

Service User Participation Strategy

1. Introduction

Providence Row Housing Association is committed to increasing participation and life choices through all its work for people who use the services and by people in local communities, as well as its accountability to both these groups. PRHA sees commitment to Service User Participation from the board to the front line staff member as key in delivering this Service User Participation Strategy.

This commitment is underpinned by PRHA's Business 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 Service User Participation.

1.1 Aim

The principal aim of the Service User Participation Strategy is to build on the achievements of the previous Strategy in order to deliver high quality responsive services, to provide our Service Users with more choice and to have more say over their homes and services.

The benefits arising from involving Service Users include:

- Improved service delivery and value for money
- Increased Service User satisfaction and job satisfaction for staff
- Improved communication between staff and Service Users
- Informed and knowledgeable Service Users who have the skills and confidence to influence decisions about service delivery, design, future policy and strategy development.

1.2 Vision

PRHA believes that it cannot operate without working in full partnership with its Service Users and sees this partnership across the Association - from Board membership & tenant advisory panels to Service Users working alongside staff to local participation groups.

Service User Participation will be integral throughout all services. The outcome will be an empowered association who strives to continually improve services by listening, working with and being guided by its Service Users. With the end result of Service User led service development being standard throughout all the Association's activities.

1.3 Focus

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The Service User Participation Strategy will be in line with the Regulator's requirements and good practice published by the National Housing Federation and by relevant commissioning bodies.

The focus is on choice, high quality service delivery and involvement for all Service Users. To achieve this focus PRHA recognises the need for a range of models of involvement for its Service Users depending on the level of activity that they wish to commit to. However, PRHA believes that choice must be given and that involvement is made real.

In delivering this strategy PRHA focused on the work of the Tenant Involvement Commission's WHAT TENANTS WANT published in 2010 in order to: -

FOCUS	
1.	Get the basics right and go the extra mile.
2.	Give choice to Service Users.
3.	Make involvement personal.
4.	Be accountable.

To achieve and facilitate this focus PRHA has based its strategy on the Tenant Involvement Commission's "Customer First Plan": -

CUSTOMER FIRST PLAN (Summary)	
1	All Service Users are treated with respect as individuals and receive high quality services, which reflect value for money;
2	PRHA will know its individual Service Users and tailors its services to match their differing needs and aspirations;
3	Service Users will have individual choice over the look of their home and the way in which services are delivered to them;
4	The relationship between PRHA and Service User is built on mutual knowledge of rights and responsibilities, the level of service to expect and what to do in case of complaint;
5	Service Users will receive regular information as to how well PRHA is doing relative to others and how well it is delivering services to different groups of Service Users;
6	All Service Users will have meaningful and varied opportunities to be actively involved, if they want to be, in shaping services;
7	PRHA will put Service Users at the heart of what it does by setting corporate objectives and business plans that incorporate their concerns and priorities & by publishing performance & other information that enables them to make informed choices;
8	PRHA will involve Service Users in its governance by having systems in place to recruit & support Service users into Board membership & having a panel of Service Users that feed into and impacts on strategic decisions with formal mechanisms to feed into the decision-making of the Board and the Senior Management Team.
9	PRHA will be open to reviewing its governing body over time to

	ensure appropriate accountability.
10	PRHA learns from its Service Users, alongside other stakeholders, by involving them in a systematic way in performance management.

FOCUS

1. Get the basics right and go the extra mile

Through the Service User Participation Strategy, PRHA aims to ensure the services delivered to Service Users are of a high standard across all functions. Service Users are clear how they can be involved, continuous review of service delivery takes place, with PRHA taking feedback and information received into account to improve services.

Standards

- ✓ Work with Service Users to meet the aims and objectives for involving them in improving the Association's performance.
- ✓ Work in partnership with Service Users and tenants to review and improve performance through the local offers framework. Facilitating co-regulation across the organisation.
- ✓ Reviewing 'Momentum' – ensuring the catalogue of opportunities including employment, training and apprenticeships across all functions for Service Users are up to date.
- ✓ Service User Involvement is part of PRHA's staff appraisal system.
- ✓ PRHA to know its Service Users – who they are – what are their needs and aspirations and to use this data to ensure the information is used to shape and develop services both for the individual and groups.
- ✓ Appoint a General Needs Tenant onto the Board and offer opportunities more widely for tenants to get involved within PRHA.
- ✓ Put in place participation structures for our general needs tenants.

2. Choice

PRHA aims through this strategy to give Service Users choice. PRHA recognises that many have had little choice regarding their circumstances in the past and aims to rectify this.

Standards

- ✓ PRHA will always give and agree appointment times with Service

Users for formal meetings or services – for example maintenance appointments and keywork appointments. ✓ The Association will annually review with its Service Users what extra/different services can be provided – for example meaningful occupation workers, garden and recreation facilities. ✓ In partnership with the North River Alliance PRHA will work to involve Service Users in the design of any new building wherever possible. ✓ Involve Service Users in the review of improvements to their environment– for example garden space, cleaning and catering contract reviews. ✓ Service Users to take part in the appointment of new contractors and provide training. ✓ Peer Audit schemes – Involving Service Users in staff appraisals using customer care standards. ✓ Work with a panel of Service Users to shape PRHA's training plan.
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3. Make Involvement Personal

PRHA aims through this strategy to make participation and involvement with association meaningful to the individual.

Standards
✓ Give all new Service Users a 'menu' of how they can be involved. ✓ Each project to work with Service Users to draw up an action plan to ensure the service delivered meets the expectations of its Service Users. ✓ PRHA to ask individual and groups of Service Users how they wish to be involved. ✓ PRHA to work with Service Users to access employment and training opportunities & explore establishing social enterprises. ✓ Make available development and training opportunities to enable them to participate within the association. ✓ Support Service Users looking to fundraise for activities at their project/local community.

4. Be Accountable

PRHA exists for its Service Users and the community which it serves and through this strategy will improve the way it is accountable to all of its stakeholders.

Standards
✓ Report on performance to Service Users on an annual basis.

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- √ Provide performance information benchmarked against other relevant housing associations.
- √ Through the Service User Advisory Panel, ask Service Users about their priorities & what targets they feel PRHA should set. Also how we can improve the way we report on our performance, influence business priorities and act as a 'watchdog'.
- √ Give all new Service Users the complaints procedure and provide copies at all services.
- √ Work with Service Users and other Associations to explore additional tenant auditing options.
- √ Give all Service Users clear information on their rights and responsibilities both under their tenancy/licence and also under Commissioning standard.
- √ Give Service Users a range of options to feedback on service delivered and received – i.e. maintenance surveys, satisfaction surveys, suggestion boxes, senior managers surgeries.
- √ Ensure that involvement activities achieve value for money and use resources to achieve maximum impact.

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