



Tenant and Resident Engagement Policy

Policy:	Tenant and Resident Engagement Policy
Version number:	4.0
Date effective from:	May 2022
Policy owner:	Executive Director of Corporate Services
Policy author(s)	Tenant Voice Manager
Accountable Executive:	Executive Director of Corporate Services
Approved by:	Executive Director of Corporate Services
Equality assessment:	Yes
Next review of policy due:	May 2025
Policy grade:	2
For the full version history of this Policy, see the back page.	

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1.0 Introduction and scope

- 1.1 This document covers our policy on tenant and resident engagement and how we will meet our responsibilities and duties as a landlord to ensure we are effectively working with tenants and residents to improve and transform our services.
- 1.2 Gentoo are committed to involving tenants and residents to scrutinise services, performance, consult on policy and to provide assurance of compliance with regulatory Consumer Standards to the Executive Team and Group Board.
- 1.3 A range of engagement opportunities form part of our Tenant Voice agenda. In addition to the engagement opportunities, we also listen to the voices of our tenants and residents through the range of surveys completed, complaints and compliments received, satisfaction data collected and through interactions on social media.
- 1.4 The scope of this policy covers:

Gentoo Group	X
Gentoo Homes	
Gentoo Developments Ltd	
Gentoo Genie	

It applies to all of our tenants living in:

General Needs rented properties	X
Supported Housing	X
Sheltered Housing	X
Leasehold/Shared ownership	X
Rent to Buy properties	X
Market rented properties (domestic)	X
Temporary Accommodation	X
Stock owned but not managed by the Group	
Communal Areas, including those relating to Leasehold/Shared Ownership	
Commercial Property (offices, depots etc)	
Stock managed by Gentoo on behalf of a third party	
Garages and outbuildings	
Remote plant (district heating, electrical pumps, etc)	
Curtilage	

- 1.5 Definitions:
- Residents - Involving communities in the design, delivery and scrutiny of service delivery.
 - Tenant Engagement - Reaching out to communities to create engagement opportunities.

2.0 Links to Strategy and the Business Plan

2.1 Our vision and values set the direction and shape the culture of our organisation.

2.2 Gentoo's vision is:

Great Homes – Strong Communities – Inspired People

2.3 Our vision The Group's **values** are:

- Do the right thing
- Make a difference
- Keep learning
- Work together
- Give all you've got

2.4 The Group's Board and Executive Team have refreshed Gentoo's strategic aims, centered on the following **themes**:

- Place
- People
- Perform
- Partner
- Pride

2.5 These "5P's" have been developed to articulate the delivery of our vision via the following strategic aims:

- Provide homes and services that enable our tenants and communities to succeed (**Place**)
- Invest in people and communities to help realise opportunities and release potential (**People**)
- Be well governed and financially resilient, operating efficiently and responsibly, investing wisely to fulfil our social purpose (**Perform**)

2.6 The above aims will be supported by the following **enablers**:

- Work with others to influence and generate sustainable change (**Partner**)
- Harness the collective passion and energy of our people to support the city's plan (**Pride**)

2.7 Gentoo's policies support the delivery of the Group's Vision, Values and Strategy.

3.0 Regulation and legislation

3.1 Our engagement policy meets the following regulatory requirements:

- NHF – Together for Tenants Charter
- TPAS National Tenant Engagement Standards
- RSH Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard
- The Social Housing White Paper

4.0 Our Policy Statement

- 4.1 Involved and engaged tenants and communities are at the heart of Gentoo's Vision - Great Homes, Strong Communities, Inspired People. They are essential for the delivery of strong communities and to ensure we are working with tenants to improve our services.
- 4.2 In accordance with regulatory requirements, we consult with our tenants on a three yearly basis to establish if the engagement and involvement opportunities we have in place are fit for purpose.

Tenant Engagement opportunities include:

Tenant and Community Voice forums (TCV's) – These are tenant and resident led groups providing a voice within our Governance structures and opportunities to improve local neighbourhood services. Meetings are held with all five geographical areas which are North, South, Central, Washington, Houghton & Hetton as well as our city wide Young Persons Group. The TCV's assess funding applications including Aspire and Local Budget grants and the Chairs of each group also have bi-monthly meetings with the Group's Chief Executive Officer to provide business updates.

Your Gentoo Voice (YGV) – This is a digital platform for tenants and residents to get involved in key business decisions. This includes surveys, questionnaires, opinion polls and 'Rate Your Estate' inspections.

Scrutiny – Gentoo has a scrutiny panel to independently scrutinise the services Gentoo provides on a quarterly basis. Topics for Scrutiny are decided and agreed by tenants.

Tenants and Residents' Groups – Gentoo collaborate with a number of Tenants and Residents' Groups across the City. There are arrangements in place to provide support and advice to tenants and residents on the setting up and running of Groups.

Tenant Annual Report & Newsletter – We provide opportunities for tenants to help shape the publication of our annual Tenant Annual Report and Newsletter for actively involved tenants.

Task and Finish Groups – specific, focused workshops for tenants and residents to help revolve specific business problems and issues.

Rate your estate - Tenants have the opportunity to inspect and comment on their estates and neighbourhood.

Voluntary and Community Sector Alliance (VCSA) – Set up to build on the local voluntary and community sector. The alliance supports the City to successfully deliver the ambitions of the Sunderland City plan, utilising the skills and support of the voluntary sector in the City.

Governance – There are opportunities within our governance structures for tenants to be involved. Gentoo Board is made up of independent members, a tenant member and council nominees. They play an active role in ensuring we meet our objectives

and plan effectively for the future.

We are committed to the principles of diversity and inclusion throughout the organisation and aim to:

- Meet the needs and choice of people from all background
- Ensure that our services are relevant, responsive, and sensitive to the needs of our existing and future tenants.
- Ensure that all sections of the community in which we work have equal access to our services.

Our Tenant and Resident Engagement Policy will ensure that tenants will be treated as individuals and with fairness and respect. An Equality Assessment has been completed regarding this Policy.

5.0 Roles and Responsibilities

- 5.1 The Regulator of Social Housing requires Registered Providers to have an Engagement policy.
- 5.2 The Tenant Voice Manager is responsible for the administration of the policy, ensuring training is carried out appropriately and regularly for those involved.
- 5.3 The Executive Director of Corporate Services is accountable for ensuring this policy has regard to all legislation, regulation, and best practice and for ensuring implementation of this policy effectively.
- 5.4 The Executive Director of Corporate Services is accountable for adequate resourcing and having effective processes in place to implement this policy.

6.0 Monitoring and review

- 6.1 The Tenant and Resident Engagement Policy will be reviewed a maximum of every 3 years, or in line with business need.
- 6.2 We will track and record tenant engagement activity and report on KPI's within the Groups Corporate Strategy.

7.0 Policy outcomes

- 7.1 Our Tenant and Resident Engagement Policy aims to achieve the following outcomes by delivering;
 - A range of ways for tenants to be involved
 - Improved service delivery
 - Sustained satisfaction regarding Gentoo listening to tenants views and acting upon them

8.0 Vulnerable Tenants

- 8.1 It is important that vulnerability is considered throughout our tenant involvement and engagement activities.

- 8.2 When communicating with vulnerable tenants, information and literature must be tailored to suit the different types of support needs. All written and verbal communications to tenants with support needs must be clear, simple to understand and accessible.
- 8.3 As with general needs tenants, tenants with support needs should be consulted to find out how they want to get involved at a local level and they should be encouraged to take part in tenant involvement and engagement activities. Practical help must be provided to people with support needs to enable them to participate, this can include things like providing transport and ensuring venues are accessible. For more information please refer to the Vulnerability Policy.

Version Control:

Version	Reason	Issuer	Date
2.0	Amended format	Alexandra Gibson	19.02.2018
2.1	Updated	Lucy Malarkey	13.12.2018
2.2	Updated	Lucy Malarkey	03.01.2019
3.0	Approved by Michelle Meldrum and Louise Bassett	Sarah Treadwell	01.02.2019
4.0	Updated by Approved by	Emma Peat Louise Bassett	31.05.2022 31.05.2022

Updates made to policy:

- Changed policy name from 'Community Involvement and Engagement Policy' to Tenant and Resident Engagement Policy
- Added to Introduction and Scope – 1.2 Gentoo are committed to involving tenants and residents to scrutinise services, performance, consult on policy and to provide assurance of compliance with regulatory Consumer Standards to the executive Team and Group Board.
- Added Links to Strategy and Business Plan and 5P's
- Made changes to 3.0 adding further regulation and legislation.
- Added and updated Tenant Engagement opportunities at Gentoo which include; Tenant & Community Voice Forums (TCV's), Your Gentoo Voice, Task & Finish Groups, Rate you estate, Voluntary and Community Sector Alliance.
- Updated Role & Responsibilities changing job titles