

Resident Involvement and Engagement Strategy

2021-2025





ISHA's new resident involvement strategy will be carried out over a five-year term, matching with the new strategic plan. The areas under the resident involvement strategy are underpinned by ISHA's values and interlink with the principles set out in the 2020-2025 ISHA strategic vision.

The strategy is open to engagement with all residents, especially targeting harder-to-reach populations within ISHA's resident base. The strategy looks to strengthen relationships with local 'anchor institutions', organisations and local people, with ISHA becoming a beacon for inclusion within its community.

The strategy can only be successful if all staff are involved, and all forms of resident engagement reflected. Most ISHA staff speak with residents on a daily basis. Gathering the feedback from residents given to colleagues as part of their roles is a key part of the strategy, making sure that issues are picked up quickly and this valuable information is used to act quickly where needed and to inform ISHA's decisions.

The involvement strategy is based on key fundamental principles:

Impact – the work of residents involved with ISHA will be meaningful and have a measurable outcome that will always be reported back to them

Inclusivity – the opportunity to get involved with ISHA will not be hampered by any technological, health-related, demographic, language, geographic or physical barrier. ISHA's IT training facilities and meeting rooms will be made accessible for engagement activities

Rewarding – the work of residents who make the time to participate in ISHA activities will be recognised by ISHA. While there is no official remuneration for Board or Panel members, ISHA will share training opportunities, social gatherings, and other rewards for participating. Working on an ISHA Panel will be a chance for personal and professional development for any participant.

Flexibility – along with inclusivity, ISHA will take all reasonable steps to ensure that membership and participation is flexible. This includes exploring and using digital, face to face, and correspondence formats for participation.

To ensure the strategies effectiveness, resident feedback will be reported regularly to the Board not just through performance against satisfaction KPIs and in formal Board papers, but through the direct feedback of residents themselves, both in person and reported.

This strategy covers two streams of resident involvement:

1. Formal Panels
2. Informal and resident-led engagement

Formal Panels

At the end of the five years, the resident involvement strategy will have created flexible and integrated panels of engaged residents, split into one or more sub groups, each with its own speciality. The panels will be managed directly by the relevant internal teams, but coordinated by the Resident Involvement Team.

For example, local teams will ensure that meetings are scheduled and held regularly, while the Resident Involvement Team will manage panel membership and Scrutiny oversight across all panels. The formal panels will have members who have signed up to terms of reference and a code of conduct, but will be able to swap their membership with another resident if their circumstances change.

The panels:

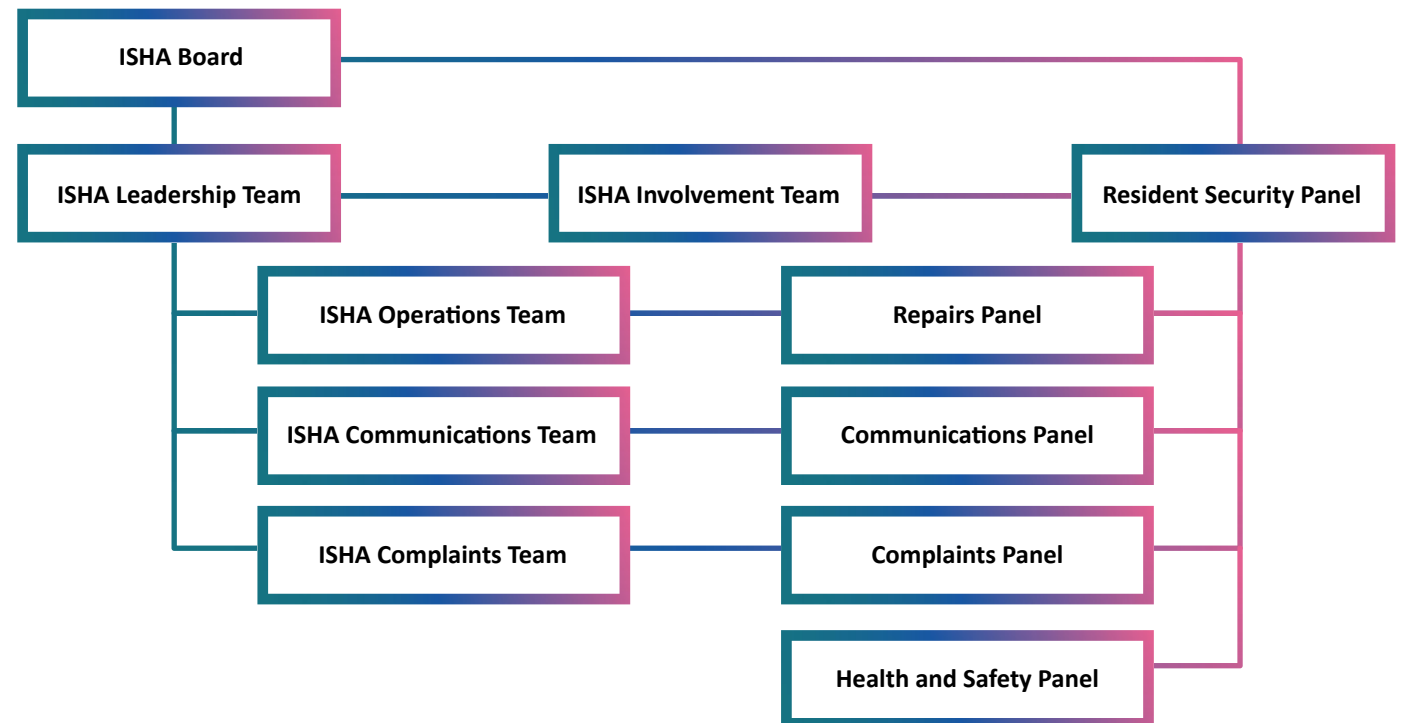
1. Resident Scrutiny
2. Repairs
3. Health and Safety
4. Communications
5. Complaints

The strategy works within current scrutiny panel plans. The resident action forums enable engaged residents to get involved with ISHA, consulting on policy and procedures within these specific sub-group categories. Residents will have the opportunity to join one or more of the sub-group panels, following the forums. This will ensure residents have more insight into ISHA processes and will have been introduced to key staff.

The sub-groups will meet at least once per year, but arrangements for review of projects and new policy will appear as they occur within the business.

Members from these panels will have the opportunity to meet with the ISHA Board. This close connection with the Board will ensure that steps co-identified with ISHA and the panels will be prioritised in line with ISHA's values, strategy and behaviours.

The Resident Scrutiny Panel links the other panels to the ISHA Board. The Scrutiny Panel will report to the Board on the activities of the other panels and have oversight of the projects and findings of work.



Resident Scrutiny

The resident scrutiny panel is already established. The three aims for the panel are:

1. To grow to a sustainable membership level,
2. to become semi-autonomous from ISHA, and
3. to continue a programme of reviews and resident forums each year.

To reach these aims, the Customer Insight Manager will continue to work closely with the scrutiny panel, helping to plan and respond to Resident Forum activities. This will build up the confidence and capability of current scrutiny panel members so they will be able to run the bulk of panel activities autonomously.

Periodically the panel membership will be advertised to residents. Following previous forums residents have expressed interest in joining the panel however none have stayed on due to personal reasons. A possible solution is to create a fluid membership base which would allow a core group of residents to participate in the core group activities as well as open forums.

When members sign up to be part of one of the formal panels, they will agree to terms of reference which will ensure that ISHA and residents are protected against perceived favouritism, and also to ensure that positions on a panel are respected amongst staff and residents.

This strategy will evolve and mature across the 5 years. By the end of the 5 years the panel will have reached the three aims.





Repairs

ISHA is proud of its community investment, as a small housing association ISHA relies upon local contractors and services providers to work in partnership and demonstrate the same values as ISHA.

Repairs contractors have not always performed in a way which reflects these values. One way of ensuring accountability and performance is by engaging our contractors with residents. A repairs panel will play a key part in this responsibility, part of the co-creation of tender requirement, procurement and performance monitoring.

2020 is an ideal time to set this panel up, as the contract with ISHA's repairs contractor has ended and a new approach to repairs contract management is being established. The repairs panel will play a key role in this project.

The Repairs panel will achieve the following four aims:

1. to successfully participate in the interim contract procurement process
2. to build and sustain a consistent membership level, that is adequately skilled to understand and take part in contract management
3. to be part of the successful implementation of the dynamic purchasing system
4. to assist ISHA with the process of procurement and ongoing contract management through performance measurement

These aims will be achieved through the panel working closely with Operations teams in the recruitment of the interim contractors.

Once this initial project has been completed, residents interested in the repairs panel will have an idea of the requirements and will understand the process. Training will be arranged in contracts and procurement and provided to residents signed onto the panel. This will ensure the panel members are adequately skilled to handle the complexities of monitoring procurement and contract management with repair contractors.



Health and Safety

The health and safety of ISHA's residents and buildings is the single most important aspect of the business, covering a number of key issues, including but not limited to: Fire safety, Anti-Social Behaviour, mental health, domestic violence and cleaning.

Building safety, including fire safety, is an incredibly important focal point. The new Building Safety Team will engage with residents as part of their mandate. This engagement will present a great opportunity to encourage residents to become part of a general health and safety panel.

In September 2020, the customer involvement team hosted a resident scrutiny exercise on ISHA's response and resident experience during COVID-19, and in February 2020 a forum on Anti-Social Behaviour. Residents who were interested or attended these events will be encouraged to be involved as part of the health and safety panel.

Forums such as these demonstrate ISHA's commitment to health and safety and provide opportunity for the health and safety panel to review and monitor performance.

The health and safety panel will work closely with ISHA's health and safety committee, as part of their meetings and will drive and participate in regular reviews of policy and procedure to ensure they are kept up to date and relevant.

The aims of the Health and Safety Panel:

1. To help establish a resident-focussed Business Continuity Plan, detailing how ISHA will consider resident health and safety in times of crisis
2. To work closely with the Fire Safety Working Group
3. Review and refresh ISHA's approach to common H&S issues such as ASB, refuse, neighbourhood safety and COVID 19 responses
4. To work closely with ISHA's Health and Safety Committee, ensuring that the health and safety of residents is at the forefront of decisions made within the business.



Communications

Amongst all feedback from residents, communications is a commonly recurring theme. ISHA will build a panel of engaged residents to work closely with us across areas of communication. The panel will work with ISHA across several business areas relating to communications, including:

ISHA branding, external website, resident portal and self-service access, communications audits and social media.

Residents will be able to play a part in shaping the design and interactivity of ISHA.

The aims of the Communications Panel are:

1. To be a sounding board for comms going to residents, this includes but is not limited to: newsletter content, Annual Report, general notice and leaflets, letter templates
2. To conduct audits and reviews of ISHA's general comms to residents, assessing tone of voice and clarity
3. To influence ISHA's branding decisions and re-brand programme (if applicable)
4. To work closely with the ISHA digital media team to help reach more residents, but also to provide content and resident interest stories

Complaints

A resident led complaints review panel will be established as part of the new complaints policy. This panel will maintain oversight of ISHA's complaints and provide feedback on the performance of complaints in the business. The panel will monitor the quality and timeliness of responses.

The aims of the complaints panel:

1. Ensure that complaints are dealt with fairly and in line with ISHA values and behaviours, and in line with Ombudsman guidelines
2. To maintain a minimum membership of between 3 and 7

Resident-led and informal engagement

This strategy also provides a blueprint to increase the amount and frequency of opportunities for informal and resident-led engagement. We will promote the idea that every interaction with a resident is an engagement, and an opportunity to receive feedback or offer more.

Engagement as opposed to involvement, centres around communication, accessibility and improving opportunities for residents to become more involved with their homes and neighbourhoods.

Activities which are captured by this include, Tenant and Resident Associations (TRAs), outreach and support activities and other informal engagement.

TRAs

1. ISHA will proactively promote tenant and resident organisations as a viable and meaningful method for representation and communication with their landlord
2. ISHA will review the process for application, and running of TRAs to ensure smooth setup and continued support for established associations
3. ISHA will look to organise cross collaboration between TRAs, through an annual social event open to all members of TRAs. This event can be hosted by ISHA or as an exclusive resident only event

Vietnamese Resident Association (informal)

These meetings conducted and managed by the Outreach Team will continue to occur regularly. We will begin to look towards integrating these meetings with other resident groups or individuals.

Focus Groups

ISHA will host regular focus groups on particular topics, including but not limited to:

1. Homes and Residents User Research project – How ISHA’s homes are lived in, maintained and utilised. Residents providing constructive feedback on the way they live in their homes, but also with ISHA’s operations teams in ongoing maintenance or compliance learnings.
2. as void standards,
3. new build standards (looking at building design, disabled units in particular),
4. other subject areas covered by the resident panels
5. ad hoc user testing of new software/websites/systems

Activities already managed by the Outreach Team and ISHA staff, to be expanded and scaled to involve more residents:

1. Excursions for residents (in particular the Vietnamese communities)
2. Cultural days, hosted by ISHA such as
 - Chinese New Year
 - Eid
 - Christmas
 - Other important events for our residents and staff
3. Employment and training – in partnership with local providers
4. Community garden project
5. Theatre groups

Gathering of information staff already hold.

This will be carried out formally on a quarterly basis by the Resident Involvement Team, but staff will be encouraged to proactively feed back things they learn from residents using the intranet, one to ones and through meetings with others across ISHA.

Resident Engagement activities

Resident engagement differs from involvement because it is designed to be more passive, educational and insightful than the formal involvement activities mentioned in the first half of the strategy. ISHA will look to work together with local anchor institutions to reach those in ISHA properties and the people and neighbourhoods they live within.

Examples of these activities include, but are not limited to:

1. Landlord roadshows – showcasing services, opportunities to meet staff and connect with other residents
2. Video series – these can include educational pieces (how to fix your XX) or discussions about the future of ISHA and its strategy
3. Resident focussed articles in publications, such as stories, competitions, interviews, news and skill-sharing
4. Webinars or Podcasts on important topics, such as ISHA performance, but also Universal Credit, Maintenance, Anti-Social Behaviour etc.
5. Informal gatherings hosted at estates/blocks. A chance for residents to get together and socialise without direct involvement of ISHA staff.

