

FOR TENANTS, BY TENANTS

TENANT PARTICIPATION STRATEGY 2025-2030



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Foreword



Councillor Michael McPake,
Convener of Housing,
North Lanarkshire Council

We are committed to effective tenant participation whereby tenants, residents, and staff work in partnership to enhance participation, capacity and empowerment across communities in North Lanarkshire. Much has been achieved since our previous Tenant Participation Strategy and we will continue to build on these achievements.

In the development of our Tenant Participation Strategy 2025-2030, tenants told us that they want to have a voice, get involved and influence decisions as well as improve communication, increase tenant satisfaction, better understand all perspectives while also improve and develop services.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank North Lanarkshire Federation of Tenants' and Residents', local tenants' and residents' groups and individual tenants who played a key role in developing this strategy by giving your feedback, time, commitment, and valuable contributions. We want to acknowledge that the involvement of tenants and residents are at the heart of the services we deliver and through working together we can improve housing services to make living in North Lanarkshire a better place.



Jim Leonard,
Chairperson,
North Lanarkshire Federation of
Tenants' and Residents'

Tenant Participation is the most crucial element in the makeup of North Lanarkshire Federation of Tenants & Residents, without it, the Federation would be unable to function. It is a fundamental quality and one that has helped make this Association the largest of its kind in Scotland.

Since the Federation's inception eighteen years ago, participation has been at the forefront of our strategy on every level, from supporting and engaging with new and established groups, encouraging individuals to form a group or, (when that can't be achieved) keeping interested tenants and residents fully informed of our extensive programme of meetings and events.

North Lanarkshire is a large and diverse local authority, this brings various challenges and obstacles, but, by working together, in that spirit of participation, it is possible to overcome these hurdles. The Federation has, over time, built an excellent working relationship with N.L.C. and we go towards our "landmark" twentieth year with confidence. We meet on a very regular basis with staff from Housing and other departments, as well as with the Convener of Housing and other Elected Members. Tenants are consulted and listened to but, without the core infrastructure of the Federation in place, this would be an almost impossible task.

This Federation is unique in that it enjoys the support of a full-time Tenant Participation Team to advise and guide it, every group has recognised the benefits of having an in-house T.P. Team and each group engages with the team at its own level and needs. This is the icing on North Lanarkshire Federation's cake and, having a team of professionals at hand has been the catalyst for making it probably the most successful organisation of its kind in Scotland.



Stephen Llewellyn,
Chief Officer (Housing),
North Lanarkshire Council

It is with great pleasure as Chief Officer of Housing to introduce our new revised Tenant Participation Strategy 2025-2030. A key strength in the development of this strategy has been the engagement of North Lanarkshire Federation of Tenants' and Residents', local tenants' and residents' groups and individual tenants through attending meetings, participating in focus groups, completing surveys and providing feedback.

The global pandemic had an impact on the Tenant Participation Strategy. We had to respond quickly to a rapidly changing situation which presented challenges and opportunities for delivering tenant participation activities.

Online digital engagement became the new form for tenant participation during the pandemic. More recently face-to-face methods of engagement have resumed while digital technology has continued to increase our reach to tenants and residents to meet their needs and preferences. Tenant participation grows from strength to strength, and we value tenants' contributions making tenant participation in North Lanarkshire what it is today – tenants with a passion for participation.

Our new Tenant Participation Strategy 2025-2030 sets out our overall aim and objectives for tenant participation, with the action plan providing the detail on how we will do this in partnership with our tenants and residents.

I would like to thank all tenants and tenant and resident representatives who have given their time and energy to engage in the development of our new Tenant Participation Strategy 2025-2030 as well as attending annual conferences, carrying out scrutiny of our services, estate walkabouts, meetings to discuss housing issues and providing views on what matters to tenants. I look forward to continuing our good work with tenants and residents on improving housing services in the communities of North Lanarkshire.

Your Tenant Participation Team

The main role of the Tenant Participation Team is to support local tenants and residents with issues that matter to them. The team work with existing tenants' and residents' groups, identify and support new groups as well as engage with individual tenants and residents in a variety of ways.

The team aim is to involve the community in shaping housing services by consulting with tenants and residents to strengthen their voice and by providing information, support, and advice to help develop and strengthen participation across North Lanarkshire.

The team ensure that the views of those living in our neighbourhoods are heard on what works well and what needs to be improved. We want to deliver the services that tenants need and we want to get it right first time. We can only do this if tenants and community members work together with us and tell us what is important to them and their communities. Our in-house team play a key role in enabling equal opportunities for all our tenants, good communication and effective participation.



Tracy Lennon, TP Manager



Nancy Robertson, TP Officer



Julie Gonzalez-Bradley, TP Officer



Caroline Hanlon, TP Admin Assistant

1. Introduction

Our Tenant Participation Strategy 2025-2030 has been developed in partnership with tenants' and residents' groups, individual tenants and North Lanarkshire Federation of Tenants' and Residents' (NLF) through seeking and listening to their views. This strategy outlines how we will support and resource Tenant Participation over the five years of the strategy.

Definition of Tenant Participation:

The National Strategy for Tenant Participation – Partners in Participation (1999) describes Tenant Participation as being *“about tenants taking part in decision making processes and influencing decisions about housing policies; housing conditions; and housing (and related) services. It is a two-way process which involves the sharing of information, ideas, and power. Its aim is to improve the standard of housing conditions and service.”*

Guide to Successful Tenant Participation, Scottish Government 2019

By 'Tenant Participation' (TP), we mean a two-way process whereby tenants and landlords share information, ideas, and responsibilities in order to shape and improve our housing policies, housing services and the standard of our housing stock. North Lanarkshire Council (NLC) is committed to working with tenants and residents, recognising the clear benefits that TP delivers for the people and communities of North Lanarkshire and the Council. These include, but are not limited to:

- Improved service delivery and outcomes for tenants which provide value for money.

- Working in partnership to identify and achieve shared objectives, contributing to the overall ambition of reducing inequalities and improving prosperity for everyone in North Lanarkshire, as set out in The Plan for North Lanarkshire.
- Improved knowledge and awareness amongst tenants of housing services with increased skills and confidence to enable participation and influence decisions.
- Increased tenant satisfaction with homes, neighbourhoods, and communities.

Over the lifetime of this strategy, we will continue to build on our successful communication and involvement approaches in North Lanarkshire to further strengthen participation. In doing so, we will continue to embrace TP throughout our organisation, at the most senior level, for officers and elected members responsible for strategic direction, to officers working in localities, providing direct support, advice, and assistance within our communities. Our starting position is strong, with common goals, a culture of mutual respect and understanding and a passion to improve outcomes for the people of North Lanarkshire. This strategy reflects on our key achievements achieved over the past five years and outlines our vision and future shared commitments for the five-year period 2025-2030:

‘To continue to develop and improve how we communicate with our tenants and residents; and to ensure we provide equal opportunities for participation and involvement that are accessible to all.’

2. Strategic and Legislative Context

We have summarised our legislative duties below. It first became a legal requirement in 2001 for landlords to actively develop and support TP and produce a TP Strategy in consultation with tenants.

Table 1: Legislative Requirements

Legislation	Duties and Responsibilities	How we do this?
Housing (Scotland) Act 2001	Legal requirement for landlords to actively develop and support TP and to produce a TP Strategy. Tenants were given rights to be consulted on decision making on their landlord's housing services and in continuously improving landlord performance.	Co-production approach to development and implementation of strategies, plans, and performance reporting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TP Strategy • Local Housing Strategy (LHS) • Housing management • Repairs and maintenance • Rent consultation
Housing (Scotland) Act 2010	The Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) and the independent Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) were introduced with outcomes and standards for communication and participation. Tenants are required to be asked how satisfied they are with how their landlord keeps them informed on services, their landlord's performance and opportunities to participate in decision making.	Tenant Scrutiny activity considers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standards of service to be provided in relation to housing management, repairs and maintenance • Changes to rent and service charges • Biennial Tenant Satisfaction Survey • Performance and Review Group
Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015	This helps local communities' voices to be heard in the planning and delivery of local services.	TP Team encourage tenant representatives to attend community boards to ensure the voice of tenants is listened to in wider decision making.

The National Standards for Community Engagement

The National Standards for Community Engagement are good practice principles to improve and guide the process of community engagement. Our TP Strategy was developed in line with the **National Standards for Community Engagement** and the Scottish Government's **Guide to Successful Tenant Participation**.

Figure 1: The National Standards for Community Engagement



Local Context and Links to other Strategies, Plans and Structures

The Plan for North Lanarkshire sets the direction of travel for the Council, partners, and our unique communities. The Plan has a vision where North Lanarkshire is the place to Live, Learn, Work, Invest, and Visit. The TP Strategy is aligned to the vision of The Plan for North Lanarkshire and supports its shared ambition. It makes a particularly strong contribution to the key priority to “Enhance participation, capacity and empowerment across our communities.”

Our Local Housing Strategy (LHS) 2021-2026 assesses housing need, demand, and provision to deliver high quality housing and related services in our communities in North Lanarkshire. Our TP Strategy is an action within the LHS which embraces partnership working and community engagement.

North Lanarkshire Partnership facilitates nine Community Boards in North Lanarkshire providing the main vehicle for consultation and engagement between communities and the Council. Our TP Team encourage tenant representatives to attend community boards to represent the views of tenants and to help shape and contribute to the Local Outcome Improvement Plans.

Our Equality Strategy 2019-2024 focusses on furthering the ambitions and priorities of The Plan for North Lanarkshire. It recognises that the poverty, disadvantage, and inequalities that exist for some people in North Lanarkshire can be further exacerbated if they have particular characteristics. There are five objectives to success in mainstreaming equalities with two objectives relevant to the TP Strategy: Objective 1 “To know and understand our communities” and Objective 2 “To involve our communities effectively”. The TP Strategy is committed to involving those in seldom-heard groups including, but not limited to, people from ethnic minorities, Gypsy Travellers, older people, and young people. It sets out actions for understanding the barriers affecting involvement and effectively facilitating better participation to ensure our TP groups are as representative of their local communities as they can be.

3. Regulation and Performance

Scottish Social Housing Charter

The first Scottish Social Housing Charter (SSHC) was introduced on 1 April 2012. There have been two reviews in 2016 and 2021. The Charter sets out the quality and value of services that tenants can expect from social landlords when performing their housing activities. It also provides the basis for the Scottish Housing Regulator (SHR) to assess and report on how well landlords are performing, enabling social landlords, their tenants and service users to identify areas of good performance and areas needing improvement.

The Charter has 37 indicators and 16 outcomes as well as standards covering customer/landlord relationship (equalities, communication, and participation); housing quality and maintenance; neighbourhood and community; access to housing and support; getting good value from rents and service charges; and other customers. The outcomes are about the results a social landlord achieves for its tenants and customers. The outcomes linked to this strategy relate to customer/landlord relationship on:

Figure 2: Charter Outcomes for Tenant Participation

EQUALITIES

Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs and rights recognised, is treated fairly and with respect and receives fair access to housing and housing services.

COMMUNICATION

Tenants and other customers find it easy to communicate with their landlord and get the information they need about their landlord, how and why it makes decisions and the services it provides.

PARTICIPATION

Tenants and other customers are offered a range of opportunities that make it easy for them to participate in, and influence their landlord's decisions at a level they feel comfortable with.

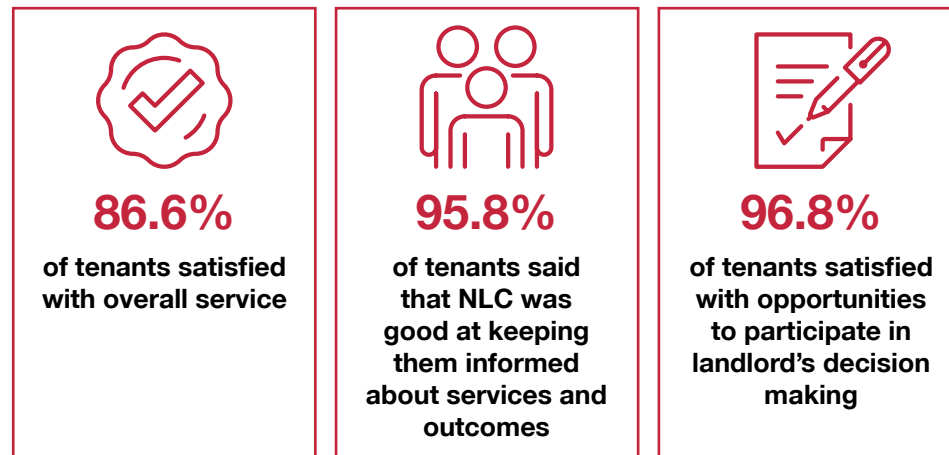
All the outcomes and standards in the Charter support the right to adequate housing as a human right by setting the standards and outcomes that social landlords should achieve for their tenants and other customers by delivering good quality homes and services.

A full list of the **Charter** outcomes and standards is included within the supporting documents available on the Scottish Government website.

Social landlords must provide the SHR with an Annual Return on the Charter (ARC) by the end of May each year. The ARC reports our performance information to the SHR against the charter outcomes and includes contextual data relating to our stock.

We are committed to working with tenants and customers in assessing, implementing, and reporting on all 16 Charter outcomes. Following submission of the ARC, the SHR then produces an independent report on our performance by the end of September/ October each year. This report is available to the public on the SHR website at www.scottishhousingregulator.gov.uk and can be used to compare our performance against that of other social housing landlords in Scotland.

Tenant Satisfaction



Our tenants tell us how satisfied they are with overall service and participation which is a requirement of the ARC. Our performance across participation and satisfaction indicators continues to improve and consistently compares favourably in comparison to the Scottish local authority average.

Table 2: Scottish Social Housing Charter on Tenant Satisfaction Indicators

Scottish Social Housing Charter Indicator	2017	2019	2021	2023	North Lanarkshire Performance Direction	LA Average 2023
Satisfied with overall service provided	84.0%	91.0%	81.2%	86.6%	Increase of 5.4%	83.2%
Landlord good at keeping them informed about services and outcomes	85.3%	92.5%	92.6%	95.8%	Increase of 3.2%	81.1%
Satisfied with opportunities to participate in landlord's decision making	68.0%	92.5%	96.8%	96.8%	Maintained	76.5%

Annual Assurance Statement

We must submit an Annual Assurance Statement to the Regulator which provides assurance that the Council complies with the relevant requirements contained in Chapter 3 of the Regulatory Framework.

We have to consider feedback from our tenants and other service users as part of the Annual Assurance Framework, which provides an objective view of how the Housing Service is performing and whether the Charter outcomes are achieved.



4. Equal Opportunities

“Every tenant and other customer has their individual needs and rights recognised, is treated fairly and with respect, and receives fair access to housing and housing services.”

Scottish Social Housing Charter, Outcome 1

In line with the Equalities Act 2010, our TP Strategy is committed to finding ways to make sure that participation reflects the rights and needs of a diverse range of tenants, encourages participation from people of ethnic minority backgrounds, people with physical disabilities, older people, young people, and people who share a protected characteristic. We are committed to removing barriers to participation for people who may be discriminated or marginalised and we will actively seek to encourage tenants and residents from under-represented population groups in our decision making and TP opportunities.

Throughout the course of this strategy we will implement an equality data collation and monitoring framework, to aid a better understanding of our tenant involvement profile to help us identify specific communities of interest which require more targeted interventions to improve involvement. This will help us ensure that tenants and residents involved in shaping housing services are representative of our local communities, which in turn will help improve services to meet those specific needs.



5. Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic

Reflecting on the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, our methods of participation activities changed as a result of restrictions and Covid-recovery. It was a challenging time for the delivery of all services and not least engaging with tenants on their preferred face-to-face basis.

The TP Team kept in touch via telephone, email, and text message during the pandemic with all tenant and resident groups as well as some individual tenants, while local groups supported their communities. Online meetings were held with NLF as well as Food for Thought sessions and training was provided to support tenants on getting online. Our plans to reconnect and meaningfully engage with tenants has resumed over the past two years.

The pandemic has reinforced the need for our approach to be fluid and adaptable to meet changing needs and preferences. The acceleration to digital technology has also increased our ability to engage with many more tenants and residents than previously, providing an exciting opportunity to increase involvement over the course of this new strategy.



6. Aims and Objectives

We developed our aims and objectives through consultation with NLF, local tenants' and residents' groups and individual tenants through our online surveys, focus group and conference.

The overall aim of the TP Strategy at a North Lanarkshire and local level are:

To continue to develop and improve how we communicate with our tenants and residents; and to ensure we provide equal opportunities for participation and involvement that are accessible to all.

To achieve our aim, we have developed four objectives in collaboration with tenants and residents. These are:

Objective 1: Enhance participation, capacity and empowerment across our communities

We will continue to expand participation and involvement opportunities to help tenants shape and influence housing services, making it easier for people to get involved. We understand that not everyone will want to participate in the same way and that individual needs can vary. We will therefore ensure that we have a range of different ways in which people can get involved to meet the broad range of needs and will continue to harness the new opportunities brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic to increase the opportunities to get involved digitally, recognising that online methods can provide a more convenient option for some tenants not able to get involved in traditional face to face activities. At the same

time, we also acknowledge that for some digital engagement may not be an option, whether this is through personal choice or lack of access to a device or connectivity. We will ensure there is a wide range of both in person, non-digital and digital opportunities available.

We will continue to work with our partners to provide training to empower and create capacity within our communities for involvement and raise awareness of opportunities through effective partner collaboration.

We will also make sure that we provide information in clear, easy to read and accessible formats.

Objective 2: to develop engagement opportunities for our tenants, residents and under-represented groups that will develop their capacity to help themselves

We are committed to continuing to build on our successful programme of involvement opportunities to identify new ways to involve more tenants and residents and in particular increase the involvement of tenants seldomly involved in tenant participation. We will extend our reach, targeting specific communities of interest who are under-represented in our TP opportunities, to ensure housing services are shaped by the unique communities which they serve.

Objective 3: Ensure effective use of tenant participation resources to involve tenants and residents in the development of services and support

We will continue to make best use of the annual TP resource allocation to pioneer new ways to increase the impact of our resources to strengthen participation. We will review our tenant scrutiny delivery model to identify recommendations for a future delivery model and increase our online presence to capitalise on cost effective ways to encourage involvement.

Objective 4: Demonstrate continued commitment to customer satisfaction and feedback

We will continue to involve tenants in reviewing performance and in the production and review of the annual performance report. We will review methods for measuring tenant satisfaction and evaluate our subgroups to ensure they continue to be fit for purpose. We are committed to sharing our activity with other council services to increase opportunities for collaboration to improve wider council services for the benefit of our communities.



7. Key Achievements

There have been several key achievements over the last five years. The council has been awarded 'gold' in TPAS Scotland's Landlord's Tenant Participation Accreditation, evidence of the high standard of all aspects of tenant participation activity over recent years.

Other key achievements include:



Six conferences held including NLC Annual Tenants' Conference and NLF Annual Tenants' Conference

3 study visits as part of Ambition Subgroup to visit new build sites and hear about new designs, air-source heat pumps and adaptations



Tenant Participation Team won CIH Scotland Best Frontline Housing Award in 2021/22

Supporting the largest representative group in Scotland: the North Lanarkshire Federation of Tenants' and Residents'



Supported groups to apply for lottery and other funding

Launch of NL Bloom Garden with 20% increase in participation, Celebration events and brochure of garden nominations



Ukrainian Tenants' and Residents' Association established

Facilitated digital support for over 200 tenants



11 open meetings and information sessions including Zero Carbon Homes, Challenge Poverty Week and Scottish Housing Day

15 consultations responded to including SHR 'Future of Housing Regulation in Scotland'






4 policy review sessions supporting NLF on Constitution, Code of Conduct and Guide to Tenant Participation

Held 17 Food for Thought sessions




Reviewed Tenants' Grants in partnership with NLF

£9,2000 grant funding awarded to 16 groups in 2023/24, five-fold increase on 2018



Supported 18 new or re-established groups

Supported 14 NLF Business Plan meetings



Increased annual grant funding allocated to NLF to support upgraded office space 2022/23

24 Tenant Scutiny sessions held during 2022/23



Local Hero Awards launched during 2023 Tenants' Conference with 4 winners

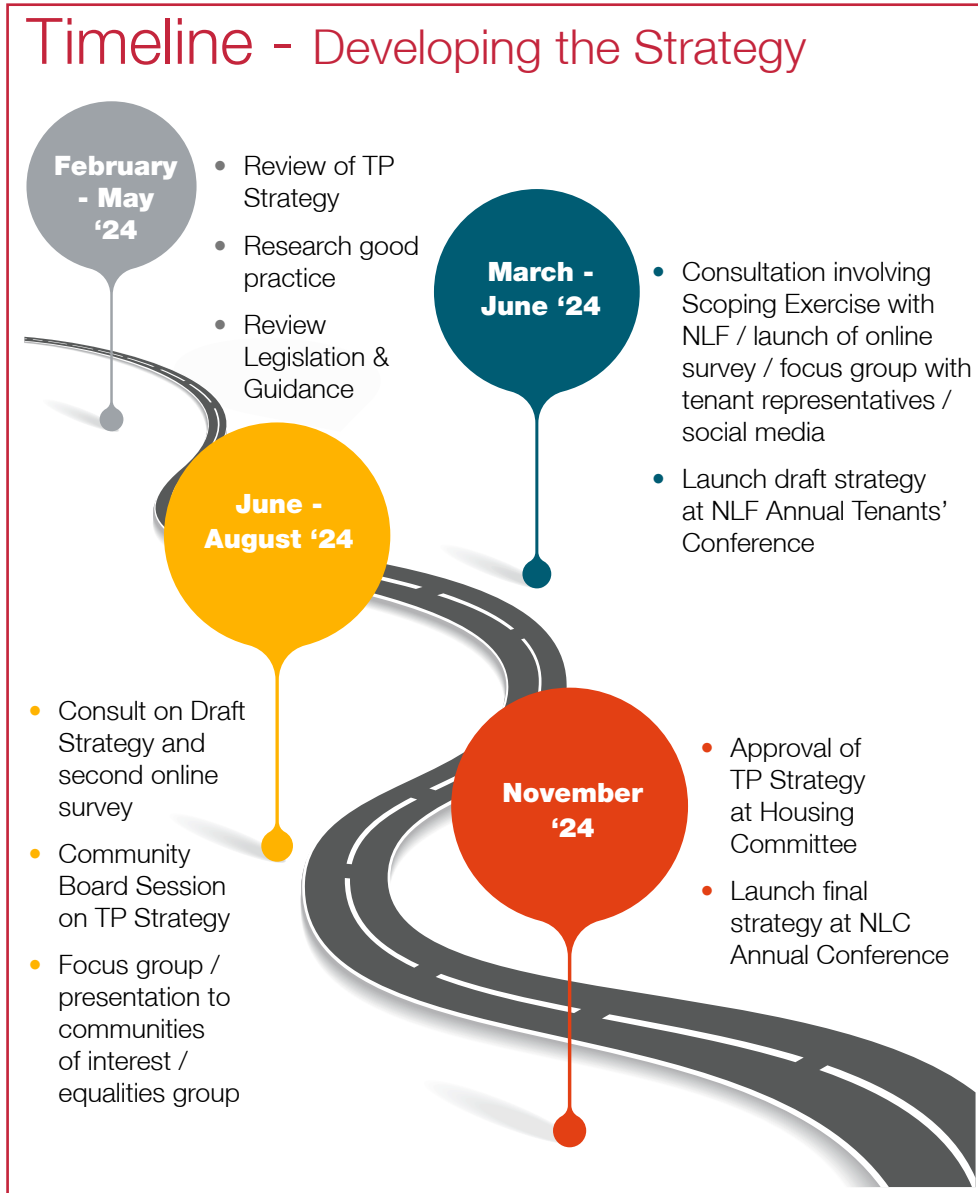
8. Developing the Strategy

The process for the development of the TP Strategy 2025-2030 began in early 2024 with a two-phased approach. Phase 1 entailed a review of our existing TP Strategy 2020-2025 and a scoping exercise with NLF to provide feedback on what worked well on the layout of the 2020-2025 strategy and suggested improvements. Research was undertaken on good practice at a national level using the Scottish Government's Guide to Successful Tenant Participation and examining TP strategies in other local authorities.

We consulted and engaged with tenants and residents through our online survey and focus group with representatives of tenants' and residents' groups and individual tenants. All these methods of feedback informed and provided insights on the consultative draft of the TP Strategy 2025-2030.

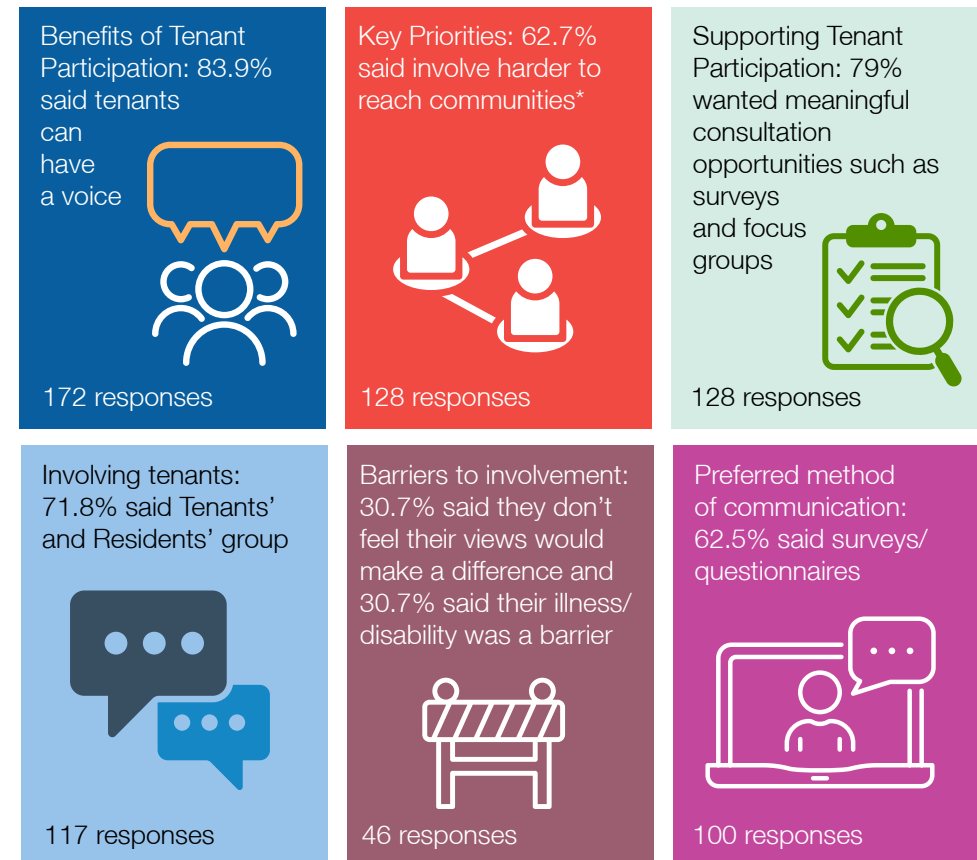
Phase 2 of our consultation focussed on the consultative draft strategy and took place over the course of June to August 2024. Feedback on the draft strategy used a range of involvement and consultation methods. This included publication of the strategy on the Council's website with an online survey, in addition to several online and in-person consultation opportunities for a range of different stakeholders, to encourage as wide a range of views as possible to inform the final strategy. A separate consultation report which contains further information on the consultation and development of the strategy can be found as a supplementary report to this strategy on the Council's website.





Tenant Feedback – What You Said

An online TP Survey was undertaken during March and April 2024 via the Council's website. The survey was widely promoted on Gov Delivery with 10,000 subscribers, Towns Today, NLC and NLF social media, Lanarkshire Live Radio, yammer post and to Tenants' and Residents' Groups as well as elected members. Here are some of the key findings:



* such as people with disabilities, ethnic minorities, Gypsy Travellers and young people.

Benefits



Barriers



Key messages from consultation in phase 2 on the draft strategy reinforced the importance of providing clear, easy to read, accessible information in a range of formats and of developing a broader range of activities to extend the reach of tenant participation to people or groups who are under-represented. The strategy has been revised to include additional actions to widen the scope of activities to reach a larger audience.

Over three quarters of respondents to an online survey said that the draft strategy was easy to read and understand. A summary version of the strategy has been produced alongside a 'one page strategy' which provides a concise and simplified way of conveying all the key messages of the strategy in a quick reference document.

The majority of respondents agreed with the aims and objectives of the strategy, with emphasis placed on priorities to listen to tenants and to strive to improve customer satisfaction.

9. How to Get Involved in North Lanarkshire

Tenant Participation Structure

NLC Housing Solutions has overall responsibility for the delivery of TP activities in North Lanarkshire. The TP Team is employed by NLC Housing Solutions and works in partnership with NLF, the umbrella organisation representing the views of tenants and residents groups across North Lanarkshire. There

are 36 tenants' and residents' groups across North Lanarkshire, which are supported by two TP Officers. Each TP Officer provides support for different geographical areas. The overall management of the TP team is provided by a TP manager and there is also a TP administrative assistant to support the wider work of the team. The diagram below shows the structure of TP in North Lanarkshire.

Tenants and residents can get involved in TP in North Lanarkshire through a variety of ways and activities. These are as follows:

Tenants' and Residents' Groups

Some tenants choose to become formally involved in the form of either non-registered or registered tenants' and residents' groups. Becoming a Registered Tenants Organisation (RTO) gives groups a recognised role in the decision making process and contact details are maintained on a public register for consultation and information distribution. We would encourage groups to apply for RTO status, however non-registered groups can still promote the interests of their neighbourhood and be included on the TP consultation database/contact list and are also eligible to apply for an annual administration grant.

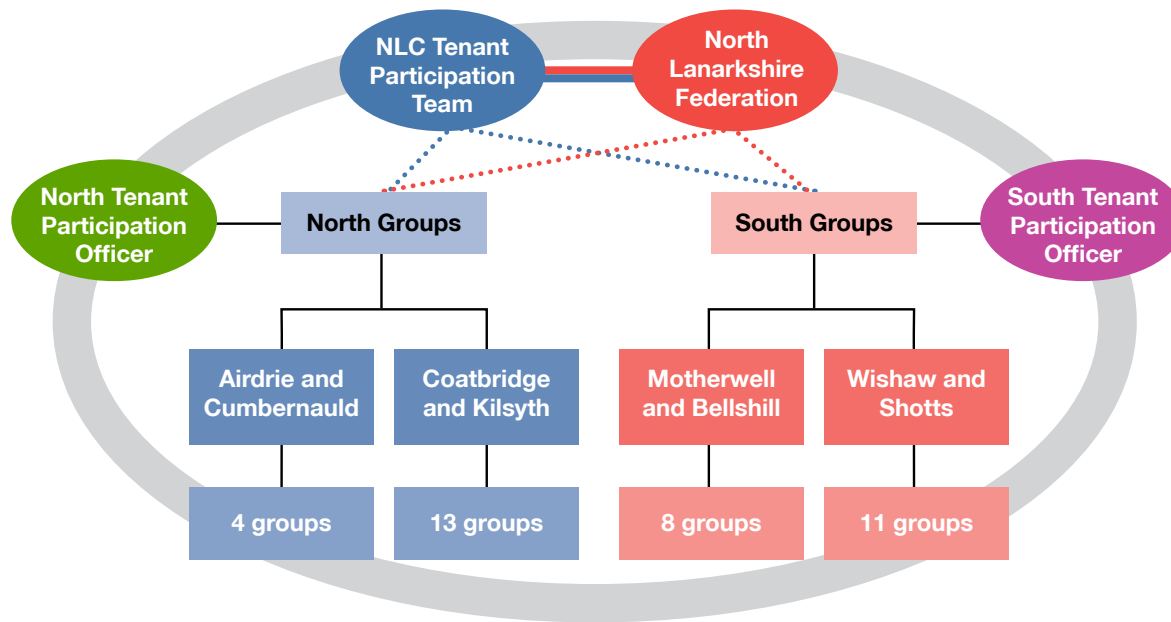
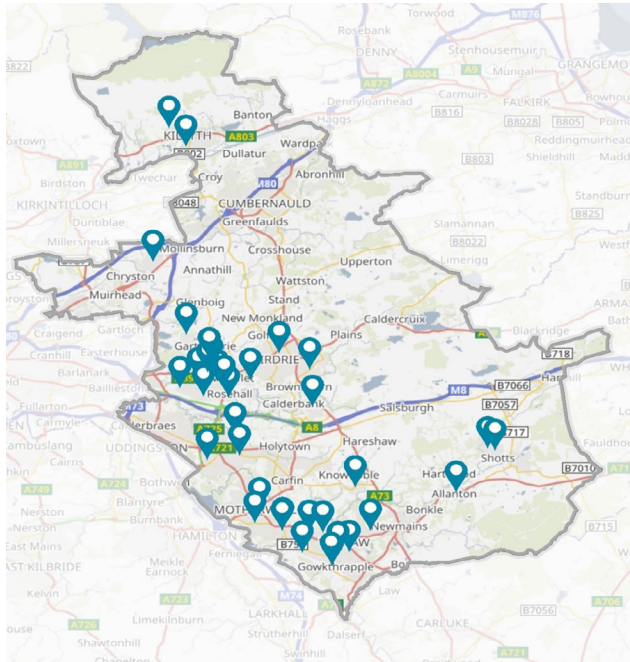


Figure 3: Tenant participation structure

Here is a map showing the groups across North Lanarkshire:



North Lanarkshire Federation

NLF was established in 2006, representing tenants and residents across North Lanarkshire. The aims of NLF are to promote and encourage tenant and resident involvement and to make a difference by taking forward the views of local people. NLF have fortnightly meetings to discuss progress on achieving actions within the TP Strategy and the NLF Business Plan which aligns with our TP strategy.

“My personal thanks for your support in setting up the Kirkwood 2023 Tenants’ and Residents’ Association. Your support is much appreciated.”

Peter Fanning, Chairperson Kirkwood Tenants’ & Residents’ Association

Chairpersons’ Meeting

There are quarterly Local Chairpersons’ meetings giving local tenants’ and residents’ groups the opportunity to meet and have discussions with the local Area Housing Manager. Representatives from tenants’ groups within each locality can attend these meetings. An individual representative may attend in the absence of an established tenants’ group or where a group has folded. Members of the TP Team can also attend the Chairpersons’ meetings as a central point of contact between tenant representatives and locality staff.

“I was absolutely delighted, Jim actioned all of my issues immediately and there have been teams of men working in the area. It is now looking “first class”.

The entire group is delighted and this has also helped motivate them more, as a group, as they have now seen first-hand the positive results from engaging with locality staff.”

John Duffy, Mornay Way Tenants’ & Residents’ Association

Estate Walkabouts

Estate Walkabouts are led by tenants’ and residents’ groups and active tenant representatives along with local housing offices following guidelines and timescales. Tenants and residents are given the opportunity to highlight any priorities or issues of concern within their local areas to housing staff.

There is an annual Joint Tenant and Staff Chairpersons’ and Estate Walkabout Review Group Meeting whereby tenants and staff in localities have the opportunity to discuss what works well, to indicate improvements to be implemented as well as review the documentation and procedures.

“This was our first walk about when several of our members met with housing staff from North Lanarkshire Council. Over a couple of hours, we covered a wide area including various streets, common grass areas, and walkways.

We felt we were listened to, and it was a great opportunity to be able to highlight places of concern and discuss a wide range of issues. Staff agreed to deal with issues raised or report to other local housing landlords or other relevant NLC staff. We’re really grateful to NLC staff for taking the time to meet with us and undertake the walkabout.”

David Johnstone, Chairperson Townhead Tenants’ & Residents’ Association

“We have done a walkabout with housing staff in our retirement housing complex and things that we looked at have all been done”

Gabe Smith, Chairperson, Chapelhall Tenants’ & Residents Association

Tenant Scrutiny

Tenants and other service users are involved in the self-assessment process of landlords, which takes an in depth look at parts of the Housing Service. A Tenant Scrutiny Activity Framework has been developed in partnership with NLF. During the period of the previous strategy, our tenants focussed on Allocations, Retirement Housing, and the Performance Report. North Star Consulting and Research have been commissioned as our independent Tenant Advisors to carry out tenant scrutiny on our behalf. Feedback from groups has been positive on this approach to tenant scrutiny. We will continue to engage with our tenants and residents during the strategy period 2025-2030 to identify the best opportunities and methods of Tenant Scrutiny activity.

North Lanarkshire Federation Subgroups

There are currently three NLF Subgroups: Ambition, Roads and Street Lighting and Waste Management which meet on a quarterly basis. Motherwell Tower Subgroup disbanded in March 2021 and was successful in resolving issues in relation to Motherwell

towers such as fire safety and parking. NLF highlighted:

“This is a great testament to the hard work and dedication of the group and council officers.”

Jim Leonard, Chairperson, North Lanarkshire Federation of Tenants’ & Residents’

Ambition Subgroup

The Ambition Subgroup is the newest of all our groups. Established in 2019 it is proving to be extremely popular, covering many progressive topics such as Town Centre Regeneration, New Supply, Capital Investment and Tower Reprovisioning. Group members receive real-time updates relating to development projects, plans, and new technologies within North Lanarkshire.



Ambition Subgroup visit new development in Caplaw Grove, Gowkthrapple

“Council officers provide updates on Council related housing matters and other issues such as programmes of work involving the Council’s plans for town centres. There is the opportunity to ask questions and it is interesting to hear about initiatives going on in other areas. The meetings also provide an overview on the work the Council is doing to meet its target of building new social housing in North Lanarkshire. A great advantage in attending these meetings is the opportunity to meet with and have discussion with the senior members of staff from the housing team - who are available and happy to answer questions or source information in response to the public’s enquiries.”

Mary McIntosh, Individual, Shotts

As well as meeting quarterly, group members have also joined staff on three sites visits to Chryston, Airdrie and Gowkthrapple. Groups members were able to view new build amenity housing and the operation of air source heat pumps which will contribute to achieving net zero. Feedback received on the site visits has been positive and future visits will be planned over 2025-2030.

Roads and Street Lighting Subgroup

The group works in partnership with NLC Roads Department which is a very useful two-way forum for any roads issues and updates which affect all our communities. Members are encouraged to raise any issues they see or hear about from their local communities but also learn of any updates and planned programmes NLC have ongoing.

Waste Management Subgroup

The Waste Management Subgroup had been running since 2017 with a focus in the early days on the changes to waste collection services. In recent years, the group was a key educational tool. A review was undertaken of the Waste Management Subgroup and we look forward to re-establishing a refreshed group soon.

NL in Bloom

The TP Team facilitate NL in Bloom. The competition for 2024 has been reviewed with new categories agreed. Representatives from the TP Team and NLF visit each year all shortlisted gardens to choose winners and hold an annual celebration event whereby winners are presented with a NL in Bloom Gardens Award. A NL in Bloom brochure was produced of garden winners for 2023. NL Bloom has proved to be a successful way of engaging with tenants, promoting estate management, and highlighting neighbourhood improvements. We witnessed an increase of 20% in participation levels in 2023 compared to the previous year demonstrating the popularity of NL in Bloom.



NL in Bloom Awards Ceremony

Database of Tenants/Customers

The TP Team hold a list of groups which is reviewed quarterly and annually. Contact details are updated on a regular basis via meetings, AGMs, and Tenants' Conferences.

NL Federation Annual Tenants' and Residents' Conference and NLC Annual Tenants' Conference

An annual NLF Tenants' and Residents' Conference & AGM and a separate NLC Tenants' Conference are held every year. There have been three NLF Conferences and three Tenants' Conferences over the course of the 2020-2025 strategy. The conferences remain popular and provide an effective involvement and networking opportunity.



NLC Annual Tenants' Conference



North Lanarkshire Federation Conference

Training and Development

A variety of training and briefing sessions are delivered to consult with and inform our tenants and customers on key service areas. These include the NLF annual programme of “Food for Thought” sessions, tenants’ conferences, open meetings, and consultation events which are co-ordinated in line with training needs, service priorities and legislative changes. Some of the “Food for Thought” sessions held over the strategy period included sessions on the Charter in January 2024; the Tenants’ Code of Conduct in February 2024 and the new TP Strategy in April 2024. A Cost-of-Living Event was also held in March 2024.

The TP Team deliver committee training to groups and have produced a guide on roles and responsibilities. There have been monthly development meetings to review NLF’s Constitution and Code of Conduct. Future development meetings will review the TP Guide and other policies. Joint tenant and staff training is planned for estate walkabouts and chairpersons’ meetings.

Tenants are also supported to attend external conferences and training sessions to gain knowledge and understanding about national housing issues and share good practice.

“This was our first time attending such event. We found it really informative, well run and worthwhile.”

Denise Mendell, Individual

Social Media

Our social media pages for Facebook are used to consult electronically via online surveys and to publicise topical news and events to maximise and promote involvement opportunities. Our social media is an effective medium to target campaigns such as the TP Advent Calendar, International Women’s Day, Employee Appreciation Day, and Celebrating Scottish Housing Day.

There are currently 753 followers on NLC’s TP Facebook Page: [@NLCTenantParticipation](#) and 327 followers of @nlfederation. There has been a substantial increase in Facebook followers with more than double since our last strategy when there were 301 followers.

Tenants can keep in touch with housing news and services via email alerts. There is eGov Delivery which provides an opportunity to subscribe to a range of topics and receive an email direct to your inbox by entering your email address. In addition to housing news, subscription is available to a range of other topics. To sign up, visit www.northlanarkshire.gov.uk

Digital Support

The TP Team have supported tenants and residents to develop their knowledge and skills in the use of digital platforms to participate in virtual meetings, Food for Thought and Information sessions as well as provide training on the use of digital devices and laptops.

“I cannot thank the TP team enough, they have given me a new laptop with internet & showed me how to use it, they even done a dummy run of an online meeting as I was nervous to join in. Since getting online, I have attended many meetings & sessions, giving me a purpose again.”

James Cole, Individual, Cumbernauld

Tenants’ Newsletter

Our **Tenants’ Newsletter** produced twice per annum are delivered to every tenant as well as being online and shared on social media.



A review of the Tenants’ Newsletter saw the introduction of a living local version. We have also agreed to set up a joint tenant and staff working group to undertake a further review during Autumn 2024.

Surveys

We undertake various surveys and questionnaires regarding our services including our biennial Tenant Satisfaction Survey with NLF contributing to tenant satisfaction questions. Our online TP Survey was developed in partnership with NLF to find out tenants’ views on the strategy and TP.

National Tenant Engagement

The Scottish Government supports RTOs through four fully established regional networks. One purpose of the RTO representatives is to communicate practically with the Scottish Government on national policy issues. Having this two-way conversation means that the government can tap into the knowledge and expertise of the RTO members. Additionally, this also means that RTOs are able to participate and respond to consultation documents in a more effective and uniform way.

“Back in 2023 several tenants group representatives and individual tenants attended a focus group session to discuss and respond to a consultation by the Scottish Housing Regulator – The Future of Social Housing Regulation in Scotland. The national picture has an impact on the housing service locally and it’s important that tenants across North Lanarkshire can have their say and influence national housing matters. This session was a great opportunity to do that.”

Jim Leonard, Chairperson, North Lanarkshire Federation

Independent Tenant Scrutiny Support

The Council currently commissions an independent external organisation to provide scrutiny support to NLF, tenants’ and residents’ groups and our wider tenants and residents. Tenant scrutiny involves a panel of tenants who meet regularly, gather evidence, give

feedback to the Council and make recommendations as part of an in-depth report. It has been a key success in improving tenants’ and residents’ ability to influence how services are delivered. NLF, our tenants’ and residents’ groups as well as individuals who are engaged in TP have helped identify and scrutinise several topics.



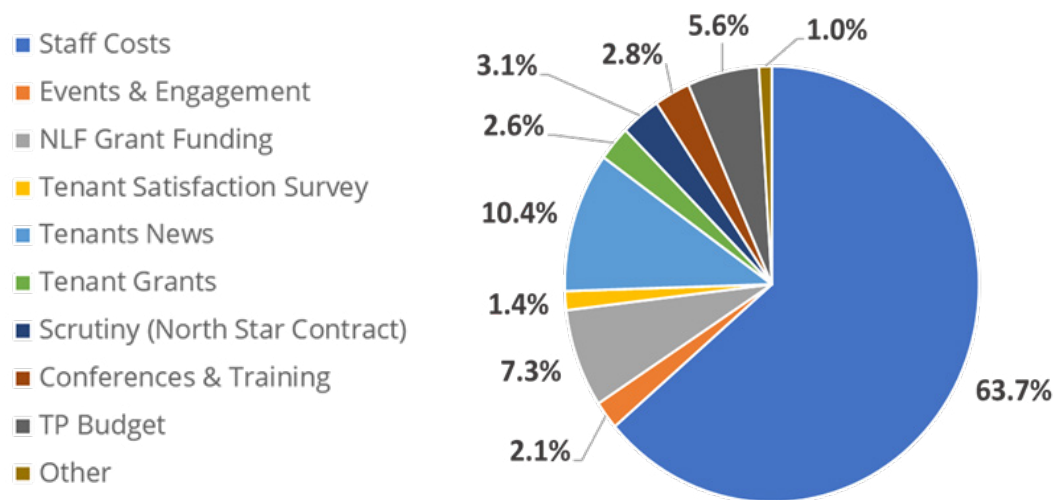
10. Tenant Participation Budget

The tenant participation budget expenditure was £352,954 for 2023/24 with two-thirds (63.7%) spent on staffing costs, 10.4% on the tenants’ newsletter – Tenants' News and 7.3% on NLF Grant Funding. The table and graph below provide a breakdown of how the budget was spent in the year 2023/24 on a range of service provision and engagement activities. It provides a good indicator of the resources required to enable successful delivery of this strategy.

Table 3: Budget Breakdown for 2023/24

Description	£	% of budget
Staff Costs	225,005	63.7
Events & Engagement	7,488	2.1
NLF Grant Funding	25,744	7.3
Tenant Satisfaction Survey	4,900	1.4
Tenants News	36,669	10.4
Tenants Grants	9,200	2.6
Scrutiny (North Star Contract)	10,985	3.1
Conferences & Training	9,904	2.8
TP budget	20,000	5.6
Other	3,059	1.0
Total	352,954	100.0

Figure 4: Budget Breakdown for 2023/24



11. Action Plan

Our action plan sets out the actions to be delivered to achieve our objectives and aim.

Objective 1: Enhance participation, capacity and empowerment across our communities			
Action	Milestones	Timescale	Lead
Key Action 1.1 In partnership with our tenants and residents annually review the Tenant Participation Strategy and update the action plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete an annual review of the Tenant Participation Strategy to align with current policy and legislative requirements 	2025-2030	TPT/Tenant Representatives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update progress on achieving actions within the plan 	Annual	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Involve tenant representatives in an appraisal of the actions contained in the new strategy 	2025-2030	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue quarterly reporting on the strategy actions 	Quarterly	
Key Action 1.2 Review and revitalise local tenant participation action plans in consultation with local groups and chairpersons' meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual review of tenant participation at locality level 	Annual	Local Groups, Chairpersons' Meetings, TPT & LHT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quarterly TPT and Locality Manager meetings to discuss actions 	Quarterly	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver joint tenants and staff training annually promoting awareness of the process of tenant participation at locality level 	Annual	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage attendance of tenants at local tenant participation action meetings 	Annual	
Key Action 1.3 Consider and develop opportunities for social forms of engagement that will encourage tenant participation and build capacity within communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with tenants and residents to develop a range of social forms of engagement that encourage tenant participation and build capacity 	2025-2030	TPT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a guidance note to outline social activities that can be supported through tenant participation grant funding 	2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide support to tenants' and residents' groups to create a diary of social activities 	2025-2030	

Objective 1: Enhance participation, capacity and empowerment across our communities			
Action	Milestones	Timescale	Lead
Key Action 1.4 Develop an annual tenant participation training and information programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a revised training plan for tenant participation 	2025	TPT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult with tenants and residents on future training and information requirements 	2025-2030	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult voluntary and public sector organisations on potential joint training opportunities 	2025-2030	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop information programme 	2025-2030	
Key Action 1.5 Review arrangements in relation to grant assistance to support tenants' and residents' groups and NLF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current funding arrangements 	2025-2030	TPT/NLF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider review and tenant scrutiny findings to inform future resourcing 	2025-2030	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult on and develop proposals in relation to tenant participation 	2025-2030	
Key Action 1.6 Continue to develop effective communication to help ensure involvement opportunities are accessible for everyone	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide high quality information in plain language that can be accessed in a range of formats and languages 	2025-2030	TPT/NLF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and maintain a register of tenants and residents who require information in alternative formats or languages or need specific assistance to participate to their full potential 	2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review existing tenant participation information available via the Council website or printed form to ensure it is accessible and easy to understand 	2025	

Objective 2: Continue to develop engagement opportunities for our tenants, residents and under-represented groups that will develop their capacity to help themselves			
Action	Milestones	Timescale	Lead
Key Action 2.1 Work with our tenants and residents to produce and review the 'Tenant Participation Guide'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consult and engage with tenants on content 	2025 - 2030	TPT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and produce a 'Guide to Tenant Participation' including Code of Practice, NLF Business Plan, Code of Conduct, Terms of Reference, Constitution, Evaluations, Grant Applications 	2026	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider and develop opportunities that will increase participation and reduce administrative burden on groups and individuals starting their tenant participation journey 	2025 - 2030	
Key Action 2.2 Undertake annual tenants' engagement opportunities to inform and influence service delivery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and publicise annual diary of engagement opportunities 	Annual	TPT/NLF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out regular consultation on rent increases and provide clear and concise information to help tenants make informed choices 	Annual	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist NLF to develop an Open Meeting programme on key service areas 	2025 - 2030	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist NLF to develop and implement their Food for Thought (FfT) Programme 	2025 - 2030	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure recommendations and findings from FfT programme inform future service delivery for Housing Solutions 	Annual	
Key Action 2.3 Raise awareness of tenant participation services and activities within our local communities and council services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage more individuals to become involved in tenant participation 	Annual	TPT/LHT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase visibility of staff within communities 	2025 - 2030	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the voice of tenants and residents is represented at the Community Boards 	2025 - 2030	
Key Action 2.4 Increase involvement of under-represented groups in tenant participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve our understanding of the profile of tenants and residents involved in tenant participation 	2025 - 2030	TPT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement a framework for gathering equality monitoring data for tenants and residents involved in tenant participation 	2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Undertake annual analysis of equality monitoring information to identify under-represented groups 	Annual	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an action plan to increase involvement of under-represented groups/ individuals 	2025 (and kept under review)	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish connections with the pan Lanarkshire Gypsy Traveller Strategic Group to explore opportunities to support engagement and participation of the Gypsy Traveller community in shaping services 	2025	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with NLC Equalities Manager to identify opportunities to increase awareness of tenant participation amongst under-represented groups linking to the Council's Equality Strategy 	2025 - 2030	

Objective 3: Ensure effective use of tenant participation resources to involve tenants and residents in the decisions, and development of services and supports			
Action	Milestones	Timescale	Lead
Key Action 3.1 Review Tenants' Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Carry out market research to determine best media/form for newsletter 	Ongoing	ALL
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Newsletter Working Group to involve tenants and residents in assisting with content ideas and tenant articles 	2025 - 2030	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Produce two Tenants Newsletters annually 	Bi-annual	
Key Action 3.2 Further develop use of technology to promote and increase tenant participation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review electronic publicity methods and implement findings 	2025	TPT/NLC
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase use of social media and council website to inform, involve and engage on tenant participation 	2025 - 2030	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and implement training programme for social media training for tenants' and residents' groups and individuals 	2026	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop virtual tenants' and residents' opportunities for engagement and participation 	2025 - 2030	
Key Action 3.3 Develop ongoing programme of tenant scrutiny topics and activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete annual programme of tenant scrutiny activities and implement recommendations/findings 	Annual	TPT/NLF
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assist NLF to develop annual programme of tenant scrutiny 	Annual	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review current service delivery model 	2026	
Key Action 3.4 Deliver tenant participation services at a neighbourhood level to respond to needs as they arise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop short-life groups to address particular local housing issues 	Annual	TPT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve communication and relationships by keeping groups and individuals updated on staff changes within local teams 	2025 - 2030	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all frontline housing staff are consistently trained and informed in relation to tenant participation 	2025 - 2030	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide joint training opportunities in relation to tenant participation for staff in other services 	2025 - 2030	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop relationships with other council services to enable 'piggy backing' at wider engagement events to promote tenant participation 	2025 - 2030	

Objective 4: Demonstrate continued commitment to customer satisfaction and feedback			
Action	Milestones	Timescale	Lead
Key Action 4.1 Review methods for measuring tenant satisfaction to reflect demographic profile of our tenants and meet requirements of the Scottish Housing Regulator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete review 	2025 - 2030	HS/TPT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop bank of case studies to demonstrate achievements and successes 	2025 - 2030	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete review of how we report back to tenants and residents on the findings, recommendations and actions in relation to tenant surveys 	2026	
Key Action 4.2 Continue to develop and maintain a database of tenants/ customers who have agreed to be contacted to take part in consultation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Database reviewed annually and updated regularly 	Annual	TPT
Key Action 4.3 Produce an annual performance report in consultation with tenant representatives and in line with Charter guidelines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annual Performance Report produced and submitted 	Annual	HS
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and refresh the sub-group comprised of NLF representatives and ensure regular schedule of meetings to look at the ARC, Performance Report & the Annual Assurance Statement 	2025 - 2030	
Key Action 4.4 Annually review outcomes for NLF Subgroups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete annual review of NLF Subgroups using the Place Standard tool 	Annual	TPT
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement review findings 	2025 - 2030	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop programme of activity to be shared with other council services to demonstrate how wider council engagement is vital to success 	2025 - 2030	

RESPONSIBILITY KEY

Abbreviation	Description
NLF	North Lanarkshire Federation
TPT	Tenant Participation Team
LHT	Local Housing Team
NLC	North Lanarkshire Council
HS	Housing Solutions

12. Monitoring and Evaluation

The TP Steering Group meets quarterly involving tenant representatives from the NLF and is chaired by the Convener of Housing. This group is responsible for ensuring progress is reported and achieved in relation to the actions and milestones set out in the strategy. An annual review of the strategy will be undertaken in consultation with NLF and our tenants and residents.

If you would like to comment on the strategy or to get involved in tenant participation, please contact our Tenant Participation Team on 07890438431 or e-mail tenantparticipation@northlan.gov.uk

13. Glossary

AGM	Annual General Meeting
ARC	Annual Return on the Charter
LHS	Local Housing Strategy
NLC	North Lanarkshire Council
NLF	North Lanarkshire Federation of Tenants' and Residents'
RTO	Registered Tenant Organisation
SHR	Scottish Housing Regulator
SSHC	Scottish Social Housing Charter
TP	Tenant Participation
TPT	Tenant Participation Team

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