

Appendix 1

Title: Resident Participation Survey 2018 Analysis
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Recommendations: The DMC is asked to consider the report and discuss suggested ways of encouraging participation.

Report Summary: The report provides DMCs with an analysis of the results of the Resident Participation Survey 2018 and provides a series of suggestions towards stronger tenant participation. Suggestions are aimed at the Council and existing structures such as TRAs and DMCs.

1. Background

The [Resident Participation Survey](#) was launched on 13 September 2018 to find out what level of influence Camden's tenants and leaseholders think they should have in the delivery and running of the Council's housing services. The survey was accessible via the Council's online consultation hub with hard copies sent out on request. By the time the consultation closed on the 15 October, 1161 residents had responded to the survey.

2. Residents want to participate

Responses to the survey show that tenants and leaseholders do want to take part in decision-making and in the life of their estate:

- 44.6% of residents believe tenants and leaseholders should have "quite a bit" of a say and would like to see Camden support them more to set up TRAs and work with them to develop local plans and run community activities. 18.17% would like to have "a lot" of a say.
- 26.1% would rather only get together occasionally to agree priorities.
- 9.5% want rather to "get on with their lives".

For those who want to participate, inspecting and commenting on the quality of housing services and deciding on how to spend the budget are the priority (71.5% and 54.6% respectively).

A majority of residents prefer to participate personally by giving their opinions directly to the council (72.8%) while less than a fifth said that they would like their voice heard via a representative (16.8%).

3. Towards stronger participation

While the survey was mostly about ways of involving tenants and leaseholders in participation mechanisms in place in Camden, most of the questions gave residents the opportunity to share their opinion on the current offer. Many residents do value the opportunities that are on offer and feel satisfied with them. However, many are calling on the Council and the already existing structures to encourage participation further.

What could the Council do in response?

- Launch a campaign of information

A striking majority of respondents (84.24%) are not able to name any of the participation opportunities. This seems to indicate that many opportunities are being missed when more than 60% of respondents said they would like to be involved 'quite a bit' or 'a lot' (see para 2 above). 16.9% of residents said they never hear about options to participate. This shows that the Council needs to broaden information they already provide about the opportunities that exist to participate. For instance, the council could run an information campaign through emails and leaflets sent to all tenants and leaseholders, on notice boards in estates, the Camden Magazine and the Housing newsletter with the aim of raising awareness and broadening participation.

- Target participation amongst BAME and younger residents

Those who identify as white British and those aged between 45 and 74 are proportionally the most aware of opportunities to participate. This shows that additional communication on participation could be targeting BAME and younger residents. The Council could engage with these residents to understand what more they need to be able to participate (through focus groups for example). This will be a priority in the New Year as part of the TP strategy development.

- Improve communication towards leaseholders

The results of the survey suggest that there seems to be a feeling among some leaseholders that they are in a minority, that their voices are not being heard (by the Council and in comparison with tenants) and that they are not properly informed of what they are paying for. The Council will commit to go to the leaseholder forum to discuss the outcome and publish information in the leaseholder newsletter.

- Use accessible and user-friendly communication

Some residents feel that the website could be clearer and more user-friendly. Some also feel that communication needs to be more accessible (including using a more accessible language). The Council could therefore review its existing communication and find new ways of communicating with residents in consultation with residents, including those with disabilities. In the new year we will be consulting with disability groups as part of the TP strategy development and will include communication with the aim of feeding this as part of the website development and any future communication.

- Always action when issues are raised and follow up

For some people there was a concern that the Council didn't follow up on issues raised directly or through TRAs. At the same time, some feel that it is difficult to contact the Council, with long waiting times on the phone, at times. Some also feel that it is difficult to meet someone in person. With the Landlord Review, residents will have a single point of contact to support to address their issues. The Council could also strengthen its presence in the estates, with housing officers on site and regular estates walkabouts where residents could point things out to officers. The Council could also think about opening local "hubs" where officers and residents can meet and discuss local problems.

- **Involve residents more in the commissioning, monitoring and oversight of works**

Some also feel that they should have more of a say in the commissioning and monitoring of works carried out by the Council or external contractors. The Council already has mechanisms to involve residents in these and has involved residents for the tendering of the repairs contract and is currently involving resident representatives in the Chalcots works. The new Eyes and Ears project will be another way of making resident involvement part of how we deliver services going forward.

What could TRAs and DMCs do?

- **Be more visible and communicate more with residents**

Few respondents were able to name at least one participation opportunity (173 out of 1161). Of these, only 78 knew about TRAs and 28 about DMCs. While the Council should strengthen its communication around these existing opportunities for residents to participate (see above), TRAs and DMCs could also think about ways of ensuring that residents are aware of their activities and outcomes.

- **Open up recruitment and increase representation from BAME and younger residents**

As explained above, BAME and younger residents are less aware of opportunities to participate and, while the Council should target communication at those groups, TRAs and DMCs could look at ways of increasing take up and participation among those groups. This would help changing the feeling of some that DMCs are sometimes not 'open'.

- **Find more flexible ways for residents to take part**

Some residents say that they would be interested in attending TRA and/or DMC meetings but cannot because they are not able to attend in person meetings that are organised during week nights. TRAs and DMCs could think about holding their meetings perhaps at different times or find ways for residents to dial in (through Skype for example).

Resident Participation Survey 2018: Overview of Results

1. Statistical information on respondents

1161 tenants and leaseholders responded:

- More tenants than leaseholders took part (663 tenants (57%) vs 482 leaseholders (41.52%).
- More women than men took part (57.71% vs 40.14%).
- The majority of respondents were aged 45 to 64 (52%). A small number of younger (16 to 24 – 0.69%) and older (65 and above – 3.96%) took part in the consultation.
- Almost a majority of respondents identified as English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British (48.58%). 12.66% identified as any other White and 4.74% as Black or Black British. More than 10% of respondents refused to answer the question (5.43%) or did not answer at all (5.08%).

2. Question by question

Camden's Housing Service currently offers a number of resident participation opportunities. Are you able to name any of them?

A striking majority of respondents (84.24%) are not able to name any of the participation opportunities. 173 respondents feel able to name at least one participation opportunity. Among these, the most popular answers are: TRAs (78 – 45%); The Leaseholder Forum (40 – 23.1%); DMCs (28 – 16.1%); CASP (9 – 5.2%); and Sheltered Housing Forum (5 – 2.8%). These figures are low if taking into account that more than 1161 residents responded.

Of the 173 who know of at least one opportunity to participate, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- Leaseholders know proportionally more about opportunities to participate than tenants (49.7% of leaseholders (86) vs 47.8% were tenants (83);
- Women know more of these opportunities than men (94 female 54.9% of women (94) vs 45% of men (78);
- Those who identify as British proportionally are more aware than others (54.3% of those who know compared to 48.5% of the total of respondents); and
- Residents between 45 and 74 are the most aware of opportunities to participate.

If you answered 'yes', what is your opinion of them?

Some residents highly value the opportunities they know of. However, for some others:

- "Forums can be political and not always representative."
- "They can be talking shops and lip service to the Council."
- "Discussions can be heated and some might feel uncomfortable."

In the last twelve months, have you taken any of the following actions in an attempt to resolve a local housing problem, express your views on a local housing issue or make a suggestion?

Phone and email seem to be the most common ways of contacting the Council (60.9% and 48.9%). Many also met Council staff face to face (19.2%) and used their Camden Account (24.9%). Less than a third (30.5%) made a complaint.

Asked about their opinions of these services, the following issues were raised:

- “The difficulty to meet (or talk to) someone in person;”
- “The jargonising communication;”
- “A feeling of being in a minority by leaseholders.”

How do you prefer to find out about opportunities to participate in housing services?

Emails (and e-newsletter) seem to be the favoured way (67.5%). Traditional paper information also score highly: leaflets through the door (33.6%), the Camden Magazine (20.7%) and Housing News (20%) all score higher than Camden’s website (19%). 16.9% of residents never hear about options to participate.

In what way do you prefer to participate?

A majority of residents prefer to participate personally by giving their opinions through (72.8%) while less than a fifth want a representative (16.8%).

Do you think that your landlord offers you a broad enough range of ways to participate?

In line with responses to previous questions, almost half of respondents do not know (47.5%). While a fifth (20.6%) are satisfied, almost a third (30.23%) answer ‘no’.

How much of a say do you think tenants and leaseholders should have in running their homes?

44.6% of residents believe tenants and leaseholders should have “quite a bit” of a say and would like to see Camden support them more to set up TRAs and work with them to develop local plans and run community activities. 26.1% would rather only get together occasionally to agree priorities. At both ends of the spectrum, 18.17% would like to have “a lot” of a say while 9.5% want rather to “get on with their lives”.

What do you think that tenants and leaseholders should participate in?

While a few do not want to participate at all, a very strong majority of respondents (71.5%) would like to be involved in “inspecting and commenting on the quality of housing services”. 54.6% would like to decide on how the budget is spent.

If there was one thing Camden Council could do to encourage you personally to participate in housing services, what would it be?

Most of the responses are in line with comments in the responses to previous questions (see 2.2. and 2.3.) and some residents suggest ways of improving the relationship between the Council and tenants/leaseholders:

- Through local “hubs” where officers and residents can meet and discuss local problems;
- Target areas that have little tenant participation and give support to establish TRAs;
- Meetings should be flexible, more accessible and organised at different times to accommodate the needs of all residents;
- Meetings should have short agendas;