Investing In Involvement
Tenant Management in Southwark

Introduction

This Investment In Involvement statement has been produced to demonstrate the benefits obtained by LB Southwark through its commitment to and support of the development of tenant management within its housing stock.

The council has long held it to be true that tenants who exercise their statutory Right to Manage (RtM) deliver better services and raise satisfaction levels through their respective Tenant Management Organisations (TMOs). This has been demonstrated through regular testing of satisfaction levels by STATUS and through internal STAR based surveys.

Tenant management in Southwark has existed long before the statutory introduction of the Right to Management in 1994 with the oldest TMO dating back to 1982. There are currently 15 TMOs operating in the borough delivering services to over 4,300 homes, a further 3 groups in the development process and three small blocks/estates seeking to join existing TMOs.

This statement has been produced by the Tenant Management Initiatives team (TMI) and has been approved by the Southwark TMO Committee (STMOC).

Statement of Outcomes

Enhanced resident satisfaction

- TMOs regularly see higher levels of satisfaction with services than our directly managed homes. 78% of TMO tenants are satisfied compared to 65% in the rest of our housing stock

Cost savings

- For the years 2013/14 and 2014/15 TMOs accrued surpluses (savings) of over £1.1m. This was then able to be re-invested in the homes under TMO management by way of improvements (e.g. Fair Street TMO installed new door entry system) and additional maintenance (e.g. Browning EMA have undertaken communal redecorations to over 450 homes).

Service Improvements

- All TMOs have locally based offices enabling their staff to have greater contact with residents. In doing so TMOs build up relationships with those living in their homes.
- The direct employment of handypersons by TMOs has seen much higher levels of satisfaction with the work undertaken and the comfort of knowing the person who is undertaking the repair. It has also proved to have achieved cost savings through much greater awareness of local repair issues.
- TMOs can't 'hide' from difficult issues as they are rooted in the community they serve and, every 5 years, have to win a continuation ballot of all residents in order to keep delivering a housing service.

Social dividend and community benefit

- Enhanced social capital through the development of schemes such as
  - Community football
  - Knitting club
  - Local history group
  - Food growing/gardening
  - Community sculpture project (The Shared)
  - Links to external organisations
    - Thames Estuary Project (environmental trips)
    - London College of Communications (art exhibitions and oral history project)
- All of these groups bring different parts of the community together building community resilience. Southwark is a very diverse borough and, through increased social activities rooted in the community, improvements in social cohesion have been seen.

Individual benefits

- Through membership of TMOs we have seen individuals develop increased levels of self-confidence leading to health benefits and increased employability.

Benefits for employees

- Employees benefit through increased levels of job satisfaction by being able to deliver a service designed by residents. Employees often find that there are less 'barriers' and bureaucracy in TMOs which provides a more reactive service.

Other Benefits

- As tenant management has matured in Southwark we have seen some TMOs developing beyond the original remit of delivering a housing service, by and for residents, into organisations providing social housing.
- Leathermarket JMB have, through their sister company Leathermarket CBS, embarked upon the new build of 27 new homes for social rent.
- The power of local involvement has been clearly demonstrated through their ability to unlock a parcel of land which any other

Over this period tenant management in Southwark was supported by the TMI team comprising of

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│  Monitoring and │ │ Finance Manager │ │   Development   │
│ Support Officers│ │      (x1)       │ │  Officers (x1)  │
│       (x4)      │ │                 │ │                 │
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