



Resident Involvement Strategy

2024 - 2027

Version Control

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Resident Involvement Strategy 2024 – 2027



Foreword from Councillor Sue Thornley – Housing Portfolio Leader

I am delighted to be able to introduce the Council's new Resident Involvement Strategy.

Resident Involvement means putting our Tenants and Leaseholders at the heart of what we do and we need our residents to play a part in this process to help the Council improve how it provides its services. We need to understand what you think about where you live and hear your ideas for the future of your home and community.

It is essential to ensure that the services we deliver are fit for purpose and meet the needs and requirements of our tenants and leaseholders effectively. We feel it is important that we offer a menu of choice for engagement that provides for a fair representation of residents across the district, to ensure that everybody's views are heard.

None of this can be achieved without effective engagement which is why the Resident Involvement Strategy is so important in defining how we, as a Council, can start to achieve our aspirations for Resident Involvement over the next three years, and deliver the services that you need and want.

1. Introduction:

We are passionate about our communities and residents, we believe that everyone should be able to play an active role in things that matter to them the most, so we are creating Cannock Chase Council's Resident Involvement Strategy 2024 – 2027 which outlines our commitment to involving and working with local communities, particularly our Tenants and Leaseholders.

Cannock Chase Council manages 5031 general needs properties (including 94 independent living (sheltered housing) properties), along with 297 leasehold properties. Being able to deliver a responsive and appropriate service, reflective of the needs of our tenants and leaseholders is essential. There are many benefits to be achieved through maintaining effective partnerships with our tenants and leaseholders, by encouraging their involvement to help shape, scrutinise and challenge Housing Services and subsequently, influence delivery. As a result of this, the services we aim to provide will endeavour to reflect local need and increase satisfaction.

2. Context

Relevant Council Strategies:

Corporate Plan 2022-26

The Corporate Plan sets out how we want to be a forward-thinking Council, making best use of our assets, living within our means, and ensuring we are accountable for our decisions. The Corporate Plan has 4 priorities as set out below:

PRIORITY 1 - ECONOMIC PROSPERITY - "To reinvigorate the economy and create a District that thrives" We aim to:

- Attract investment to develop the District's economy.
- Encourage entrepreneurship, promote apprenticeships, and support business.
- Attract modern, green, and skilled industries and create jobs.
- Rejuvenate our town centres.
- Support the development of our visitor economy.

PRIORITY 2- HEALTH & WELLBEING - "To encourage and support residents to lead healthy and independent lives" We aim to:

- Provide opportunities for residents to lead healthy and active lifestyles and recognise the importance of mental health and wellbeing.
- Embed health and wellbeing into all of our policies and everything that we do.
- Work with partners to address health inequalities across the District.
- Support residents that need our help.

PRIORITY 3 - THE COMMUNITY - "To ensure Cannock Chase is a place that residents are proud to call home" We aim to:

- Ensure our neighbourhoods are safe, clean, and tidy
- Maintain our local parks and green spaces.
- Encourage residents to live a sustainable lifestyle.
- Improve the housing offer across the District.
- Ensure our communities are well designed, accessible, and inclusive environments.
- Support and build strong connections within our local communities.

PRIORITY 4 - RESPONSIBLE COUNCIL - “To be a modern, forward thinking and responsible Council” We aim to:

- Improve our customers’ access to services.
- Enhance the use of technology and new ways of working.
- Develop our workforce to ensure they are suitably skilled.
- Be a responsible Council that lives within its means and is accountable for its actions.
- Make the best use of our assets.

This strategy contributes towards all four of the priority areas but primarily into Priority 3: The Community, by improving the housing offer across the District and supporting and building strong connections within our local communities.

Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2023-2033

The Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy sets out our plans for the improvement of housing and support needs across Cannock Chase for the next 10 years. This strategy is our first longer-term plan that includes all aspects of housing, homelessness and rough sleeping. The strategy will be reviewed after five years following completion of the statutory homelessness review.

The Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy will:

- fully reflect the wider vision of the authority and its partners.
- reflect a clear and evidenced approach.
- provide a strong focus on how partners will deliver their commitments, including the infrastructure needed to support housing growth.

The key aims of the Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy are:

- To increase the supply of Affordable Housing.
- To improve the maintenance and management of existing housing and strive to achieve a carbon neutral housing stock in the future;
- To promote the provision of suitable accommodation, information and advice to prevent and reduce homelessness and rough sleeping.

This Strategy contributes towards meeting these aims by ensuring that the homes and services we provide to tenants are meeting the specific needs of our tenants and leaseholders, by way of consulting and listening to residents and implementing the necessary actions to address those needs and wants.

3. The regulatory requirements of Resident Involvement

The Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 has empowered the Regulator of Social Housing to be stronger and provide for more active regulation of their consumer standards which came into force from 1st April 2024 and as a result aims to create a more tenant-centric attitude that is embedded in organisations when delivering their services.

Tenants are at the forefront of each of the four consumer standards set by the Regulator, but engagement and involvement with tenants is specifically covered in the Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard.

The outcomes that landlords must deliver are about being open with tenants and treating them with fairness and respect so that tenants can access services, raise complaints, influence decision making and hold their landlord to account.

The standard further states the following requirements, that Registered Providers must:

- treat tenants and prospective tenants with fairness and respect.
- take action to deliver fair and equitable outcomes for tenants and, where relevant, prospective tenants.
- take tenants' views into account in their decision-making about how landlord services are delivered and communicate how tenants' views have been considered.
- communicate with tenants and provide information so tenants can use landlord services, understand what to expect from their landlord, and hold their landlord to account.
- collect and provide information to support effective scrutiny by tenants of their landlord's performance in delivering landlord services.
- ensure complaints are addressed fairly, effectively, and promptly.

4. Our Vision and Aims

Our vision within the Housing Strategy and Service Improvement Team, and the wider Housing Services department, is to ***'Keep our residents engaged, informed and at the centre of everything we do'***.

To achieve our vision, we plan to engage with and listen to our residents to determine what they would like our service to deliver. We have met with a small number of residents already to look at what good resident involvement looks like to them and how we can incorporate this throughout 2024-2027. We have adopted some of their ideas in the development of this strategy, these include:

- Better use of technology to help with the engagement with younger people and to be able to support tenants with providing input around work.
- A more diverse and broadly representative mix of residents needs to be involved.
- Better ways of engaging with traditionally hard-to-reach groups.
- More in-person, face to face, engagement opportunities.

We have used these points to help us create our aims for resident involvement over the next 3 years. We have also reviewed all the new legislation that has come into force to ensure we are up to date and current with our direction of work.

Our Aims:

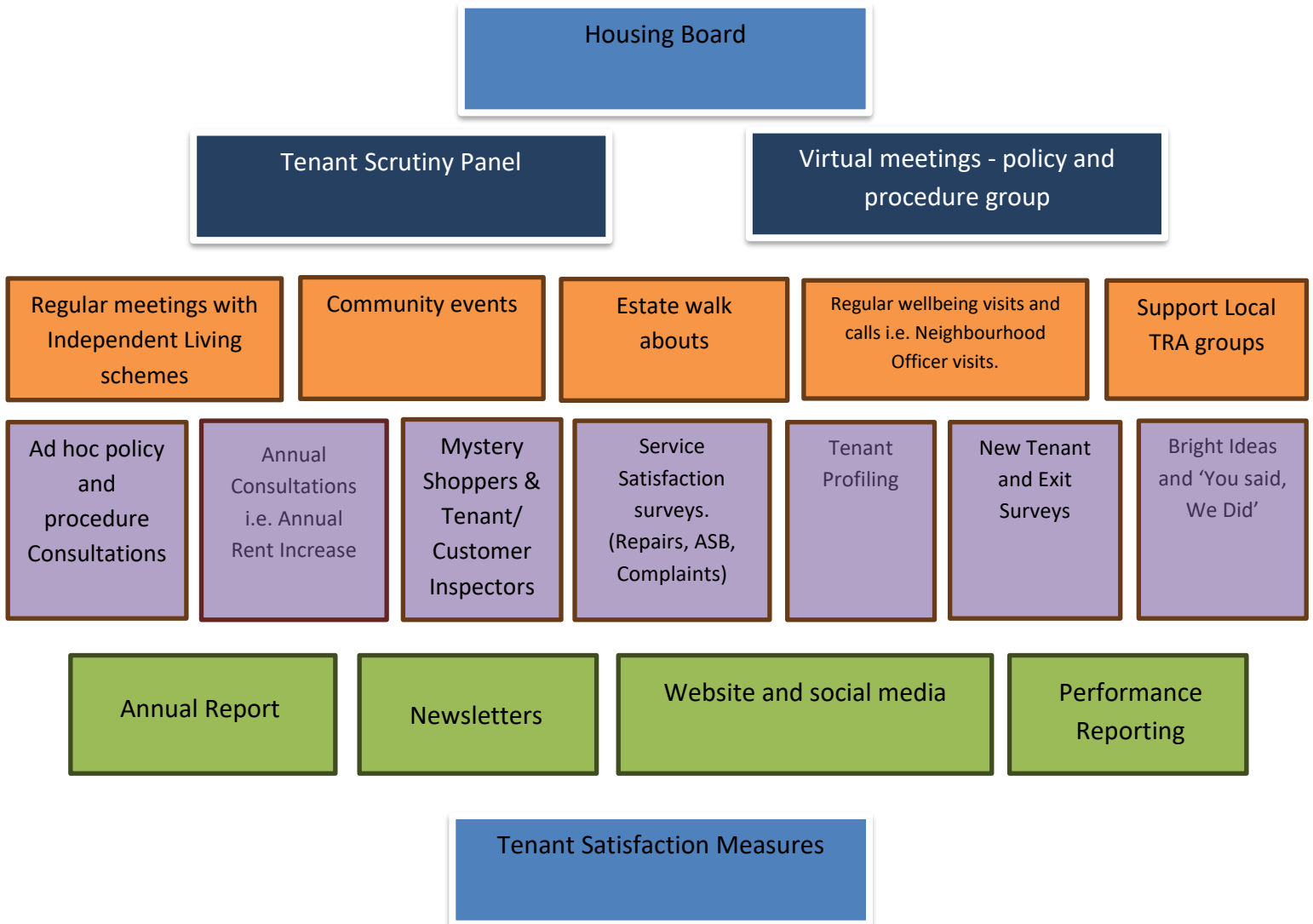


5. How will we achieve our Aims:

We want to build on our previous Resident Involvement Strategy and really make a difference. We would like to increase our engagement offer and there are several methods of involvement that we are committing to as part of this strategy. We want to show tenants we have listened and how their views have influenced decisions.

Our proposed engagement framework and menu of activities is provided below:

Resident Involvement



We will be offering the opportunity for tenants (and other customers, including housing applicants and leaseholders) to get involved at a range of levels, from the Housing Board level at the top, down to consultations and satisfaction surveys, or even just being kept up to date with information. At the heart of it, we want to improve tenant satisfaction and believe that more engaged residents who feel valued and listened to will be happier and more satisfied.

Details of the proposed methods:

Housing Board

A new Housing Board will oversee the Housing Service, formed by Councillors, independent representatives (housing professionals), senior officers and tenants. A number of tenants will be recruited and invited to join the board. Tenants' travel expenses will be paid and incentives will be offered for their time and valuable contribution. We will look to have a range of diversity on the panel to ensure we have a good range of views to consider matters.

The Housing Board is an important link between the Council and our tenants and leaseholders. The Board will meet on a regular basis to assess budgets, works programmes and monitor the performance of the Housing Service.

Tenant Scrutiny Panel

Our Tenant Scrutiny Panel will be re-launched towards the end of 2024/25 that will provide tenant scrutiny of policies, procedures and performance. The Tenant Panel will report up to the Housing Board and will be able to provide recommendations for service improvement.

Virtual Meetings - Policy and Procedure Group

To ensure we include all our tenants we will also be setting up Virtual Meetings - predominantly to look at policies and procedures - hosting out of hours discussions and circulation of emails to enable us to consult with our tenants in full time employment and to capture a good range of views to inform and feedback to management team and the Housing Board.

Neighbourhood Engagement:

- Annual Estate Inspections

In early 2024 we will be re-launching our estate inspections through partnership working with the Community Safety Hub. Tenants and leaseholders will be invited along to be able to raise any concerns to the Neighbourhood Officers and Tenancy Sustainment Officers.

- Community events

Following a review of our community events throughout 2022 -2023 we identified that hiring a large hall in the centre of the town isn't working for tenants wanting to get involved. We gathered feedback on this and it was due to a lack of, or the costs of transport. Throughout 2024 -2027 we will be launching Estate Connection days by taking community events into estates, setting up in the community gardens and being able to have face to face contact with our tenants and reach more people by taking the events to them. We have now purchased an events pack that we will be

able to be set up in the community spaces enabling us to have more face-to-face contact with residents. A programme of events will be created and advertised to residents.

- Hybrid working

We will have officers from our Neighbourhoods, Allocations and Income Management teams working out of local libraries and other public areas so they are easy to access for members of the community to have face to face interaction, be listened to and issues raised and responded to.

- Independent Living (Sheltered) Schemes

We will complete community grant applications to be able to fund activities within our sheltered schemes. The activities will support the cost-of-living crisis and enable our residents to attend health lifestyle classes and sit-down exercises.

The funds we raise will contribute to food vouchers and paying for services to support their health and wellbeing. Once the groups have been established, they will be managed by the residents and Scheme Managers.

A Building Safety Policy is being developed to meet the requirements of the Building Safety Act, the Fire Safety Act 2021 and other legislative and regulatory changes introduced and proposed. It is anticipated that in future years the buildings that are within the scope of the Building Safety Act may change, and therefore, based on the risk of vulnerability of its residents, we have included the Independent Living Schemes within that Policy. It sets out the engagement methods, in line with this Strategy, to ensure future compliance with the Building Safety Act.

- Resident Associations

Tenants and Residents Associations are local groups organised and managed by a committee of local volunteers. Tenants' and Residents' Associations are recognised by the Council. They play an important role in building local communities, contributing to the making of policy and the delivery of services to tenants. Small grants will be available to support Resident Associations with their running costs for meetings and community events etc. We will support existing groups and look to help new groups set up, including a forum for our leaseholders.

Customer Satisfaction surveys

The Council undertakes a number of satisfaction surveys for several areas of Housing Services, including externally contracted work e.g. central heating servicing and installations; repairs, anti-social behaviour and complaints.

The satisfaction surveys help us to gauge satisfaction and determine areas where we need to improve. We will develop solutions where themes of dissatisfaction arise and hopefully implement early actions to prevent complaints being submitted.

Tenant profiling

We already carry out Tenant Surveys to establish details of our new tenants, to gather their first impressions of their new tenancy and their experience of the lettings process. We also survey tenants leaving us to establish why they have moved on and if we could have done anything to maintain their tenancy.

We need to go further and understand our current tenants much better and look at how we can improve our service to meet their needs, so we will be creating an internal working group to complete tenant profiling throughout the duration of the strategy.

Tenant profiling will also support with:

- Evaluating our existing services to ensure we meet demands as they change.
- Plan accommodation needs within our 30-year business plan.
- Manage resources effectively and provide opportunities to transform our approaches with customer service.
- Improve & prioritise decision-making.
- Be more consultative in our approaches to ensure changes are developed in partnership with our tenants & partners.
- Overcome barriers for tenants
- Communicate with hard-to-reach groups
- Target resources to specific locations and specific households
- Improve the quality of our services.
- Manage risks.
- Improve access to innovative and affordable/ social housing.
- Respond to criminal matters such as County Lines / Cuckooing

Bright Ideas

We will offer tenants and leaseholders the opportunity to win £25 for coming up with any 'Bright Ideas' that we are able to implement. This will be communicated through social media and newsletters on a regular basis.

'You Said, We Did'

We want to show that we are actively listening to residents' views, be it suggestions for improvements, comments or complaints about the service they have received, or even compliments. We want to hear from tenants and leaseholders and will be including a regular feature in our newsletter, a regularly updated web page and a summary round-up in the Annual Report to Tenants, to try to demonstrate how what they say really does help shape the design and delivery of services and decisions that affect them.

This will be taken from the wide range of activities that we will be offering, so any decisions at the Housing Board, Tenant Scrutiny or Virtual Groups will also be communicated to all tenants and leaseholders.

Website

During 2024 we will be expanding our dedicated pages for residents on the website, this will be updated with regular news items, keeping tenants informed. This will also include performance reporting information, so tenants and leaseholders can see how we are performing and hold us to account.

Social Media

Throughout this strategy period we will continue to develop our social media offer to be able to effectively communicate with our residents. We have created a new branding for our tenants so it can clearly be seen and distinguish posts relevant to them. Social Media platforms we will aim to use will be: X (formerly Twitter), Instagram and Facebook.

We will work with the Communications team to become more involved with the use of the Next-door application and other such social media platforms and applications. This will help further develop our social media engagement offer to tenants and leaseholders, as well as gaining valuable intelligence and information that can help shape our services.

The Council have developed a free application 'Cannock Can' that can be downloaded from Google Play or Apple App Store. We will encourage all tenants to download this app and be able to post regular information on events and local support groups within their area. This will also promote wellbeing and healthy living and promote local events that occur within the District.

Annual Report to Tenants

We will continue to produce the annual report to tenants and leaseholders and intend to refresh the format over the next couple of years, further to discussion with involved tenants and leaseholders. Copies are delivered to tenants and leaseholders and are also made available online.

Tenants Newsletter

We will be producing three editions of the newsletter a year to keep tenants informed on news items that affect them and provide information to support them. Each newsletter will be delivered to tenants and leaseholders and available online. We propose to include a QR code in the newsletter so that tenants can feedback to us on any information they would like to see in future editions or any other comments they wish to make.

Tenant Satisfaction Measures

Housing Services will conduct an annual Tenant Perception Survey as required by the Regulator of Social Housing for their Tenant Satisfaction Measures. Findings will be reported on the website and through the newsletter. Allowing tenants to see how we are performing and compare us to other similar housing providers will ensure transparency and drive effective tenant scrutiny.

The TSMs will ultimately underpin this strategy and help determine the success of our engagement framework.

6. Measuring the Impact and what does success look like:

As we roll out our Action Plan (included at the end of this document), we will be recording all engagements (type, number, individuals concerned) against the standards that have been set. The information recorded will recognise the area, type of engagement and achievements accomplished through effective engagement. This will be reported on a regular basis to the Housing Board.

The detailed action plan shows how we will bring this strategy to life. This will also be measured through the Service's key performance indicators (KPIs).

7. Funding and resources:

Cannock Chase Council continues to operate in a challenging financial climate and this is likely to continue throughout the duration of this Strategy. The Council is committed to delivering this Strategy and will seek to maintain its focus for the duration of 2024 – 2027. It is however, unknown what level of financial commitment will follow in subsequent years, which may affect some elements of delivery. We hope with improved resident engagement it will help us to focus our limited resources better and in a more customer focused way.

To encourage tenant involvement we will:

- Provide transport or pay travel expenses for relevant meetings.
- Offer incentives.
- Pay reasonable expenses, such as childcare fees;
- Organise meetings in accessible locations and at suitable times;
- Provide relevant mentoring, training and support if required.

We recognise that tenants should be able to get involved at a level that suits them and in issues they are interested in. We want to offer involvement opportunities that

are not only convenient to tenants but also offer an individual as well as a collective say.

8. Consultation and Equality & Diversity

During the production of this strategy, we have involved a small group of tenants virtually. We also be undertook a small in-person consultation exercise with an initial group of involved tenants, prior to rolling out a 6-week public consultation on the Council's website.

An Equality and Diversity Impact Assessment has been undertaken on the Strategy and was found to have positive or neutral impacts on housing tenants, leaseholders and other customers of the housing service.

9. Contact

To find out more about becoming involved please contact:
Service Improvement Team,
Housing Services,
Cannock Chase Council
Civic Centre,
Beecroft Road,
Cannock,
Staffs,
WS11 1BG

Telephone: 01543 462621

E-Mail: ResidentEngagement@cannockchasedc.gov.uk

Resident Involvement Strategy 2024-2027: Action Plan

Vision: Keeping our residents engaged, informed and at the centre of everything we do'.

Aims

1. Understand and support our residents to meet their needs.
2. Reduce complaints with more engagement.
3. Increase the diversity of our involved residents.
4. Improve communication with our residents.
5. Contribute to community safety and partnership working.
6. Consult with our residents and show we have listened.

<u>Action</u>	<u>Timescale</u>	<u>Resources</u>	<u>Contributes to Aim(s)</u>
Continue to produce an Annual Report to Tenants and Leaseholders.	Ongoing, annually (October/November)	Service Improvement Team	1, 4
Continue Satisfaction Surveys to gauge satisfaction and determine areas of improvement from survey responses. Monitor themes of dissatisfaction and implement early action to reduce potential complaints.	Ongoing, monthly	Service Improvement Team	1, 2, 6
Completion of tenant profiling survey.	March 2025	Tenancy Services Manager Resident Engagement Officer	1, 6

Using the results of the profiling survey, undertake area-based analysis of our residents, to inform and guide the development of services and targeted areas to support.	September 2025	Housing Services	
Offer more engagement to Independent Living (Sheltered) Accommodation and support their needs, i.e. with community funding applications.	July 2025	Resident Engagement Officer / Scheme Managers	1, 2, 3, 4
Re-launch Love Your Block campaign	July 2025	Neighbourhoods Team	2, 3, 4
Set up 'pop-up' events using Housing branded events pack, including school summer holiday sessions to target individual estate areas.	August 2024, then as and when.	Resident Engagement Officer	2, 4
Develop a plan to look at our community centres and how can they become more involved and utilised more for resident engagement.	March 2025	Resident Engagement Officer	3, 4
Promote positive outcomes of residents' involvement on the website and work with Communications Team on linking to social media.	Ongoing, regularly	Service Improvement Team Communications Team	3, 6
Set up a recruitment process to recruit new members to our involved groups (Housing Board, Scrutiny Panel, Virtual Group) through varied involvement activities and look to include online and out of hours options where needed. Process to include selection and training events as required.	November 2024	Housing Services	3, 4, 6
Host quarterly meetings for the Housing Board and Tenant Scrutiny Panel.	January 2025	Democratic Services (Board) Housing Services (Panel)	3, 4, 6
Investigate the creation of a young person's Tenant Panel (to sit alongside Scrutiny Panel)	November 2025	Resident Engagement Officer	3, 4, 6
Set up a Virtual Panel - for commenting on policies, procedures, publications etc. Run panel as and when required.	January 2026	Resident Engagement Officer	3, 4, 6

Offer and provide training to up-skill involved residents and to increase involvement.	January 2025 onwards	Service Improvement Team	3
Working alongside the Tenant Scrutiny Panel, set up mystery shopper and Tenant/Customer Inspector roles to look at key areas of service delivery.	March 2025	Resident Engagement Officer Housing Services	3, 6
Explore the use of incentives for getting younger residents involved.	Ongoing	Resident Engagement Officer Community Safety Officers	3
Encourage and identify suitable new Resident Champions. Support the Champions once in place.	March 2026	Resident Engagement Officer	3, 4
Publish the newsletter three times a year, along with contributing to the corporate Chase Matters magazine on a regular basis. Consult tenants and leaseholders (using QR code) to see what they want included in future editions.	Ongoing, 3 times a year.	Service Improvement Team	4, 6
Work with the Communications team to explore the use of other social media platforms/applications to increase presence and improve social media engagement	December 2024	Resident Engagement Officer Communications Team	4
Provide support towards the development of the 'Cannock Can' app.	March 2025	Resident Engagement Officer	4
Attend other partners' events in the community, to be a presence for Cannock Chase Housing.	Ongoing, as and when.	Resident Engagement Officer	4, 5
Hold and attend Estate Inspections.	Ongoing, monthly (April to October)	Neighbourhood Officers, Resident Engagement Officer	4, 5

<p>Improve website offer for resident engagement and regularly update i.e. inclusion of news page (linked to social media posts) and performance information.</p> <p>Create a regularly updated 'You Said, We Did' feature on the website, coverage in the newsletter and annual summary in the Annual Report to Tenants and Leaseholders.</p>	April 2026	Resident Engagement Officer Service Improvement Team	4, 6
Attend local Community Trigger Meeting and Partnership Hub.	Ongoing	Neighbourhood Officers	5
Report into the Community Safety strategic board meeting	Quarterly	Resident Engagement Officer	5
Identify and put in place community safety advocates for each estate.	March 2025	Resident Engagement Officer/ Community Safety Team/ Neighbourhood Officers	5
Carry out postal and online consultations around projects, policies and procedures that will affect our tenants.	Ongoing, as and when required.	Housing Services, Resident Engagement Officer	6
Conduct a review of the Resident Involvement Strategy, with involved residents to monitor progress and achievements.	September 2026	Resident Engagement Officer	6