

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY

2021 to 2024



Introduction

Housing management is not just about bricks and mortar – it is about working in partnership with customers and residents to help everyone achieve the best for our district.

At Rykneld Homes we are committed to helping communities become involved in our work and supporting groups and individuals who want to help people to flourish on our estates and in our towns and villages.

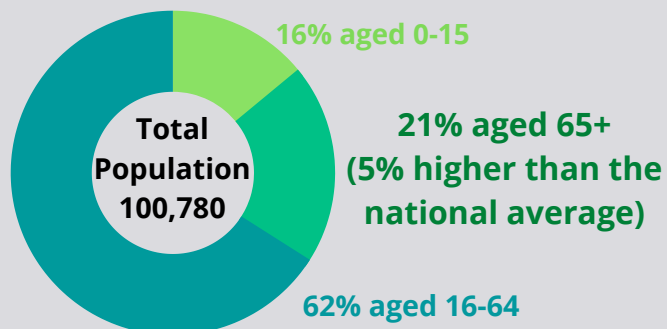
We believe this can only be achieved by working in close partnership with local communities. Our three-year Community Involvement Strategy sets out both our priorities and how we will deliver on the priorities set nationally by the government. We want this strategy to act as a framework which can bring these together and ensure the customer voice continues to be at the heart of what we do.

Community Involvement is a key part of us helping to achieve the Council's vision, so that North East Derbyshire is:

- Clean and attractive
- A place where people are proud to live and work
- A place where people will prosper
- A place where people will feel safe, happy and healthy.



North East Derbyshire at a glance



Number of people in 'bad' general health (1.4% higher than national average)



1 in 3 adults are physically inactive (less than 30 mins of moderate exercise per week)



Our Community Involvement Team

Rykneld Homes' Community Involvement Officers are dedicated to empowering our customers to help the council and Rykneld Homes continuously improve housing throughout the District.

They also work with the wider community to support groups and develop projects that enhance local areas and improve wellbeing. The team has won national awards for developing innovative projects that meet community needs.

Our Approach

At Rykneld Homes and North East Derbyshire District Council (NEDDC) we believe that customers are at the heart of our organisation. They bring the knowledge and experience of living in our homes and on our estates. They also offer a personal perspective on what their communities may want and need. We want engagement to be meaningful and accessible for customers to help shape our services. As a landlord, we are committed to delivering on government priorities and standards that ensure customers are engaged with our work and consulted about issues affecting their homes.

Rykneld Homes has signed up to the National Housing Federation's 'Together with Tenants Charter' a commitment which sets out key customer focussed priorities including openness, performance management and customer engagement.

We have always worked hard to meet such standards and are proud to support the Charter and its ambition to improve standards across the country.

At Rykneld Homes we focus on two types of involvement.

- Working with customers to strengthen our service delivery.
- Reaching out to the wider population and partners to help improve the quality of life for the communities we serve.

Improving Our Services

Work to improve our services is inclusive, reaching out to as many of our customers as possible.

Options are advertised through different media to attract as wide an audience as possible, including our website, our customer magazine Your Rykneld which is posted out to every customer four times a year, through social media and in our dedicated 'Get Involved' booklet, which sets out our involvement opportunities including time commitments.

Those options include the ability to get involved in the following ways:



Improvement
groups, Scrutiny
and Operational
Board



Digital
involvement from
home

Developing Our Communities

Enhancing residents' quality of life is a key aim for North East Derbyshire District Council and Rykneld Homes. This involves going out into the community and either supporting existing community projects and groups, or establishing new ones where there is a need.

Projects are varied, but the key themes we want to support include:

- Improving people's health, both physical and mental
- Bringing the community together and reducing social isolation
- Improving opportunities for children and young people
- Enhancing the environment
- Tackling unemployment
- Reducing anti-social behaviour
- Encouraging volunteering

Demonstrating Impact

The Community Involvement Team produces an Annual Report, which clearly sets out key projects and what benefits they've had, both in terms of service improvements and community development. Using nationally recognised measures, the team can estimate the social value of their work, which tells us the wider benefits to society.

The impact demonstrates that social housing is about much more than just the houses we build and maintain.



Our Commitment

NEDDC and Rykneld Homes believe Community Involvement is essential to the provision of a successful housing service. We have signed up to the Together with Tenants Charter and commit to:

- **Relationships** - Involvement will be inclusive, representing our customer base and the wider community. We will ensure our involvement is based on honesty, openness and transparency.
- **Voice and Influence** - We will seek and value the views of customers, and will use this information to inform decisions. Every individual resident will feel listened to on the issues that matter to them and can speak without fear.
- **Communication** - We will provide clear, accessible and timely information about the issues that matter to customers. This includes providing important information about customers' homes and

local communities, how the organisation is working to address problems, how the organisation is run, and information about performance on key issues.

- **Accountability** - Collectively, we will work in partnership with customers so they can independently scrutinise us and hold us to account for the decisions that affect the quality of their homes and services. We will report annually on the impact of our Community Involvement work.
- **Quality** - We will work with partners to develop meaningful projects that deliver customer priorities, look at best practice across the housing industry and strive to be innovative in our approach.
- **When things go wrong** - Residents will have simple and accessible routes for raising issues, making complaints and seeking redress. Residents will receive timely advice and support when things go wrong.

Key Priorities

Within the course of this three year strategy we will focus on many projects and initiatives.

Some will be a continuation of existing priorities and some will be new projects, developed in response to ever shifting community needs. Our priorities must be flexible as requirements, situations and agendas change.

We have however set some key priorities for focus during the term of this strategy. These will be delivered through a range of projects and initiatives, and will be planned and delivered in partnership with customers and the wider community.



Enhance the Natural Environment

Our Community Involvement Team have long engaged in projects that enhance the environment and habitats for wildlife. The team plan to expand on this and grow the number of projects that seek to protect and promote wildlife.

We will look to engage as many people as possible with this, giving a particular focus to involving children and young people. Through projects of this sort we hope to inspire a new generation of nature enthusiasts.

Use Technologies to Connect Communities With Our Staff

We recently established a new Digital Involvement Group, enabling customers to engage in consultation through online surveys. We will continue to look at digital options to broaden the number of customers who can get involved with Rykneld Homes.

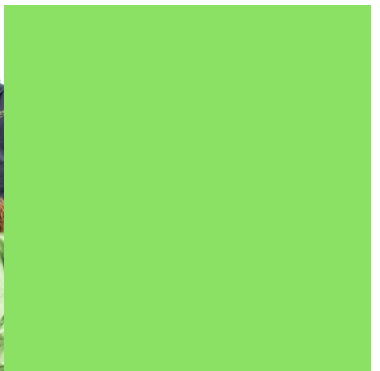
The COVID-19 response clearly demonstrated the power of new technologies in keeping people connected. We will look to learn from this and make use of these tools so we can innovate the way we engage with our customers and the wider community.

Wider Context

This Community Involvement Strategy does not sit in isolation. There are many factors that will influence its implementation. The social housing landscape is always changing and we will ensure that we are able to continually adapt to those changes.

We will therefore regularly review the strategy and reflect on how we can deliver Community Involvement that is forward thinking and flexible.

The strategy seeks to deliver on the National Housing Federations' Together with Tenants Charter, which is in the process of being implemented nationally. There are elements of the charter that are addressed in other Rykneld Homes policies and strategies, including our Customer Care Strategy and our Complaints Handling Policy. For more information on these, please get in touch or visit our website.



If you would like to contact us about this strategy or if you want to get involved with Rykneld Homes you can



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www.rykneldhomes.org.uk



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