

## Investigate, challenge and change - we are always looking for more residents to get involved in the Panel.

Join the Resident Influence and Accountability Panel and together we can make a difference. Are you:

1. A good communicator and listener?
2. Someone who feels that areas of the housing service could be improved?
3. Enthusiastic and reliable, with high standards of behaviour and integrity?
4. Someone who can challenge constructively?
5. A person who can work effectively both independently and as part of a team?

If you answered a yes to any of these questions, our Panel may be for you.

### What is the Resident Influence and Accountability Panel?

The Resident Influence and Accountability Panel (the Panel) was previously known as the Strategic Tenants And Residents (STAR) Panel. The new name reflects the new standard which was introduced on 1 April 2024 by the Regulator of Social Housing. The regulator's Transparency, Influence and Accountability Standard requires social landlords to be open with residents; treat them with fairness and respect so they can access services, raise complaints when necessary, influence decision making and hold their landlord to account.

The Panel consist of up to 12 council tenants and leaseholders, who work in partnership with the housing service to improve services and get better value for money. Residents do not 'represent' individual tenants and or leaseholders but bring a service-user perspective to discussions that influence decisions and shape services. This panel also carries out Resident scrutiny exercises and gives residents a greater influence and the ability to hold us to account for the quality and delivery of our housing services.

The Panel meets every three months in person and or online and deals with an interesting array of topics. The Resident Chair is elected by their peers and the Panel members are selected through a competency-based recruitment processes and can serve up to three years.

### What's in it for me?

It's an excellent way to meet new people, learn new skills and build your confidence. You'll receive a £150 shopping voucher for each of the four meetings you attend in person, (including a short planning and de-brief online meeting, to support each of the four main meetings). This will also be making a meaningful difference to how housing services are delivered to you and other residents. You will:

1. Enable residents' voices to be heard and be part of a group that is resident owned and resident led.
2. Have access to fun, free and informal training opportunities, gain new skills to support personal and professional development and strengthen your CV.
3. Act as a 'critical friend' to Waltham Forest Housing Service. Someone who is encouraging and supportive, but who also provides honest and often candid feedback.
4. Be invited to a social event hosted by the Housing as a thank you for panel members' time and commitment.

## What is the time commitment for the panel?

- **Quarterly meetings** - the Panel meets four times per year and meetings are roughly two hours long.
- **Planning and debrief catch up meetings** - a week before and after the quarterly meetings there's a virtual half hour meeting scheduled – so residents can ask any questions, follow up on any information and generally keep everything on track.

If you need help getting to and from meetings, please contact the Housing Engagement Team who can assist with that too, their contact details are below.

## How can I get involved?

If you are interested in joining the Panel or have any further questions, please contact the Housing Engagement Team by emailing [engagement@walthamforest.gov.uk](mailto:engagement@walthamforest.gov.uk).

Please remember to include the following details:

- Your name
- Your contact details
- Your estate



*"I'm very active in my local community, I want to help make things better for other residents and ensure that everyone's voice is heard. Being involved in the Panel has shown me that there's so much work going on behind the scenes in housing."*

*"I find that being part of the group is really interesting, informative and refreshing to get straight answers to direct questions. I've been given a lot of support in the role and have enjoyed meeting new people."*

**Josie, Resident Chair from November 2023 until present day.**



*"Our role is to give a residents' perspective on housing policy, performance and future strategic plans. We do not 'represent' residents from specific areas but act as a completely independent 'critical friend' to the council's housing service. We independently review how well a certain aspect of the housing service is delivered to bring about improvements for all residents."*

**Bert, the Resident Chair from 2012 to November 2023.**