

Oxford



Tenants' &  
Leaseholders'  
Panels

www.oxford.gov.uk



OXFORD  
CITY  
COUNCIL

# Getting Involved

**A Guide to** Tenant and  
Leaseholder Involvement

Building a world-class city for everyone

# Contents

## What is Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement?

Why is it important to be involved?

Who can get involved?

What amount of time do you need to give?

Page  
**1**

**What support will be offered to me?**

Page  
**2-3**

**How do I get involved?**

Page  
**3**

**What involvement activities are available?**

Pages  
**4-9**

**Your Say Your Way registration form**

Page  
**9**



## Useful Contacts

### The Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement Team

For all enquiries relating to any of the information given within this guide.

T: 01865 335454 E: [tpsteam@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:tpsteam@oxford.gov.uk)

[www.oxford.gov.uk/getinvolved](http://www.oxford.gov.uk/getinvolved)

### Oxford City Homes Contact Centre

For all tenancy enquiries including rents, your tenancy, housing repairs and gas servicing.

T: 0800 227676 E: [contactcityhomes@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:contactcityhomes@oxford.gov.uk) [www.oxford.gov.uk](http://www.oxford.gov.uk)

### The Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS)

Provides information, support and training for tenants, leaseholders and residents.

T: 0161 868 3500 E: [info@tpas.org.uk](mailto:info@tpas.org.uk) [www.tpas.org.uk](http://www.tpas.org.uk)

## Other Useful Websites

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) [www.communities.gov.uk](http://www.communities.gov.uk)

The Homes and Communities Agency [www.homesandcommunities.co.uk](http://www.homesandcommunities.co.uk)

The Tenant Services Authority [www.tenantservicesauthority.org](http://www.tenantservicesauthority.org)

YOUR SAY

YOUR WAY

To get involved and find out more contact the Involvement Team on:

## What is Tenant and Leaseholder Involvement?

This is the process through which Oxford City Homes works with its tenants and leaseholders to shape the services it provides.



## Why is it important to be involved?

By getting involved you can help to shape and influence the services we provide for you. Oxford City Homes is committed to working with its tenants and leaseholders and listening to their views to improve our services.

Each year our involved tenants and leaseholders produce an action plan, which details what they want to achieve through involvement.

This action plan can be found in our Tenant and Leaseholder Compact.



## Who Can Get Involved?

Any Oxford City Council tenant or leaseholder can get involved. We also want to hear from other residents who would like to work with us to improve services in their area. You might want to bring along neighbours, friends or family members so they can get involved too. We are particularly keen to hear from those who feel that they may be under represented or find it hard to access our services.



## What amount of time do you need to give?

As little or as much as you like! The time commitment depends on what you get involved in, some activities consist of monthly meetings, others are one off consultation or training events. Each activity within this guide has an estimated time commitment attached.

# What support will be offered to me?

## The Oxford Tenants' Resource Centre

The Resource Centre is based at Oxford City Homes on Horspath Road in Cowley (see map below). It is easily accessible by car and public transport. Parking is also available. You can drop

into the Resource Centre anytime you like during working hours. You can also arrange to visit by appointment.



### Staff

The Involvement Team is made up of 3 full time and 1 part time Officer. Their role is to support and develop all involvement activities and to ensure that as many people as possible get involved in them.

The Resource Centre contains a Computer Room and information library and is used by tenants and leaseholders to give them more knowledge on the issues that may affect them. You will have access to computers, photocopying facilities, the Internet, paper based resources and large and small meeting rooms. The Resource Centre is where the Involvement Team is based and where we hold a number of our involvement activities and training events.

**Oxford City Homes Offices**  
Horspath Road, Cowley  
Oxford OX4 2RH  
T: 01865 718114 Main switchboard (general enquiries)  
T: 0800 227676 (requests for service)  
E: [contactcityhomes@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:contactcityhomes@oxford.gov.uk)

**Oxford Tenants' Resource Centre**  
T: 01865 335454  
E: [tpbteam@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:tpbteam@oxford.gov.uk)

**A** Way in (One way system by car)  
**B** Oxford Tenants' Resource Centre Main Entrance Reception is on first floor  
**C** Oxford City Homes Main Reception  
**D** Disabled car parking 3 spaces  
**E** Disabled entrance Lift available to upper floor. Foyer area accessed by a ramp  
**F** Staff entrance

**F** Pre-booked car parking 4 spaces  
**G** Staff traffic tunnel with cycle rack  
**H** Limited visitor parking  
**I** Pedestrian crossings  
**J** Bus Stops with route numbers  
**K** Additional parking 5-10 mins walk

**Oxford Tenants' Resource Centre**  
vehicles one way  
Horspath Road

## Out of Pocket Expenses

Bus fares and car mileage are reimbursed and we also provide transport to attendees who find it difficult to get to activities. We can also make a contribution towards childcare or other caring costs to ensure that as many people as possible can access activities.

## Training

We are committed to developing skills for all of our tenants and leaseholders and the training we offer is normally free of charge. See page 6 for the different types of training we offer.



## Prize Draws and Vouchers

For certain activities prize draws take place for all of those who get involved. We also offer shopping vouchers as an incentive for certain activities such as mystery shopping (see page 7).



YOUR **SAY**

YOUR **WAY**

## How do I get Involved?

By completing the "Your Say Your Way" form on page 9 of this guide and returning it to the Involvement Team. We will then keep you up to date with what is happening in your chosen areas.

# What Involvement Activities are available?

## The Oxford Tenants' and Leaseholders' Panels

There are currently 7 panels focusing on different areas of the service provided. You do not need to be elected onto any of the panels, except for the Involvement Monitoring Panel, they are open to all tenants and leaseholders. Each tenant or leaseholder is limited to being on 3 panels in total at any one time.

### Involvement Monitoring Panel (IMP)

You have to be elected at the Annual General Meeting (usually in May) to become a member of this Panel. This Panel helps to oversee all of our involvement activities and its members attend the Housing Advisory Panel and the Council's Scrutiny Committees.

IMP members also act as spokespersons for different involvement activities and help to ensure that other tenants and leaseholders are kept up to date with what is happening.

This panel also monitors the Tenant and Leaseholder Compact, the agreement between the Council and our tenants and leaseholders, which sets out the standards for how we will involve you. They also assist in the management of the Oxford Tenants' Resource Centre and work towards developing ways of involving more tenants and leaseholders, particularly in areas which are under represented.

Time commitment – 4 hours per month (minimum one evening meeting per month, plus any preparatory work and training).

---

### Repairs and Improvements Panel

This Panel covers areas such as responsive repairs, planned maintenance, decent homes, voids and major projects. It monitors the service we provide in these areas and makes recommendations about how it can be improved. This panel has previously reviewed our Tenants Choice Schemes, Void Standards and helped to improve our repair priority system.

Time commitment – 2 hours every other month.

---

### Community Safety and Anti Social Behaviour Panel

This Panel gives a customer perspective on issues concerning the Council Policy, Strategy and service delivery around Community Safety and Anti-social Behaviour issues. It works in partnership with other areas of Oxford City Council responsible for community safety and anti social behaviour including The Crime and Nuisance Action Team (CANACT), Thames Valley Police and Neighbourhood Action Groups (NAGs).

Time commitment – 2 hours every other month.





### Customer Care and Information Panel

This Panel reviews and improves the standards of customer care and communication given to tenants and leaseholders. This is achieved by reviewing policies and documents to ensure that they are user friendly. This panel also receives information on and helps to review our service standards and works together with our Editorial Team (see page 8).

Time commitment – 2 hours every other month.



### Environmental Panel

This panel brings together like minded people to discuss ways in which Oxford City Homes and Oxford City Council can address the impact it has on the environment. This could cover areas such as carbon reduction, energy efficiency, recycling and grounds maintenance. This panel also helps us to allocate the £65,000 Environmental Improvements Budget (see page 7).

Time commitment – 2 hours every other month.

### Equality and Diversity Panel

This panel addresses equality and diversity issues including age, race, gender, disability and religion and beliefs to ensure that the services we offer can be accessed by all of our tenants and leaseholders in a fair and consistent manner. The panel looks at ways of involving more people from different groups within our communities and helps to monitor our equality impact assessment programme.

Time commitment – 2 hours every other month.

### Leaseholder Panel

This panel has 4 meetings per year and is open to all Oxford City Council leaseholders and is used to discuss and improve the services we provide for them. This Panel has worked together to create a Leaseholders' Handbook and carry out a leaseholder satisfaction survey, which in turn has helped us to identify areas where the service can be improved.

Time commitment – 2 hours every 3 months.

# Other Involvement Activities

## Tenants' and Residents' Associations (TRAs)

A Tenants' and Residents' Association is a group of people from a local area who meet on a regular basis to talk about local issues. They agree actions and plan how to make their area a better place to live.

- Oxford City Homes offers support to a number of TRAs and can assist in the start up of new TRAs.
- The support offered consists of officer time, grant funding for the running of the group as well as training in areas such as chairing skills or treasury skills.
- Currently our TRAs are involved in a number of different projects such as community fun days, area surveys and environmental projects.

Time commitment – 1 - 2 hours per month (depends on how often your local TRA meets).



## Training for Tenants and Leaseholders

Oxford City Council and its training providers offer courses to tenants and leaseholders and other involved people and these are normally free of charge.

The following training is offered on a regular basis, please contact us for the next available dates.

### IT and Computing Course

This consists of 5 sessions over 5 weeks each lasting 2 hours. Attendees would learn basic skills exercises, an Introduction to Microsoft Word, the Internet and E-mail. Courses can be tailored to address different skill levels.

### Money Management

This workshop is delivered internally by our Rent Team. It

includes recognising your money personality, categorising debts, understanding budgeting and how to budget.

### Back to Work Skills

Informal workshops containing useful guidance on job applications, interview techniques and creating curriculum vitae (CV) and letter writing, along with brushing up on numeracy and literacy skills.

### We can also offer training in the areas listed below:

- Chairing Skills
- Secretarial Skills
- Treasury Skills
- Equality and Diversity
- Mystery Shopping
- Plain English
- Active Learning for Residents Qualification

**Please note:** If you or other tenants and leaseholders would like training in a specific area, please let us know and we will see if it can be provided. We are happy for you to come along with neighbours or friends.

## Mystery Shopping

Mystery shoppers test our services and check whether we meet certain standards. This is a great way to get involved and does not require you to attend a series of meetings. Mystery shops are done in your own time and you will receive full training to ensure that you have all the skills you need. Once your shops are completed you report back the results and tell us the areas in which we can improve. All of our Mystery Shoppers are rewarded with a £40 shopping voucher for the time they have given up.

For example you might visit one of our main offices and tell us what your experience was like. You also might phone our housing contact centre and ask us questions about our services.

So far our Mystery Shoppers have helped to improve reception areas, usage of the website and access to our offices.

Time commitment – 1 days training and 2 hours every other month to complete mystery shops.

A Mystery Shopper from Cowley said "I really enjoyed the experience. It was a fantastic and easy way to get involved, meet new people and help to improve the services I get".

## Estate Walkabouts

Our Estate Managers carry out regular estate walkabouts, where they visit particular areas to see where improvements can be made. Tenants, leaseholders, residents and local Councillors are invited to come along and help identify problems which may need attention, for example graffiti hotspots, fly tipping and repair issues. This is a great chance to get involved and improve the area in which you live.

To find out when the next walkabout is in your area, please register your interest at the back of the booklet and we will get in touch.

Time commitment – walkabouts generally happen once every 3 months and last between 1 and 2 hours.

## The Environmental Improvements Budget

Each year the Involvement Team has a budget to carry out environmental improvement works for tenants and leaseholders. You can suggest a scheme in your area which we may be able to fund, all schemes need to meet criteria and be of benefit to the local community. We will meet with you to discuss it and if appropriate complete the works. If we receive too many suggestions we may carry out consultation to determine which are highest priority.

Examples of the types of things we can improve are fencing, lighting, security, communal gardens, pathways and bin stores.

Time commitment – 30 minutes to complete the form and 1 hour to meet with us on site to discuss it.





## Editorial Team

This team of tenants, leaseholders and officers are responsible for Oxford City Homes' quarterly newsletter, Tenants' Issue.

They meet together to discuss articles which they would like to include, review previous editions and look at ways it can be improved.

They also review other publications and communications such as leaflets, posters and letters to ensure that they are in plain English and meet quality, design and cost requirements.

They have their own stamp which we use on publications to let you know that they have been involved in it's production.

This is ideal for anybody interested in writing their own articles or who enjoys editing and improving pieces of information.

**Time commitment** – A 2 hour meeting every other month, plus proof reading work. You can also comment by e mail if you would rather not attend meetings.



## Surveys

We like to get our tenants and leaseholders involved in surveys regularly because it is good for us to receive feedback in order for us to improve our service. These surveys could come in the post, over the phone or be online.

An example of this is our Repairs Satisfaction Survey. This survey is sent to all tenants that have work carried out in their homes. We also include surveys in Tenants' Issue, our quarterly newsletter, and carry out a Status Survey every 2 – 3 years.

**Time commitment** – A matter of minutes (depending on the survey).

## Other Consultation

Throughout the year we carry out a variety of one off consultation events, which we may invite you to. These can cover a number of areas including youth forums, budgets and finance, decent homes or policy changes and reviews.

**Time commitment** – usually 2 hours per activity.

YOUR **SAY**

YOUR **WAY**

# Your Say Your Way registration form

By completing this form we will register you for involvement activities and keep you up to date with what is happening in the areas you have selected.

What areas of the service are you interested in? Please tick as many areas as you like.

- Repairs and Improvements
- Customer Care and Information
- Equality and Diversity
- Community Safety and Anti Social Behaviour
- Estate Walkabouts
- Editorial
- Mystery Shopping
- Tenants' and Residents' Associations
- Youth Forums and Consultation
- Leaseholder Services
- Environmental
- Environmental Improvements Budget

**Training**

- Money Management
- IT and Computing
- Back to work skills

Other areas I am interested in are

Name(s)

Address

Postcode

Contact Number

E Mail

You can return this form to us by marking an envelope with our FREEPOST address:

**Involvement Team, Freepost OF215, Oxford City Homes,  
Horspath Road, Cowley, Oxford, OX4 2BR**



www.oxford.gov.uk



Please phone the Housing Contact Centre  
T: 0800 227676 if you need a large print  
version. We can also translate key  
documents into a range of languages:

ਜੇ ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਪੜ੍ਹਨ ਲਈ ਮਦਦ ਦੀ ਲੋੜ ਹੈ ਜਾਂ  
ਤੁਹਾਨੂੰ ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਚਾਹੀਦਾ ਹੈ ਤਾਂ ਕਿਰਪਾ  
ਕਰਕੇ ਇਸ ਨੰਬਰ ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ: 0800 227676. ਅਸੀਂ  
ਖਾਸ ਦਸਤਾਵੇਜ਼ਾਂ ਦਾ ਤਰਜਮਾ ਵੀ ਕਈ ਢੁਬਾਨਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਕਰ  
ਸਕਦੇ ਹਾਂ।

यदि आपको यह पत्रक पढ़ने के लिए सहायता की आवश्यकता है या  
आपको इस पत्रक की बड़े अक्षरों में आवश्यकता है तो कृपया इस नम्बर  
पर फोन करें: 0800 227676. हम विशेष दस्तावेज़ों का तर्जमा भी अनेक  
भाषाओं में कर सकते हैं।

اگر آپ کو یہ اشاعت سمجھنے میں مدد کی ضرورت ہے یا بڑے حروف میں  
لکھی ہوئی چاہیے تو براہ مہربانی 0800 227676 پر ٹیلیفون کیجئے۔  
ہم ضروری دستاویزات کا کئی زبانوں میں ترجمہ بھی کرتے ہیں۔

如您需要幫助讀懂該出版物，或需要更  
大字型文本，請致電：0800 227676。我  
們也可以將重要文檔翻譯成各種語言。

आपনার যদি এই প্রকাশনাটি বুঝতে সাহায্যের দরকার হয়  
অথবা বড় ছাপার অক্ষরে এর একটি প্রতিলিপি পেতে চান  
তাহলে দয়া করে 0800 227676 এই নম্বরে ফোন করুন।  
আমরা মূল দলিলগুলি বিভিন্ন ভাষায় অনুবাদও করতে পারি।

Building a world-class city for everyone

