Recruitment information pack

# Introduction

This information pack is for tenants, or private tenants of leaseholders who are interested in applying to be part of the Tower Hamlets Council’s Tenants’ Voice group.

This pack provides information about:

1. About the Tenants’ Voice
2. Engagement Core Values
3. Social Media, Networking & Engagement Values
4. Terms of Reference
5. Recruitment process
6. About the Tenants’ Voice

Tower Hamlets Tenants’ Voice was established in May 2024. Made up of volunteers from all walks of life, the forum serves as an advisory body to the Council’s housing management service and helps to shape what we do and how we work. Membership of the group is open to 11 residents who serve three-year terms and meet bi-monthly. The group is made up of a maximum of 8 tenants, 3 leaseholds and 1 private tenant of a leaseholder.

The Tenants’ Voice is also responsible for holding the Council to account for its performance and the quality of services it provides. They also make recommendations to our Housing Scrutiny Committee on how we can improve our services. The forum had its first meeting in May 2023 and has already produced an ambitious forward plan for the year ahead.

This is a big challenge, so expect to commit on average the equivalent of one day per month to this important and exciting role. Occasionally, you may be asked to attend additional meetings when the forum is carrying out a scrutiny review.

Our forum members are not paid, but we’ll meet appropriate travel and childcare expenses. You’ll also get to meet new people, learn valuable new skills and be a vital part of something big – building a better, brighter Tower Hamlets for everyone.

1. Tower Hamlets Engagement Core Values

This section outlines the role and behaviour expected of members of all engagement and scrutiny Panels operated by Tower Hamlets Council. It also sets out the spirit of partnership in which residents and THH members of staff should conduct their business.

* LBTH is committed to promoting respect, equality and diversity. All participants, including observers, are required to act in a courteous manner and show each other respect. Any form of behaviour which goes against the ethos of respect and tolerance will not be accepted.
* Participants must not disclose any confidential information that they may be provided access to during the course of their involvement.
* Members must not use meetings to report repairs, neighbour disputes or any other matters relating to their own personal tenancy or home ownership (unless relevant to the context of a discussion).
* Participants may not represent a political party through their involvement in a LBTH forum.

1. LBTH Social Media, Networking & Engagement Values

This document outlines the role and behaviour expected of members of all engagement and scrutiny panels operated by London Borough of Tower Hamlets. It also sets out the spirit of partnership in which residents and staff should conduct their business and when using social media.

* LBTH is committed to promoting respect, equality and diversity. All participants, including observers, are required to act in a courteous manner and show each other respect. Any form of behaviour which goes against the ethos of respect and tolerance will not be accepted.
* Participants must not disclose any confidential information that they may be provided access to during the course of their involvement.
* Members must not use meetings to report repairs, neighbour disputes or any other matters relating to their own personal tenancy or home ownership (unless relevant to the context of a discussion).
* Participants may not represent a political party through their involvement in a LBTH forum.
* Participants may wish to communicate with each other via email on matter related to engagement facilitated by LBTH. This requires individuals to consent to this activity. Participants may not send unsolicited emails or share email addresses with a third party without prior consent. Abuse of this facility could result in a suspension from future involvement opportunities.
* LBTH expects participants using social media – whether accessed during meetings or personal time – to ensure that they do not conduct themselves in a way that is detrimental to other resident members as well as LBTH and to take care not to allow their interaction on social media to damage working relationships amongst members of staff, other residents, partners and stakeholders of LBTH.
* Posts on social media should not include anything that could be considered discriminatory against, or bullying or harassment of, any individual, for example by: making offensive or derogatory comments relating to sex, gender reassignment, race (including nationality), disability, sexual orientation, religion or belief or age.
* Posts on social media should not include photos of LBTH staff or residents unless consent has been obtained.

1. Terms of Reference

Tenants’ Voice 2025

**1.0 Objective**

***Tenants’ Voice*** is a resident-led group set up to ensure that tenants, leaseholders and sub – letters of the council have their needs, concerns and aspirations listened to, heard and acted upon by LBTH in a manner which is beneficial to all stakeholders concerned.

1. **Remit and powers**

2.1 The role of *Tenants’ Voice* is three-fold:

* Consultative:

To be consulted on proposals affecting the provision of housing services to LBTH tenants and residents including strategies, policies, service design and works programmes.

* Advisory/challenge:

Using performance and complaints data, audit visits to operational services and comparative insights on best practices highlighted by TPAS and resident scrutiny teams across the UK to oversee the operational performance of LBTH housing services for tenants, leaseholders and sub-letters and make recommendations for service improvements.

* Scrutiny:

To undertake scrutiny reviews of identified areas of concern as a panel or task and finish group bringing together residents with ‘lived experiences’ and officers or external bodies and individuals with expertise in the field to review the Council’s housing management

2.2 Building safety will be a key area of focus for the group.

2.3 Residents of the *Tenants’ Voice* act as an advisory body and do not have powers on the operational running of the housing service.

2.4 Budgetary decisions and staffing considerations will NOT be within the *Tenants’ Voice* remit though recommendations can be forwarded with respect to residents’ perceived priorities.

2.5 *Tenants’ Voice* will work closely with other resident groups in Tower Hamlets whilehelping to identify means of engaging with some of the borough’s most vulnerable residents who’s voices are often overlooked..

2.6 The *Tenants’ Voice* group has the power to commission/request the following:

* Request service managers to report and attend meetings
* Invite LBTH Directors as well as other external experts to meetings
* Request for more data from service areas
* Commission focus groups with key resident groupsand with residents marginalised because of a lack of mobility, confidence, English language and digital skills;
* Request visits to relevant high performing organisations
* Request relevant expert advice
* Request further training building skills for improved performance as a housing scrutiny panel
* Commission ‘mystery shopping’ of services
* Commission satisfaction surveys
* Members can request a 15min slot, for a private discussion without the presence of LBTH staff, at the start or end of the meeting

2.7 *Tenants’ Voice* will select, on an annual basis, the performance indicators to be presented at meetings.

**3.0 Membership, recruitment, servicing**

3.1 The group will have a maximum of 12 members and will comprise of:

* Eight tenants
* Three leaseholders from amongst residents in Tower Hamlets;
* One tenant of a leaseholder

Initially and in addition an interim independent Chair for a maximum of 6 months – see para 8.1

3.2 The following will not be eligible to be a member of the group:

* Members of any other formal body or committee within the LBTH governance structure
* Members of any formal body within the LBTH tenant and leaseholder engagement structure
* Elected Members
* Anyone holding a formal role [Chair; Vice Chair. Secretary; Treasurer] within a Tower Hamlets Tenants’ and Residents’ Association

3.3 Any tenant or resident who is the subject of a serious complaint or has any previous or current history of anti-social behaviour, will not be eligible.

3.4 Residents may attend *Tenants’ Voice* meetings as observers or co-opted members.

3.5 All decisions made by *Tenants’ Voice* will be based on the overall majority vote. Observers are excluded from this.

3.6 Expressions of interest to participate in the group will be sought. Interested residents will be asked to complete a short form with their details, setting out why they want to get involved and what relevant skills and experience they can offer. As possible, consideration will also be given to ensuring a broad representation of residents from a range of protected characteristics, ages and ethnicities as well as geographic spread across the borough.

Informal interviews will be carried out by a panel made up of one member of the Council’s Regulatory Assurance Team, two existing group members and a member of the current administration nominated by the Mayor.

3.7 Meetings will generally be hybrid i.e. facilitating both in-person and on-line participation.

3.8 Agendas and papers will be circulated at least 5 working days prior to meetings. Minutes of the meeting will be circulated within 10 working days. All papers will be published on-line.

**4.0** **Links to LBTH governance**

4.1` The Mayor or Lead Member for Housing will attend a minimum of two Tenants’ Voice meetings per year.

4.2 Recommendations from *Tenants’ Voice* will be considered by the Lead Member for Housing as part of one-to-one meetings with the Corporate Director of Housing Regeneration.

4.3 The Corporate Director of Housing Regeneration will feed back to the Housing Management (Cabinet) Sub – Committee and Housing Scrutiny Committee on recommendations set out by the *Tenants’ Voice* and provide updates to Tenants’ Voice members.

4.4 A written update on the work of the *Tenants’ Voice*, prepared by the Regulatory Assurance Team, will be presented to the Housing Management Sub Committee at every committee. A report will also be provided to Housing Scrutiny Sub Committee on at least an annual basis

**5.0 Conduct of Tenants’ Voice members**

5.1 Members should treat each other, officers and others with respect in line with the values of the council and the aims of the *Tenants’ Voice* group. They should promote equality, openness and transparency. All members of the group will adhere to a Code of Conduct that covers social media, networking and engagement values. The Council has the power to remove any members who are in breach of these values (values are outlined on the Council’s website and Tenants’ Voice induction pack).

5.2 Members should work to inform themselves of the needs of a diversity of tenants, leaseholders and sub-tenants so as to better understand and reflect the views of wider residents and, in particular, of those who’s voices are traditionally marginalised from wider public or in-house debate.

5.3 Members must not bring LBTH into disrepute when undertaking their duties and must maintain confidentiality. This includes not sharing or inappropriately using contact details of other members of the group.

**6.0** **Length of Service**

6.1 Members will serve for a maximum of 3 years.

6.2 Members may seek an additional term which will will be considered in line with other applications for membership according to lived experiences and professional expertise, geographic representation, particularly of housing estates not benefiting from TRA representation, and representation of diversity within the profiles of Tenants’ Voice members.

**7.0 Frequency of meetings**

7.1 The group will generally meet every two months. The maximum number of meetings will be six per year, excluding sub-committee meetings and independent panel reviews.

7.2 Members who fail to attend two or more consecutive meetings without appropriate notification will be considered to have resigned from their role on the *Tenants’ Voice.*

7.3 The quorum for the *Tenants’ Voice* is a minimum of 4 members.

7.4 Scrutiny reviews will be scheduled as additional sessions to the scheduled *Tenants’ Voice* meetings.

**8.0 Chair of the *Tenants’ Voice***

8.1 The group will have a dedicated chair for a maximum period of three years. thereafter elections to the post from the membership of the group will be held.

8.2 The group will elect two vice chairs for a maximum period of three years. The vice chairs will be responsible for chairing meetings in the absence of the chair.

**9.0 Annual Work Plan**

9.1 The group will have an annual work plan. The work plan will be agreed in quarter four or at an annual away day.

**10.0 Annual Review**

10.1 An annual review of the effectiveness of the group and the Terms of Reference will be carried out by the Regulatory Assurance Team in conjunction with the Chair who will be supported by a sub- group as agreed by Tenants’ Voice panel members.

**11.0 Training and Development**

11.1 Members may request access to training to support them in their roles. This will be available subject to cost and availability of the training requested.

**12.0 Additional support**

12.1 Support may be provided for childcare needs, to residents with mobility issues and for other reasonable adjustments. Group members should speak to the Regulatory Assurance Team should they require assistance.