

## TPAS Engagement Standards 2021 – BCT Self-Assessment

Criteria 1 – Governance and Transparency	BCT Comment
<p><b>1.1</b> There is a clearly defined and agreed role for residents in the governance arrangements of the organisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCT has 4 Tenant Board Members.</li> <li>• Customer Scrutiny Committee (CSC) is a formal committee that is part of BCT governance arrangements. The role of the CSC is set out in the Terms of Reference, and the Chair reports regularly to the Board on the work of the Committee.</li> <li>• CSC has a Tenant Board Member as Chair.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.2</b> There are clear, widely publicised routes for residents to hold the organisation to account on standards for service delivery, strategy, performance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tenant Engagement Framework in place.</li> <li>• BCT Performance is published through Board reports, reports to CSC and on BCT website</li> <li>• Service Standards in place.</li> <li>• Complaints procedure 2019 which was scrutinised by CSC and improvements put in place.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.3</b> There is an environment of mutual respect between the organisation and its residents with steps taken to identify and tackle negative stereotyping including understanding the impact of language and behaviours.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCT has a Code of Conduct for employees, tenant board members and involved tenants.</li> <li>• There are clear terms of reference in place for the CSC, BCYPP and the GMI's.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.4</b> The organisation regularly considers, and shares publically how it uses the learning from resident engagement as well as its data and insight to improve the services it provides.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCT publish Board reports on the BCT website, which includes performance and In-depth service reviews.</li> <li>• Performance regularly explained at CSC meetings.</li> <li>• BCT actively encourage tenant's involvement with the CSC.</li> <li>• CSC reviews include tenants. Recent Examples are BCT Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedure and the Repairs and Maintenance Review.</li> <li>• Tenant Grounds Maintenance Inspectors measure the grounds maintenance service KPIs.</li> <li>• We have a customer communications groups that review and approve BCT documents and information to tenants.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.5</b> The organisation provides regular assurance to its residents how it keeps them safe in their homes and how it meets the regulatory and legal requirements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular updates to BCT Board.</li> <li>• "Safety in your home" page on BCT website.</li> <li>• Information leaflets provided to all tenants covering health and safety issues and supplied to new tenants at sign up stage.</li> <li>• Fire Risk Assessment (FRA) information and progress updates of FRA actions published on the BCT website.</li> <li>• We publish Health and Safety reports on our website.</li> </ul>

<p><b>1.6</b> The organisation engages with residents to produce an appropriate and meaningful Annual Report which should include resident satisfaction measures; performance against its stated commitments; how income is being spent, complaints trends, impact from resident engagement and comparisons of the organisational wage structure and management costs.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Report to Tenants produced, involving tenants as part of the Customer Communications Group. The report is delivered to all households and published on BCT website.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.7</b> There is consistent and honest sharing of information with all stakeholders the risks the organisation faces, the person responsible for managing those risks, how it is meeting key organisational targets and how it plans to deal with areas of concern.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSC receives quarterly performance report that details key area of performance affecting the business and outlines mitigations.</li> <li>• Board Risk Register reports are available all on the BCT website.</li> <li>• Risk Registers reported to Board and associated Board committees.</li> <li>• Stress testing exercises undertaken by Board.</li> <li>• Progress on the Corporate Plan Action Plan is reported to Board quarterly. The Action Plan is also published on the BCT website.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.8</b> The organisation consults at least once every three years on the best way to involve residents in the governance and scrutiny of the housing management service.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCT carries out a regular Star survey with all residents and results reported to Board and the CSC, presented at the AGM and Tenants Conference and published on the Website.</li> <li>• Star surveys were undertaken in 2012, 2014, 2016 and 2018.</li> <li>• An additional comprehensive consultation was carried out in summer 2019 to establish their key priorities in regards to investment and service delivery.</li> </ul>
<p><b>1.9</b> The organisation publishes clear information on the roles and responsibilities of senior staff, including the named persons responsible for ensuring it meets both the economic and the consumer standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Executive Management Team information is published on the website.</li> </ul>

Criteria 2 – Scrutiny	BCT Comment
<p><b>2.1</b> Scrutiny activity works to the five Tpas Scrutiny key principles; Independent, Inclusive, Positive, Constructive &amp; Purpose.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• TPAS model principles were adopted by the BCT Board and CSC when developing the BCT scrutiny model.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.2</b> An appropriate and agreed scrutiny model and process is in place, with clear routes into the governance, business and service delivery operations of the organisation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSC in place and is a formal committee of BCT’s Governance structure.</li> <li>• CSC model undertakes tenant-led service reviews which are to the BCT Board.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.3</b> The organisation, including its staff and governance functions, values scrutiny as a critical friend from an independent resident led process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCT’s CSC sits at the heart of the organisation’s governance structure, service quality reviews, performance monitoring and appropriate engagement and involvement activities.</li> <li>• Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedure is a positive example of a recent tenant led review process.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.4</b> Scrutiny produces evidence based recommendations, is designed to improve services, increase efficiency and provide robust assessment.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSC has the opportunity to review and recommend service improvements.</li> <li>• Examples of CSC involvement in service improvements include Concierge and Cleaning Contract and review of Complaints and Compliments.</li> <li>• A team of Tenant Grounds Maintenance Inspectors regularly report on the work of the GM Team and then make recommendations for improvement where necessary.</li> <li>• In 2021, the CSC will conclude a review of the Repairs and Maintenance service focussing particularly on timescales for completing repairs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.5</b> Scrutiny activity is provided with the financial and administrative support it needs to carry out its business.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Activity is supported by senior staff, through all necessary resources being made available for meetings, training and administration.</li> <li>• CSC prioritise and plan the scope of any reviews.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.6</b> Scrutiny is provided with all relevant performance, regulatory, legal &amp; benchmarking information it needs to carry out its business.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance information is provided to Board and CSC.</li> <li>• Performance information includes benchmarking measures using HouseMark information.</li> <li>• Regulatory Standards assessments are reported to Board and CSC.</li> <li>• The Annual Report to Tenants includes BCTs Regulatory Judgement, Regulatory Standards self-assessment and additional benchmarking information.</li> </ul>
<p><b>2.7</b> Scrutiny has strong links with the other organisational engagement structures and the wider resident base in order to support its overall aims.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scrutiny links with other engagement structures including the Annual Tenants Conference, Annual Family Fun Day, various consultations and CSC members engage with tenants when obtaining feedback during service reviews.</li> <li>• CSC has oversight of Community Engagement Budget and related activities.</li> </ul>

Criteria 3 - Business and Strategy	BCT Comment
<p><b>3.1</b> Residents are meaningfully engaged in the co-creation, monitoring and review of the organisation's engagement strategy to make sure it delivers clear impact and value.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The BCT Tenant Engagement Framework (TEF) is aligned to the Engagement Strategy agreed by Board and it is reviewed on a 3 year cycle.</li> <li>• CSP will lead a review of the TEF in 2021.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.2</b> Residents are meaningfully engaged in the development, monitoring and review of the organisation's policy; service; budget and strategic development as well as any local offers for service delivery.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic development of BCT for 2020/25 was heavily consulted upon during 2019 to ascertain customer priorities and objectives.</li> <li>• The BCT investment programme and budget were reviewed and changes were made as a result of the engagement.</li> <li>• In February 2021 the CSC agreed a new policy for performance reporting for 21/22 and stage 2 of the Thriving Byker Strategy.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.3</b> Residents and staff are clear of the purpose and intended outcomes of all engagement activities with clear explanations of the time needed and their level of influence.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two of the BCT strategic objectives are to "Contribute to a Thriving Byker" and "To sustain the BCT community ethos".</li> <li>• A published corporate plan action plan sets out engagement actions in relation to these objectives plus progress which is reported quarterly to Board and the report published online.</li> <li>• Engagement activities and outcomes are highlighted as part of news updates, newsletters, annual report to tenants, CSC, TARA meetings and at the annual tenants conference.</li> </ul>
<p><b>3.4</b> The organisation has a clear and publically stated plan for engaging residents in its health &amp; safety responsibilities and makes clear those responsible for compliance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCT publishes all health and safety compliance information and fire risk assessments on the website.</li> <li>• <i>A plan for engaging residents in health and safety responsibilities will be developed and published following the merger with Karbon Homes and when compliance service integration is complete.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>3.5</b> There is an agreed timeframe to ensure that all engagement activities provide enough time to hear and consider resident views.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCT adopt different consultation methods and time frames depending on the subject. For example, the Environmental Upgrade lasted a number of months and used various consultation methods, including interactive maps.</li> <li>• Allocated times slots for engagement events, presentations and other activities always allow time for questions or for residents to openly air their views.</li> <li>• During COVID additional methods of consultation have included freephone telephone, freepost, email, online, social media in accordance with safe working requirements.</li> </ul>

<p><b>3.6</b> There is a clear and consistent method for reporting back to residents how their views have been considered in all engagement activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• BCT Board reports available on the BCT website.</li><li>• CSC reviews communications and considers the most appropriate methods to communicate to tenants and residents.</li><li>• Byker News includes a “you said, we did” section.</li></ul>
<p><b>3.7</b> Residents are consulted in a timely and effective manner on a change in landlord or significant change in the management arrangements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A comprehensive consultation was carried out between 14<sup>th</sup> September and 30<sup>th</sup> October 2020 on the potential transfer of engagement/merger with Karbon Homes. A range of consultation activities were out in place in accordance with COVID safety guidelines as mentioned in 3.5.</li></ul>

Criteria 4 - Complaints	BCT Comment
<p><b>4.1</b> There is a clear, accessible and continuously publicised complaints policy designed with residents, that shows the definition of a complaint, how to complain, key timescales, routes for redress, how to access help and support and who has responsibility for the complaints process.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSC led review of BCT Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedure agreed by BCT Board in November 2019.</li> <li>• Policy is published on the BCT website and promoted in BCT reception along with complaints performance.</li> <li>• CSC compared the complaints procedure against the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code in August 2020</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.2</b> The organisation ensures information on the Housing Ombudsman is readily available for all residents and provides assurance of its compliance with the complaints handling code.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Included in BCTs complaints information and in the staged response letters.</li> <li>• BCT also adhere to the Housing Ombudsman Complaint Handling Code.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.3</b> Complaints are encouraged as opportunities to listen, learn and influence change with a culture that assures that speaking out will not bring negative consequences.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• “Learning from complaints review” forms are completed after every complaint.</li> <li>• Any learning or opportunity to improve services is considered and implemented where possible.</li> <li>• CSC participated in action learning of complaints in February 2020.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.4</b> Residents are engaged in the continuous learning and development from complaints, with all improvements widely publicised to residents and staff.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints performance is published on BCT website and in BCT reception.</li> <li>• Complaints performance will also be included in future BCT Performance Scorecards for 2020/21 and reported to BCT Board and CSC quarterly.</li> <li>• Future plans will include the publication of complaints information in Byker News.</li> <li>• CSC reviews complaints performance and learning.</li> <li>• BCT carry out a sample survey of customers who have complained in the previous quarter.</li> </ul>
<p><b>4.5</b> Complaints, including those determined by the Housing Ombudsman, are documented, widely communicated and consistently publicised to all stakeholders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Complaints information is reported to Board and CSC and published separately on the BCT website.</li> <li>• <i>Future complaints and compliments information will also be published in the Byker News.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>4.6</b> Residents are engaged in routinely reviewing the complaints handling policy &amp; process to include self-assessment against the Housing Ombudsman’s Complaint Handling Code.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CSC led review of BCT Complaints and Compliments Policy and Procedure in 2019 and will be reviewed every 3 years.</li> </ul>

<b>4.7</b> The organisation encourages resident involvement in complaint handling through the formation of resident panels.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The CSC will lead on the review of the Policy in 2022</li></ul>

<b>Criteria 5 – Information and Communication</b>	<b>BCT Comment</b>
<p><b>5.1</b> Relevant information is provided to all recognised panels and involved residents in an agreed time-frame to allow them to monitor performance and hold their landlord to account on how key organisational objectives are being met.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Board and CSC papers are issued a minimum of 7 days in advance.</li> <li>• Prior to the Board and Committee meetings, residents are encouraged to meet with the Chief Executive to discuss any questions that they might have regarding the reports and information they have received.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.2</b> All information provided to residents is clear and understandable with key points summarised, using an inclusive range of methods and in a format.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Performance information is presented using a range of methods in an easy to understand format that was agreed with Board and involved tenants.</li> <li>• BCT offer a language translation service for all documents.</li> <li>• Customer Communications Group in place that review BCT tenant publications including Byker News and Annual Report.</li> <li>• CSC were asked to review the performance scorecard.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.3</b> In any ad-hoc or specifically focussed engagement activity, information is provided in an agreed timeframe before any activity takes place.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCT advertise engagement opportunities on the BCT website, in the front office, community buildings, Byker News and on social media channels.</li> <li>• BCT employs the principle of issuing papers a minimum of 7 days in advance of any meeting.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.4</b> The organisational website holds easy to find and useful information on areas such as governance, regulatory judgements &amp; inspections, compliance, how to get involved, management, repairs, complaints, performance and the impact made from its resident engagement activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All information is available on BCT website.</li> <li>• Complaints pages developed with tenants to ensure ease of use.</li> <li>• Tenant engagement framework is published on BCT website.</li> <li>• There are clear, easy identifiable pages on the website relating to activities</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.5</b> The organisation provides an accessible and unhindered route for residents to request information relating to the activities of their landlord. This should be widely publicised to reflect its resident profile.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCT website has a Get in Touch page for residents to request information relating to any activity in a variety of means.</li> <li>• Every Byker News has a feature on how to contact BCT.</li> </ul>
<p><b>5.6</b> The organisation regularly distributes to its residents up to date information including</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCT publicises all Board reports including performance data, benchmarking and KPIS's.</li> <li>• Annual report</li> </ul>

Performance against set targets and emerging organisational challenges as well as topics of community and national interest. The frequency, content and methods of distribution will be agreed by the organisation and its residents.

- Byker news letters

Criteria 6 – Resources for Engagement	BCT Comment
<p><b>6.1</b> The organisation provides sufficient resources to deliver effective engagement and residents the opportunity to influence the decision about the resources made available.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCT employ a dedicated Community Engagement Officer.</li> <li>• Community Engagement budget is in place that is used to resource engagement opportunities and CSC.</li> <li>• Neighbourhood Housing Officers complete an annual 1-2-1 visit with every tenant to obtain face to face feedback and information.</li> <li>• Annual engagement calendar is publicised on the BCT website and in Byker News.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6.2</b> There is an appropriate system in place for recognition and reimbursement of the time given by residents for engagement activities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCT offers Board member remuneration and an expenses policy is in place.</li> <li>• Re-imbursment is provided to assist tenants to attend meetings e.g. taxis for those with mobility issues / childcare costs etc.</li> <li>• CSC meetings provided with light refreshments.</li> <li>• <i>COVID has identified the need for BCT to supply residents involved in the new Customer Scrutiny Panel with appropriate ICT facilities and this action will be investigated by the new BCT Committee when the Panel is in place.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>6.3</b> Involved residents are offered timely advice, relevant training and where appropriate, effective mentoring.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training is provided to both Board members and CSC members.</li> <li>• BCT have a Board Member Induction Framework and Board Training Plan.</li> <li>• Example of training provided would be CSC training delivered by Centre for Public Scrutiny relating to scrutiny reviews.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6.4</b> The organisation and its involved residents independently network to gather best practice in resident engagement and increase their awareness of the wider housing sector challenges.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Best practice visits to other organisations are offered as part of CSC reviews.</li> <li>• Networking opportunities are available at local seminars and tenant events i.e. NE Tenants Voice.</li> </ul>
<p><b>6.5</b> All staff can describe the benefits resident engagement can bring to the organisation, its residents and the wider community and understand how their role can enhance the organisation's ability to hear the residents' voice.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCT's bottom up 'Byker Approach' is understood by all staff.</li> <li>• Job descriptions are reflective of a leadership and empowerment approach to engagement.</li> <li>• A bespoke appraisal and competency framework exists which supports the leadership and empowerment culture of the organisation.</li> <li>• Staff surveys are undertaken to benchmark staff engagement levels.</li> <li>• Staff actively involved in the delivery of the Thriving Byker Strategy stage 2 during 2021.</li> </ul>

<b>Criteria 7 - Community &amp; Wider Engagement</b>	<b>BCT Comment</b>
<p><b>7.1</b> There is an appropriate menu of engagement opportunities that; reflects the resident profile; responds to the different needs in relation to equality strands and any additional support, which can be evidenced in the delivery of their services, engagement activities and communications to promote widespread engagement.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCT has implemented the Tenant Engagement Framework to promote widespread and meaningful engagement opportunities at different levels of involvement.</li> <li>• Annual 1-2-1 visit completed with every tenant,</li> <li>• Annual engagement calendar of activities in place.</li> <li>• BCT will continue to engage with tenants and residents, ensuring that they are involved in decision making and in setting the key priorities for the Estate through the delivery of the Thriving Byker Strategy (TBS) Stage 2.</li> <li>• BCT have developed a Strategic Partnership Group made up of Northumbria Police, Heads of the local Primary Schools, Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue and Newcastle City Council. BCT will work in close collaboration with key strategic partners, stakeholders, community and voluntary groups to achieve the TBS priorities and increase community activity.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7.2</b> The organisation provides opportunities for its residents to engage in emerging social housing sector policy consultations and responses.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BCT has a number of groups involved in the delivery of the Tenant Engagement Framework, including hard to reach groups and covering the wide demographic that is observed on the Byker Estate.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7.3</b> Where regeneration or planned improvements takes place, residents will be fully informed and from the start are part of the project planning, delivery and monitoring.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wide scale consultations are undertaken concerning regeneration or planned maintenance improvements. Examples would be the extensive Environmental Upgrade consultation undertaken to understand resident's environmental investment priorities.</li> <li>• Four different consultation activities during 2019 to gather customer opinions and priorities to help to inform the future strategy of BCT.</li> <li>• Information regarding upcoming regeneration and planned improvements are included in the Annual Report to Tenants and Byker News</li> <li>• All tenants involved in planned maintenance improvements receive a home visit and correspondence detailing the timing of improvements to their home.</li> <li>• Everyone is consulted prior to any work being carried out in their home and will also receive a satisfaction survey upon completion.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7.4</b> There is a clear approach to promoting and supporting community action in the communities the organisation has residents which includes any Right to Manage opportunities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Thriving Byker Strategy brings together over 25 different partners to deliver against range of issues including health, financial inclusion, employment and anti-social behaviour.</li> <li>• BCT supports a wide range of community activity covering Tenants and Residents Association and the Byker Children's and Young Peoples Partnership.</li> <li>• The TBS Stage 2 will continue to be the overarching agile document that will evolve around the development of a Action Plan. Stage Two of the TBS will be widely influenced by the views of</li> </ul>

	<p>tenants and residents over a number of key themes: pride and ownership in the area; health, wealth &amp; mindfulness; income maximisation; a cleaner and greener Byker; a safe place to live; children and young people; hard to reach groups; community training and employment; digital connectivity.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Strategic Partnership Group brings together the statutory organisations working in Byker, to govern and oversee the strategic aims and delivery of the TBS and will meet on a monthly basis.</li> </ul>
<p><b>7.5</b> Community Investment activities support partnership working and provide opportunities to increase understanding of resident and community priorities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Thriving Byker Strategy Stage Two has been drafted and consulted on and will bring community collaboration across 9 key strategic themes. A clear governance structure has been created for the implementation of the strategy with oversight from the Strategic Partners and with collaboration with over 25 different community organisations, who will support BCT to deliver a wide range of services in Byker that meet community priorities.</li> </ul>

Key    BCT    Byker Community Trust  
        CSC    Customer Scrutiny Committee  
        FRA    Fire Risk Assessment