

BCH (RSL and Bolton at Home) commitment to elected members protocol



1 Bolton Community Homes

BCH recognise the need for mechanisms to be in place to ensure local democratic accountability for housing associations and Registered Social Landlords. This protocol provides a structured mechanism to assist Members in their role as local democratic representatives.

In pursuit of BCH's aims this protocol sets out the key principles of how Bolton Community Homes' members will work with and interact with elected members;

2 Complaints service / casework

Bolton Community Homes' partners fully recognise the legitimate and important function of elected Members in responding to and trying to resolve issues on behalf of their constituents, and we need to ensure that there is a clear and effective route to enable this to take place.

We will therefore respond to elected member correspondence and complaints within 10 working days. Each partner will ensure it identifies a single contact person and telephone number so that members know who to contact.

3 Regular Contact / Communication

- BCH will produce an annual members' bulletin/newsletter outlining activities undertaken by the partnership and providing information on key service performance provision by the BCH Housing Providers.
- Copies of BCH Board Meeting minutes will be provided in the Members' rooms.
- Tenants' newsletters and annual reports produced by Housing partners will be distributed to local ward members where the Housing Association has stock, to enable them to keep up to date with communications with the broad body of customers.
- Housing Associations will engage in a programme of joint estate inspections with a range of agencies including the Police and local ward members to pick up local issues, such as environmental issues, as quickly as possible. They will work with the relevant partners to obtain a solution to the problem and make suggestions regarding future service delivery.
- BCH Housing partners will attend area forums when requested to provide information and respond to issues raised by the local community.
- If major changes to services or office realignments are planned, Housing Association partners will consult local ward members in advance and inform them of the proposed changes.

4 Awareness Raising for staff

- BCH members will make sure their staff are aware of the importance of working with and responding to elected Members and an understanding of their role.
- As part of induction training for new members of staff a module about the role of elected members and about the importance of working with and being responsive to their concerns will be introduced.
- Where a BCH member has stock in a particular ward, we will ensure that we introduce their organisation to newly elected ward members and provide an insight into the operations of the organisation.

5 Local Engagement in Regeneration and New Developments

- BCH Housing partners will engage with the Council's vision for making a real difference in targeted areas as part of the neighbourhood renewal strategy, and to respond to the great shared challenge of 'narrowing the gap' across multiple issues (health, worklessness, educational attainment, environment etc.)
- BCH and Housing Association partners will consult with local ward members prior to the submission of planning applications for new development.
- BCH Housing Partners will be significant participants in the Transforming Estates programmes, especially with regards to the new-build and socio-economic elements.

6 Commitment

- As part of being a member organisation of BCH, Housing Associations and Bolton at Home commit to adhere to the service standards and aims made within in this protocol.
- Feedback from elected members will be sought on an annual basis to gauge the success of this commitment.

BCH RSL Partner contact details



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Bolton
at Home

See Bolton at Home
booklet attached



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Homes for
Bolton