

Your Pathways to Involvement



Connecting with you & keeping you involved:

Your pathways to making a difference

At Dales Housing we are committed to putting you, our residents, at the heart of everything we do. To do that, we have developed a range of pathways so that you can become involved in shaping the way we deliver your services in a way that is best for you.

Consultation with you has resulted in the development of our Local Promises. These clearly set out the standards of service you said you wanted from us. In order to make sure we are meeting these promises, we have developed the Dales Test which we apply to everything we do.

We want to be: **D**elivering to you
Accountable to you
Listening to you
Empowering you
Successful together



Your voice matters

Why get involved?

Dales Housing is committed to giving you the best quality homes and service it can.

You live in your home and in your community, so that makes you best placed to tell us how we are doing and what we could do better.



How can you get involved?

Work with us and choose the pathway to involvement that suits you best so your voice is heard. You don't have to come to meetings or give up a lot of time to make a difference.

To help you get involved we will:

- Pay travel expenses if you need to come to meetings, or provide taxis if necessary
- Pay reasonable child care costs
- Pay reasonable costs for carers
- Provide information and reports in alternative formats if it will make it easier for you
- Vary the time of the week and days for our meetings and events if necessary
- Discuss what support we can offer if you are keen to get involved but find it challenging. We will do all we can to make sure you can get involved in a way that best suits you.

This is our promise to help you get involved.

Your pathways

The Board

The Board is responsible for the overall governance, direction and for setting the key strategic aims for Dales Housing. It approves the annual budget and business plan and is responsible for monitoring how well we are performing. Our Board is made up of 12

representatives, 4 of which are reserved for Dales Housing residents, 4 are local councillors and 4 are independent members.



Time commitment

The Board meets on average 6 times a year. The meetings generally last for a couple of hours and take place in the evening. The agenda and reports for these meetings are sent out in advance, so members need to be prepared to study these.

What's in it for you?

We provide a Board training programme and support to ensure you have the right skills which could also be useful for your future career development.

What difference can it make?

Being on the Board means you help Dales Housing to make important decisions and set the direction for the company.

Residents' Scrutiny Panel

The Residents' Scrutiny Panel is responsible for ensuring that Dales Housing continually improves the way we deliver our services, that we take account of residents' views, meet our Dales Test and deliver our Local Promises. The Panel consists of up to 12 Dales Housing residents.

Time commitment

The Residents' Scrutiny Panel will meet as required depending on the project or work area that is being reviewed. There is likely to be quite a big time commitment which will be determined by the work the Panel undertakes. Meetings will usually last for 2-3 hours. Papers, information and reports will be distributed to Panel members before the meetings, so you can be prepared. There will also be additional work which will be determined by the group, depending on the service area being reviewed.

What's in it for you?

We will provide training and support to develop your personal skills and enable you to effectively contribute.

What difference can it make?

The Residents' Scrutiny Panel will constructively challenge Dales Housing's working practices and make recommendations on how to improve so that you, our residents, get the best possible quality of service.



■ Scrutiny Panel

Dales' Drivers

We will have a team of residents who will carry out activities such as “Mystery Shopping” and “Reality Checking”, to ensure that we are meeting our Service Standards and Local Promises. This will include making phone calls, visiting our offices, reporting repairs and then telling us about your experience.



Time commitment

Dales' Drivers will get involved in continually testing all of our services as they are delivered, on a day to day basis. You may also be asked to undertake specific inspections.

What's in it for you?

We will pay you in vouchers for each reality check you do, based on the guidelines agreed within the scheme. Different amounts will be paid depending on the type of enquiry or work request. Training and support will be given which could lead to new skills and open up opportunities for you in the future.

What difference can it make?

Dales' Drivers will ensure that we are delivering services to the standards tenants have set us through our Local Promises. Because you are telling us about a real experience, we will be able to really make improvements where they are needed in a timely way.

The Sheltered Panel

The Sheltered Panel represents the views of our sheltered residents and is made up of people who live in our sheltered housing schemes. The Panel discusses issues specifically related to sheltered housing and the feedback helps to improve the overall service.

Time commitment

The Panel meets for about 2 hours every 3 months, usually in the afternoon, at one of our sheltered schemes.

What's in it for you?

The opportunity to give us the views and feedback of residents in your schemes and positively contribute to improving the service.

What difference can it make?

As a result of feedback, we reviewed our winter snow and ice clearance guidelines and published a reminder of the service we provide.



The Leaseholder Panel

Leaseholders are people who have bought the home they live in. The Panel is responsible for promoting the interests of Leaseholders and working together for good relations with Dales Housing and all residents.

Time commitment

The Panel meets for a couple of hours, 3 times a year in the evening.

What's in it for you?

The Panel focuses on the specific issues faced by Leaseholders to help improve the services for all.

What difference can it make?

The Panel contributed to the development of the Leaseholder Handbook which was given out to all Leaseholders and provides useful information.

The Reading Panel

This group will refresh and broaden the remit of our current Editorial Panel. It will make sure all our leaflets and documents, including our website, are easy to use and understand.

Time commitment

Publications will be sent out for comments as and when required and the group will meet at least 4 times a year for no more than 2 hours.

What's in it for you?

It gives you the chance to positively contribute to improving our leaflets and publications.

What difference can it make?

The Panel will improve the quality of all our written information and make sure that it is clear and easy to understand.

Special Interest Groups

Special Interest Groups get together as and when they are needed. They consider specific topics, or where a concern has been highlighted and further investigation is needed.

Time commitment

The time commitment will be determined by the Group and the specific topic that is being discussed.

What's in it for you?

You will have the opportunity to positively and constructively contribute to improving services in the areas where you have most interest, knowledge or are passionate about.

What difference can it make?

Two groups of residents have recently taken an active part in assessing and selecting the contractors that will work with us to complete the Decent Homes work and the Grounds Maintenance Contract.



The Disability Action Group (DAG)

The DAG is made up of residents who have a disability or who have experience of disability, for example, with a family member.

Time commitment

The DAG meets as and when there are specific issues to discuss. Timescales for meetings will be determined in relation to the requirements of the specific project.



What's in it for you?

You will be giving feedback which makes sure that issues facing residents with needs associated to their disability are taken into account when shaping service for the future.

What difference can it make?

The group recently reviewed the Aids and Adaptations Policy. One of the outcomes was to open up the facility to people with a need rather than a recognised disability.

Local Community Groups and TARA's (Tenants' and Residents' Associations)

Tenants' and Residents' Associations act on behalf of a defined neighbourhood, street or block of flats. For example, the Hurst Farm TARA brings together the residents of Hurst Farm to discuss local issues. We will also work with Local Community Groups on specific issues as they arise.

Time commitment

This depends on the individual association or group and how often it wants to meet. Sometimes this may be more often, for example, when setting up a group or focusing on a project.

What's in it for you?

You will be actively contributing to improving and dealing with issues in your neighbourhood. Each group or association will need to agree what it offers to those who join in.

What difference can it make?

A big one! Our TARA on Hurst Farm organises local events and produces a newsletter with lots of local information and supports a weekly Youth Club.



E Group / Armchair Consultees

The E Group and Armchair Consultees are residents who have told us they want to be involved, but don't want to come along to formal meetings. We will send information to you by email, post or telephone and ask you for your views. If you join these groups, you can choose which topics you are most interested in.

Time commitment

There are no meetings to attend. You need to be prepared to read what is sent to you and take some time to think about it and send back your views. This can be as much or as little time as you wish.

What's in it for you?

You can get involved and have your say about topics you are interested in, in a way that suits you.

What difference can it make?

Through either of these pathways you can make your voice heard on subjects that really matter to you. In this way Dales Housing can listen to a wider range of residents. Members of these groups have given feedback on this booklet and told us their views about different policies.

Village Voice

A Village Voice is a resident who is willing to liaise with Dales Housing on behalf of their area or village. You will work with officers to provide direct feedback of your experiences and that of residents in the community.

Time commitment

You can commit as much or as little as you like. You may be asked to attend occasional meetings and become involved in local events.

What's in it for you?

On behalf of your community you can get involved and have your say about your local area, in a convenient way for you.

What difference can it make?

Through you, more residents get the opportunity to have their voice heard. This makes a real difference to the local community and ensures local issues are raised, discussed and resolved.



Estate Walkabouts

Everyone is welcome to join us on the Walkabouts. The dates and times are advertised in our newsletter, Dales News and Views. They give residents and Dales Housing staff the chance to work together to improve your neighbourhood and help make it a better place to live.

Time commitment

We carry out several Estate Walkabouts on various estates each month and they usually take about an hour. You can check the newsletter or our website for the locations and timings.

What's in it for you?

These take place local to where you live, so there is no travelling and they give you the opportunity to make your community a better place to live.

What difference can it make?

By joining the officers you can point out the problems and issues that affect you in the area where you live. The Walkabouts have already identified improvements that have been carried out under our Neighbourhood Enhancement Scheme, such as providing seating areas or planting trees and shrubs.

Going Local

All our residents are invited to attend one of our 2 yearly Going Local events. They combine a bit of fun with the chance to meet Dales Housing's officers. You will be asked to tell us what you think about our services, what your priorities are and what you expect from us.

What difference can it make?

In 2010 we asked tenants to choose what aspects of their home they would like to be improved as part of the Decent Homes Plus work. As a result showers are now being installed over baths and homes are being made more energy efficient.

Time commitment

Just a couple of hours in a place that is local to you.

What's in it for you?

They are a great opportunity for you to get together with us have some fun and talk about the issues that affect you locally. You can tell us what you think of our services and how you think we can improve them.

What difference can it make?

These events are our main test to make sure that we are delivering services in the way that you want and need them. It will ensure that our Local Promises are still relevant, and if not, allows us to identify where they need to be changed.

One-off events

From time to time we will arrange events to ask you for your views. These may be small focus groups or larger events. We attend local festivals where we will ask you to tell us what you think about various issues. In 2010 we invited a group of young mums to a family day out at Crich Tramway Museum where we consulted on our Local Promises.

Time commitment

Just a couple of hours, maybe once a year.

What's in it for me?

You could have some fun, whilst also giving us your views on issues you are interested in or passionate about.

What difference can it make?

Feedback from focus groups and the Crich trip were used to determine our Service Standards and Local Promises.



Feedback

You can provide us with feedback in many ways. Dales Housing is committed to learning from what you, our residents, tell us. We want you to make your voice heard so we can listen, learn, understand and make changes that work for you. We may send out a survey or questionnaire asking for your views on a particular topic, or you can simply tell us what you think by sending in your comments, compliments and complaints – we have a special form which you can use to do this.

DALES HOUSING LIMITED

COMPLAINT FORM

We want to hear from you.
Use this form if you want to make a formal complaint.
Please return this form to the: Business Improvement Manager, Dales Housing, Dimple Mill, Dimple Road, Harrogate, West Yorkshire HG2 8JH

We need to know your name and address if you are making a complaint. If you do not supply this information there is very limited action we are able to take.

Name: _____
Address: _____
Telephone: _____
Email Address: _____

Have you already complained about this matter? If so, please state when and to whom you made your complaint.

Details of your complaint: Please describe the problem and/or an improvement here if necessary.

We value and take all your feedback seriously. We will deal with individual problems and resolve them. We then look at all of the information to identify specific challenges that we need to address and to see where we are doing well to make sure we continue to do so.

Time commitment

A few minutes here and there for you to tell us what you think about our services.

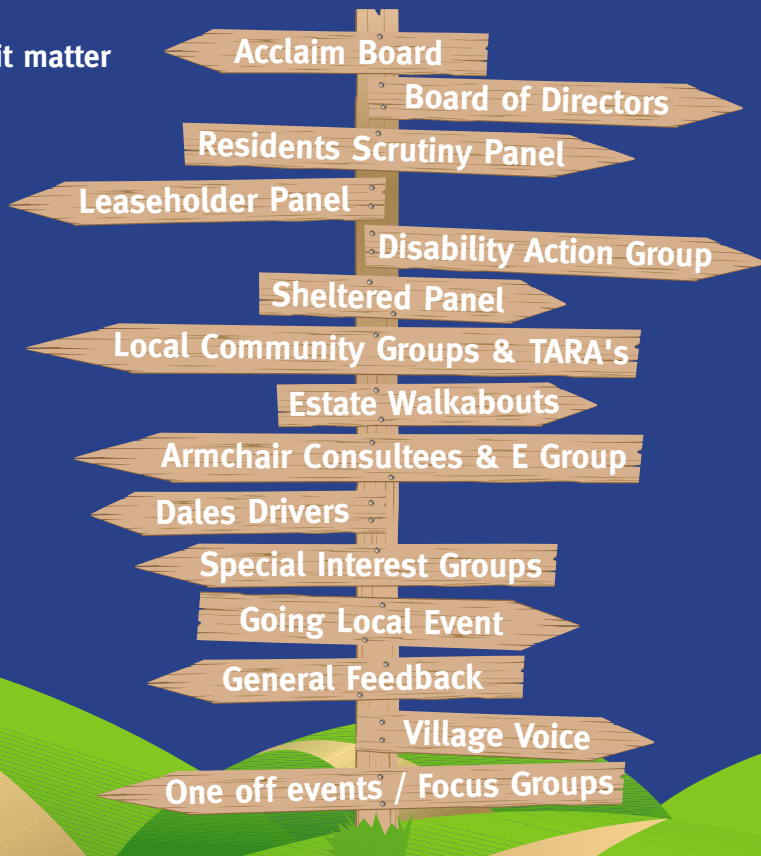
What's in it for you?

It's quick and easy to do. All of our completed customer satisfaction surveys are entered into a monthly prize draw to win £25.00 of vouchers.

What difference can it make?

We make lots of changes as a result of feedback from you. For example, you told us you wanted fewer glossy leaflets, so we now hold the majority of our information on our website which can be downloaded or printed as and when required.

Making it matter



Connect with us

We welcome any comments or suggestions that you may have, and we are always looking to improve the services that we provide. We are also keen to hear what you think about the opportunities that we offer, so please contact us if you have any comments that you wish to make.

All of our pathways make a difference and will often be a source of information that is presented and used by the Residents' Scrutiny Panel and Board to make decisions. If you would like to learn more about any of these Pathways or would like to work with us in any of these ways please contact our Customer Service Team on **01629 593200**, or email us at info@daleshousing.co.uk

If you would like this information in a different language, in large print or on CD, please contact us.



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