



Tenant Participation

January 2025

What do these slides cover?

These slides bring together our thinking around how we would like to work alongside DMCs, TRAs and other tenants to make sure that everyone has a voice and the opportunity to influence decision making. Together, it sets out how we can continue to champion and enable community power on our estates and neighbourhoods.

We know we cannot begin to tackle the housing challenges we are facing without strong tenant participation and engagement.

The proposal has been developed within the context of considerable financial HRA constraints and will be delivered within our existing Council participation resource.

In particular, we are keen to discuss:

- How the proposals set out in this paper can support you in your roles.
- How we can work together to further socialise and work alongside tenants to achieve the participation ambitions set out in this slide pack.

What we're trying to do (in summary)

We have an established **We Make Camden Participation model** that supports the whole council in making sure:

- everyone has the opportunity to be an active citizen;
- we proactively bring citizens closer to decision making, service design and scrutiny;
- we champion community power and social action across the borough.

The practices, behaviours and approaches that underpin this model are applicable across the whole council; our teams, our services and our missions.

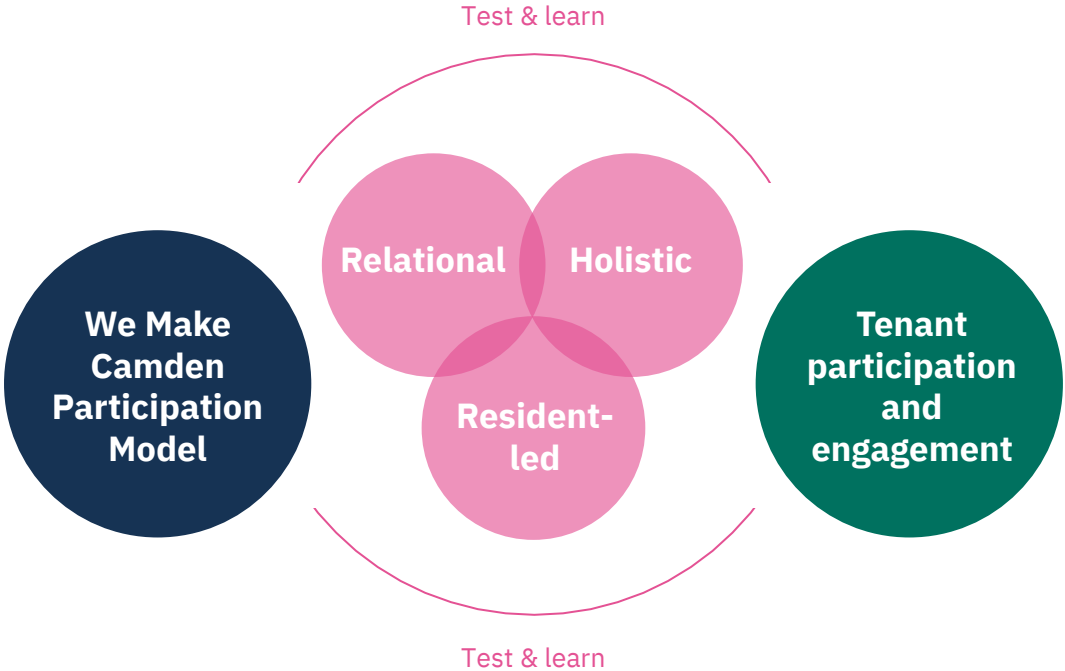
As a Council, we must make sure that we meet (and strive to exceed), **new housing standards** set out by the regulator. The Accountability & Influencing standards explicitly require us to make sure that we have the channels, means and processes in place to proactively and regularly engage with our tenants; and that we are acting on the things that we learn.

Our ambitions stretch beyond our statutory requirements. It is only by working together with citizens that we will improve the quality of life of residents and deliver services in the best way we can. We will look to embed participatory ways of working across housing so that over time they become 'how we do things'.

Applying our We Make Camden participation model to increase the participation and engagement of people who live in Camden housing

We Make Camden Participation Model aims:

- 1** Everyone has the opportunity to be an active citizen
- 2** Champion community power & social action
- 3** Bringing citizens closer to decision making, service design & scrutiny



Our priority areas of focus:

- 1** Meet & exceed housing standards
- 2** Embed new ways of working in day-to-day jobs
- 3** Support the implementation of neighbourhood working

Our We Make Camden tenant participation principles

Share power with tenants,

providing opportunities for people to make decisions about their local neighbourhood and how services are provided.

Increase diversity of active citizens, recognise that involvement opportunities need to fit with people's busy lives

and provide a variety of different ways for residents to get involved.

Champion community power and action

– support citizens to take action to improve their home/estate/ neighbourhood.

Support the Council to have 'one conversation' with tenants.

Council services (e.g. youth services) invest in supporting/engaging citizens to have the confidence to be active. We will connect with these residents and provide opportunities for their voice to influence change.

Make sure participation and engagement is part of our business as usual approach to working at the Council.

Embed participatory practice into the design and delivery of the biggest priorities within the housing transformation programme.

What will this help us achieve?

People to feel part of their neighbourhood and feel connected with others in their community

Residents to feel listened to, heard and supported, and receive timely responses to their questions and concerns

Everyone to have a sense of pride in where they live and the opportunity to be involved in making local decisions about their estates & neighbourhoods

Camden Council to be more visible and approachable to residents in our estates and neighbourhoods

People to have a positive relationship with the Council and trust that we are doing everything we can to make sure they receive help and support they need.

The Council to build a relationship with our residents that is open and honest, so when we can't meet their needs we discuss why.

The Council to operate as one Council....so residents receive a holistic and personalised service

To work with DMCs and TRAs to develop and grow our networks of active citizens and organisations, to support social action and local decision making

What will this look like as an offer for our tenants?

For
Tenants

Offer for tenants who want to take local action:

- Join or set up a TRA
- Attend one of our Estate Days or Estate Plan Inspection Days (publish dates every 12 months)
- Become a Community Champion
- Apply to the We Make Camden Kit
- Set up or join a Gardening / Food Growing Group
- Use one of our 'How to Guides' which share citizen stories of how to take action on estates
- Join / set up a Sharing Spaces project

Offer for tenants who want to be involved in local decision making, service design:

- Connect with your local DMC
- Join our virtual We Make Camden citizens group and we'll contact you with opportunities to take part in quick surveys, focus groups, reading panels and newsletters.
- Register an interest in being involved in one of our panels and work alongside us to influence decision making and service design.

What will this look like?

For residents:

Increased officer visibility in our Neighbourhoods:

- 10 Neighbourhood Action Days per year
- Regular officer presence on estates as business as usual

Community Champions

Projects on estates in 5 neighbourhoods. Explore how we can work with **Citizen activists** on other estates in the borough.

Resource and support to enable tenants to be active in their homes e.g. small scale repairs (e.g. how to guides)

Enabling social action/collaboration on our estates (including how to guides)

Opportunities to influence via existing involvement networks (e.g. youth services, Arsenal in the Community, Parents Champions)

Involvement opportunities (including how to join or set up a TRA) communicated clearly.

We Make Camden Kit and DMC funding/supporting citizen led action and growing the number of active citizens.

Support provided to set up gardening and food growing projects.

For housing services:

- The Council's Participation and Partnerships Team will work alongside the Tenant Participation and Engagement Team to connect housing colleagues and the rest of the Council with neighbourhood networks, including DMCS and TRAs.
- **Regular temperature checks and insight updates** will be produced, via our online groups, so that housing colleagues and the rest of the Council can get a sense of the issues, priorities and ideas within neighbourhoods/Estates.
- Colleagues will be able to have **early conversations across neighbourhood networks**, to test out approaches early and build understanding of the rationale behind our approaches – so that they are equipped to be able to explain to others across their network.

Bring citizens closer to decision making, service design and scrutiny (opening up the council)

Our approach to tenant participation:

- Our DMC and TRA model in Camden continues to be key to achieving this outcome. Our standing **Housing and Property Residents Panel** will meet regularly to consider ways the Council can improve and tailor their approach to delivering services (including tenant engagement) and will scrutinise/hold the Council to account. The **Housing Customer Experience Oversight Panel** will review complaints and propose solutions to help stop the same issues happening again.
- Given the pace at which we want to move forward with our housing transformation priorities and the challenging and complex context we are working in, we will develop our panel approach further to establish a virtual **We Make Camden Tenants and Leaseholders group**. 100 tenants will be recruited through a random selection method for one year. Engagement and participation approaches will be developed to ensure accessibility and flexibility of involvement.
- Every tenant or leaseholder in Camden will have the opportunity to be updated about consultation and engagement opportunities, by joining our existing online **We Make Camden citizens group**. Those signed up will receive updates on the activity of panels and WMC Tenants Group and ideas/action from the We Make Camden network.
- We will work across our network to ensure young people's voices are fairly represented while recognising the importance they place on trusted relationships and positive activities.

The Housing Regulatory Framework sets out that the Council should:

- *Make sure communication with and information for tenants is clear, accessible, relevant, timely and appropriate to the diverse needs of tenants.*
- *Ensure that Landlord services are accessible, and that the accessibility is publicised to tenants.*
- *Give tenants a wide range of meaningful opportunities to influence and scrutinise their landlord's strategies, policies and services....*
- *Registered providers must provide accessible support that meets the diverse needs of tenants so they can engage...*
- *Registered providers, working with tenants, must regularly consider ways to improve and tailor their approach to delivering landlord services including tenant engagement. They must implement changes as appropriate to ensure services deliver the intended aims.*

What will this look like?

For residents:

Clearly communicated offer of involvement opportunities, promoted via our website, printed communications and via social media (across our neighbourhood networks).

- DMC micro sites enable the DMC and TRA model to continue to develop and evolve by enabling more tenants to access information and connect with their local DMC/TRA.
- Residents can join our We Make Camden online citizens group (open to everyone) with an enhanced digital platform and be kept up to date with opportunities to influence and be involved in service design, policy formulation and scrutiny. Regular temperature checks and offers to support you to take action in your communities.
- Residents can register an interest in joining our housing tenants and leaseholders panels/groups.

Open and honest conversations, with increased transparency about progress and outcomes, so people can see how their involvement has made a difference.

Opportunities for involvement as part of existing relationships/connections that residents have with services, groups and organisations across the borough.