

# Mace Housing Co-operative Ltd

## Resident Involvement & Empowerment Strategy

### Mission

Mace Housing Co-operative mission is “to provide an efficient housing service which gives value for money and meets the needs, priorities and aspirations of all members”

### Vision

Mace Housing vision is “to bring about a sustained improvement in the houses we manage and quality of life for our members”.

### Values

Mace Housing core values support, guide and inform our work at all levels within the organisation. They are:

- We value and support members involvement
- We recognise and value the commitment and hard work by the staff
- We will always strive to provide the best possible service
- We welcome and support diversity and we are committed to equality
- We want to improve and succeed in all aspects of our work

### The Resident Involvement Strategy and the Corporate Plan

Mace Housing Corporate Plan identifies Key Strategic Objectives and was developed in consultation with members. The key strategic objectives are:

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#### ***“A Great Place to Live”***

- ❖ Consulting and working with residents on how to improve the provision of services
- ❖ Communicating with residents in ways that they want us to
- ❖ Improving members facilities and promoting their use
- ❖ Helping residents to develop their skills to play a greater role in the community.

### ***“A Prosperous Community”***

- ❖ Working with SEAP and other local employment agencies
- ❖ Make the most effective use of available resources

### ***“A Healthy and Supportive Community”***

- ❖ Working effectively with partners to optimise outcomes for our members

The Corporate Plan was consulted on and approved by the Management Committee to ensure that it reflected resident priorities and perspectives.

Members Involvement Strategy is supported by the Management Committee which details some of the specific actions which Mace Housing can take to maintain a strong focus on member involvement.

Progress against this Action Plan will be reported to the Management Committee so that members are actively involved in monitoring and reviewing Mace Housing performance and suggesting ways in which the provision of members involvement activities could be improved.

The Action Plan, and its review by members, also seeks to ensure that members are kept aware of the costs to Mace Housing of resident involvement activities, and are involved in the scrutiny of the effectiveness of different methods of engagement.

## **Main Principles**

- ❖ Mace Housing will encourage a high level of members involvement on its Management Committee and Sub Committee Boards.
- ❖ Mace Housing will encourage board membership which reflects the diversity and tenure of the area from which it has been drawn
- ❖ Mace Housing will encourage and support members to influence the services they receive in the way that is appropriate for them
- ❖ Mace Housing will monitor the cost and effectiveness of involvement methods and may discontinue methods if appropriate
- ❖ Mace Housing will encourage residents to set priorities for the organisation and scrutinise performance against these
- ❖ Mace Housing will publicise the impact residents have had in shaping and improving service performance

## **Aims and Objectives of this Resident Involvement Strategy**

This Strategy seeks to establish the main tenets of Mace Housing Co-operative plans to maintain and strengthen our commitment to involving members in all that we do. Members involvement has been a key factor in the Co-op activities from the outset.

The importance of members involvement within the Co-operative “Values” is indicative of the key role which members involvement activities play in the achievement of key organisational goals. Mace Housing aims to benefit from effective membership involvement structures in a number of ways, including:

- a. the delivery of services tailored to meet as closely as possible the needs of Mace members.
- b. creating a sense of ‘ownership’ amongst Co-op members, instilling a sense of civic pride, reinforcing the unity of communities and helping to reduce anti-social behaviour on Mace Housing managed properties.
- c. feedback on services and performance obtained directly from members which may not otherwise be easily accessible, or ascertained as quickly, allowing potential problems to be addressed

The importance of resident involvement is underlined by the presence of the ‘Tenant Involvement and Empowerment’ standard within the regulatory framework updated by the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) in 2012.

Mace Housing has a governance structure which promotes membership involvement at all levels of the organisation, ranging from formal engagement with Subcommittee and to full membership of the Management Committee. This governance structure and members involvement framework has been developed in conjunction with members over a long period of time.

Membership involvement plays a key role in influencing the core aims of Mace Housing. Through participation in membership involvement activities, both formally within the governance structure and informally via the wide range of opportunities offered, feedback and opinions by members play an important role in setting the agenda for Mace Housing, identifying priorities and driving change. It is through this information and experiences of the users of services that Mace Housing is enabled to make changes to the delivery of services where the need for change has been identified.

Effective membership involvement mechanisms and structures enable issues to be addressed earlier than would otherwise be possible, with consequent savings in both time and cost for the organisation, and resulting in an improved service to members.

### **How is Mace Housing members involved?**

Mace members are involved in a wide range of functions, which can be briefly summarised as follows:

## **I. Management Committee (Board members):**

The Management Committee is made up of 15 members who are elected at the annual general meeting (AGM). The management committee is the highest authority in the Co-operative. Any member can be nominated and elected into the Management Committee and will serve for three years period after which the members can step down or decide to be re-elected again.

## **II. Subcommittees:**

The purpose of the Subcommittee is to ensure that the Management Committee is informed of the various operational and financial activities in the Co-operative, and the sub committees are operating effectively, adopts appropriate and robust procedures and processes.

The Sub committees are under delegated authority from the Management Committee. It acts in an advisory capacity in all areas of the Co-op operations. The decisions of the Subcommittee must be ratified by the Management Committee.

The Sub Committees terms of reference are to oversee and take any necessary decisions in their specific areas, making recommendations to the Management Committee as required:

### **Allocation & Policy Sub-committee;**

To ensure that our allocation process and procedures are fit for purpose and meets current legislative requirements

Ensure that all policies are reviewed regularly at least every two years and are in line with latest legislation and members are informed of new policy amendments.

### **Finance Sub-committee;**

The Sub-committee shall consider all matters of financial strategy and policy and recommend them to the Management Committee. It meets quarterly to receive reports on the Co-op's financial performance and monitor and evaluate operational risks.

To review and monitor the integrity of the Annual financial Statements, Annual Reports, Management letters and any other statements relating to financial performance.

To review the findings of the external auditor, discussing any issues of concern during the audit, accounting and audit judgements, errors identified during the audit.

To recommend the appointment, reappointment and removal of External Auditors .

To consider the financial forecasts and annual budgets, rent levels and recommend to the MC.

To consider and advise the MC on the financial implications and any significant financial risks associated with new proposals and ventures.

To evaluate and approve proposals for capital investment and financial implications of staffing appointments within the limits of authority of the Finance Committee

### **Employment Sub-committee;**

The Sub-committee shall oversee employment matters and HR processes and policies, including recruitment, salary review and condition of service and retention, training and development; making recommendations to the Management Committee for its approval.

Corporate services: ensuring that IT and other business support services operate effectively, allowing high quality delivery through the Operations Director; escalating matters to the MC as required.

### **Development Sub-committee;**

The Sub-committee shall assess the viability of new developments and report to the Management committee. It shall consider, recommend and approve proposals relating to development of homes or commercial property for sale or for rent; consider, recommend and approve proposals relating to acquisition of any entity or any Group of any interest in land with a view to future development or sale;

To recommend and approve proposals relating to acquisition or authorise entering into works contracts, professional service contracts and the marketing of sites and schemes to enable delivery of development schemes;

### **Repairs & Maintenance Sub-committee;**

The Repairs and Maintenance sub-committee will work closely with the Maintenance officer to monitor and review the Repairs and Maintenance service that all members receive.

The sub-committee shall review key performance indicators on a regular basis in regards to responsive repairs, void works, gas servicing and health & safety issues i.e. Risk Assessments and complaints and compliments (repairs related) To be involved and make suggestions on repairs and maintenance policy reviews

### **Dispute Sub-committee;**

The Dispute sub-committee shall facilitate the effective management of disputes between members by mediating wherever possible to reconcile individuals in dispute. The sub-committee shall provide a forum for discussion of differences with the aim of preventing the escalation of disputes.

Any member of the sub-committee involved in a dispute shall not take part in the committee's discussions.

### **Questionnaires & Overall Satisfaction Surveys:**

Mace members undertake a Satisfaction survey every other year to ascertain members opinions on the services provided. The results of these questionnaires are reported in newsletters and in the Annual Report for each year.

The result of the satisfaction surveys is monitored and reported to the Management Committee, and where issues are identified via this customer feedback, action is taken to

address service provision gaps. These surveys require minimal members involvement but can play a relatively significant role in influencing service provision.

## **Monitoring performance in Resident Involvement**

Mace Housing recognises that a commitment to involving and engaging residents can be weakened by a failure to effectively monitor progress and performance against these aims.

Therefore to support the continued promotion of members involvement activities as a key function in the delivery of services to residents, Mace Housing collects information against a series of Performance Indicators (PIs) which monitor the impact and effectiveness of Mace Housing members involvement activities. The PIs capture the level of members involvement; how reflective of the diversity of the membership, satisfaction with the opportunities for members involvement provided; and whether membership governance arrangements are cost-effective.

## **Service Standards**

Mace Housing developed and agreed with members a list of key service standards, covering all of the services provided as a landlord. The five standards for members involvement are:

- 1) We will try to talk to you about decisions that may affect you;
- 2) We will try to provide many ways for you to comment on and influence our services;
- 3) We will try to let you know how your comments have influenced our decisions on services;
- 4) We will try to give you the chance to get involved when, where and how you want to; and
- 5) We will try to refund any money you spend on getting involved (for example, your travel costs).

**Reviewed 17 July 2017**

