to providing employment and volunteering opportunities to service users.

4. Vision & Action

The Involvement and Empowerment framework is the cornerstone of PRHA's commitment to ensuring all service users, residents and tenants have the opportunity to become involved within PRHA and the wider community. Through the delivery of this policy we will ensure that a wide range of opportunities are available to enable service users to maximise their independence by becoming involved in a wide range of activities or the running of the association or community activities.

For example we will: -

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- Deliver our Momentum Programme: PRHA's employment, traineeship and volunteering programme.
- Involve service users in staff recruitment: full training will be provided to all service users in order to enable full involvement.
- Facilitate and develop our advisory group structures: the advisory groups feed either directly into PRHA's board or the operations scrutiny group. Through the advisory groups service users are involved in strategic planning, performance review and audit.
- Ring fenced Board places: we will offer a training package to all service user board members.
- Support Planning, Momentum & Live Your Dreams: through both support planning and our dreams package all service users will be encouraged to address their aspirations for employment, social and leisure activities both within the organisation and within the wider community.

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