

### Background

This document details the key lines of enquiry (KLOEs) used by the Audit Commission Housing Inspectorate when looking at resident involvement. It is one of a set of documents produced by the Housing Inspectorate. To find out more about how KLOEs are used please read the guidance notes available from the Audit Commission website at: <http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/housing/housingkloe.asp>

KLOE documents are designed to provide inspectors, inspected bodies and others with a framework through which to view and assess services.

While the Housing Inspectorate has packaged some services together in producing these KLOE documents there is no expectation that inspected bodies should organise and deliver services in a similar way. The Housing Inspectorate remains committed to supporting service structures that best meet the needs of service users and that focus on service delivery outcomes not processes and structures.

### Key Lines of Enquiry

These are the overarching questions that inspectors will be looking at, to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of services.

#### Access, customer care & user focus

- How effectively does the organisation communicate and consult with its service users and stakeholders about resident involvement?
- How easily do service users access the service?
- How clear and comprehensive are service standards from a service user's perspective?
- How does the organisation respond to service users?
- What service user satisfaction has been achieved with this service area?
- Does the organisation comply with the statutory requirements and good practice in resident involvement?

#### Diversity

- How does the organisation respond to the diversity of its community to ensure that all users, or potential users, have fair and equal access to resident involvement opportunities?

#### Resources for resident involvement

- How does the level of resources and training for service users demonstrate the organisation's commitment to resident involvement?

#### Impact of resident involvement

- Is there clear evidence that resident involvement has led to improved services and outcomes for service users?

#### Value for money

- How well does the organisation maximise the impact from its resources for resident involvement?
- How effectively has the organisation established partnerships geared to achieve value for money and improving its performance to service users?
- Has the organisation used procurement to achieve value for money in delivering services that benefit service users and others?

# Housing Inspectorate Key Lines of Enquiry

## Landlord Services: Resident involvement



### Related guidance

Details of other guidance relevant to resident involvement are available on the Audit Commission website at:

<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/housing/housingkloe/kloe5.asp>

### Positive practice identified during inspection

As well as scoring and reporting on housing services, the Audit Commission identifies and promotes positive practice through inspections. Every inspection looks for examples of positive practice and innovation, creative ways of overcoming barriers and resistance to change, and ways of making better use of resources. Regularly updated positive practice from housing inspections can also be found on the Audit Commission website at:

<http://www.audit-commission.gov.uk/housing/positivepractice.asp>

### Descriptors

Descriptors are provided to help organisations understand how the quality of services is assessed against the KLOEs. Descriptors of excellent (3 star) and fair (1 star) services are included below to give an indication of what we would expect of services delivered to such standards. **These descriptors are not intended to act as a checklist or to prescribe the services that organisations would be providing if they were judged by inspectors to have an excellent or a fair service.**

KEY LINE OF ENQUIRY (KLOE)	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING AN EXCELLENT SERVICE	AN ORGANISATION DELIVERING A FAIR SERVICE
<p><b>Access, customer care &amp; user focus</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How effectively does the organisation communicate and consult with its service users and stakeholders about resident involvement?</li> <li>How easily do service users access the service?</li> <li>How clear and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a range of ways for service users to contact them – by telephone, in person or electronically – all of which are dealt with efficiently and effectively.</li> <li>Has staff who all demonstrate user focus and a commitment to resident involvement in their work, and who treat people with respect at all times.</li> <li>Has front-line staff who demonstrate a wide range of knowledge about the full range of enquiries they receive or know who or how to access the necessary information to help service users.</li> <li>Has set challenging service standards in conjunction with service users and stakeholders,</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a range of ways for service users to contact the resident involvement service, but some are not efficient and effective.</li> <li>Has staff who generally have a reasonable approach to customer care, but examples of some staff providing a lower standard. Individuals may have high standards, but it is not a strong enough part of the organisation's culture and customer care is therefore sometimes patchy.</li> <li>Has front-line staff who demonstrate reasonable knowledge about many services, but have some gaps in the range of knowledge about the enquiries they are likely to receive and are unclear where or who to access</li> </ul>

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<p>comprehensive are service standards from a service user's perspective?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the organisation respond to service users?</li> <li>• What service user satisfaction has been achieved with this service area?</li> <li>• Does the organisation comply with the statutory requirements and good practice in resident involvement?</li> </ul>	<p>which are tailored to meet local need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has a well established, effective and comprehensive compact and/ or resident involvement statement, which exceeds basic DCLG/ HC requirements. The compact/ involvement statement is up to date and relevant.</li> <li>• Provides tenancy/ lease conditions handbook and other material, which give comprehensive information on rights and responsibilities and the ways in which residents can be involved in, and influence, service delivery.</li> <li>• Produces a regular newsletter to which service users make a significant contribution in terms of content and style. Its content is up to date, user focused and presented in innovative ways to promote interest.</li> <li>• Produces information on why and how management decisions have been made, to a level of detail agreed with service users. This is widely distributed to service users in a range of formats.</li> <li>• Is engaging service users in significant, innovative and effective ways in meeting all national requirements.</li> <li>• Has a range of mechanisms in place that allow service users to participate effectively, in a way and level that suits them, in the design, management and performance of housing services.</li> <li>• Treats resident involvement as an integrated and important element of the service, designed for the convenience of the service user and not the organisation.</li> </ul>	<p>the information from, to be able to help service users.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has staff who do not understand that effective resident involvement requires a commitment at all levels of the organisation. It therefore displays some weak areas in its resident involvement.</li> <li>• Has set some key service standards, and having set them, has either not published them widely and/ or is not monitoring them.</li> <li>• Has met the basic requirements of the HC Involvement Policy.</li> <li>• Has a tenants compact and/or involvement statement, but it is not regularly referred to in practice.</li> <li>• Has a compact/ involvement statement which is a discrete piece of work – it is limited in its scope and only covers the minimum requirements.</li> <li>• May display information on resident involvement, but does not promote it effectively or make it easy to understand.</li> <li>• May produce a residents' newsletter, but with limited resident involvement in terms of style and content.</li> <li>• Does not allow service users the opportunity to have an input in all service areas/ functions of the organisation.</li> <li>• Does not view resident involvement as a core improvement driver for all areas of service delivery. Resident involvement policies are superficial and not integrated into the service.</li> <li>• Is reliant on traditional methods of resident involvement (through resident associations and formal meetings) which do not reflect the varying levels of commitment that service users are willing to offer, thus limiting their</li> </ul>

**Landlord Services: Resident involvement**

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can show that consultation and involvement always begins at an early stage (for example, in Tenant Compact/ involvement statement and policy development work) and that service user views are taken into account before all key decisions are made.</li> <li>• Actively canvasses the views of service users and uses them to review or improve services. Service users are consulted and involved in major decisions that affect the service.</li> <li>• Has service users who report a high level of satisfaction with opportunities to inform management, decision-making and service delivery. Service users feel confident that their input will be valued and acted upon.</li> <li>• Has service users who know about, and understand, the compact/ involvement statement and are satisfied with its content and scope.</li> <li>• Has resident board members who are aware of and/ or understand their responsibilities as directors in the case of ALMOs and housing associations.</li> </ul>	<p>engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows evidence that consultation with service users is limited to commenting on proposals produced largely by officers, Board or councillors. Service users are not involved in the early stages of decision-making or policy development.</li> <li>• Seeks users' opinions, but does not always act on them and places a greater emphasis on seeking the views of other stakeholders.</li> <li>• Operates processes for the recruitment of resident board members that are not transparent and do not encourage the recruitment of good quality resident Board members.</li> <li>• Has not developed ways for leaseholders to participate effectively and systematically, either within the wider service user, movement or separately.</li> <li>• Has a significant proportion of service users who think that their influence over the services they receive is limited, or the organisation does not know what their main concerns are.</li> <li>• Has satisfaction levels which reflect that users are not clear that the organisation responds to, and takes account of their feedback.</li> <li>• Has service users who may be aware of the compact/ involvement statement, but know little about its content and scope.</li> <li>• Has resident board members who are not always aware of and/ or understand their responsibilities as directors, in the case of ALMOs and housing associations.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Diversity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does the organisation respond to the diversity of its community to ensure that all users, or potential users, have fair and equal access to resident involvement opportunities?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has a clear understanding of its local community using all relevant information, including the input of local partners, and knows its own service user profile, making necessary adjustments where this is out of step in meeting the needs of those that require services.</li> <li>Knows, records and monitors information about the ethnicity, vulnerability and disability of service users and uses it to inform service delivery and prioritise resources.</li> <li>Provides information about services and service standards in a comprehensive range of languages and formats appropriate to service users' needs eg, large print, Braille, other languages etc.</li> <li>Works with its component communities to ensure fair representation and service take-up.</li> <li>Works alongside service users to decide the best ways of involving them depending on their circumstances.</li> <li>Has mechanisms that facilitate involvement of service users that are representative of the organisation's customer base.</li> <li>Does not discriminate against any person or other organisation on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or having AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.</li> <li>Can demonstrate how the varied methods of resident involvement have led to black and minority</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has an awareness of its service user base and has made efforts to offer services to most service users. Has resources identified, but may not have allocated them yet to meet the needs of all service users.</li> <li>Records some information about ethnicity, vulnerability (eg, domestic violence or learning difficulties) or disability, and partially uses it to inform service delivery and prioritise resources, but does not systematically collect all the information necessary to ensure comprehensive services for all.</li> <li>Provides some information which is readily available in appropriate formats and other languages, but this is not comprehensive and misses the needs of some groups.</li> <li>Considers local factors and is seeking to make itself more relevant to the needs of service users and is establishing mechanisms to better engage with the community.</li> <li>Has made no concerted effort to facilitate the involvement of residents that are representative of the local community(s) it serves.</li> <li>Has an awareness of its customer base beyond formal residents associations and has made efforts to reach out to it. Has identified resources identified but may not have allocated them yet</li> <li>Can show little evidence of BME or hard-to-engage groups having an impact on services.</li> <li>Generally has a reasonable overall approach to diversity, but may still have some aspects of the service which indirectly discriminate on the grounds of race, ethnic origin, disability, nationality, gender, sexuality, age, class, appearance, religion, responsibility for</li> </ul>

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	<p>ethnic (BME) and hard-to-engage groups having an impact on the service they receive.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a range of support to enable service users with specific needs to be involved, for example by offering travel or carers' allowances, using accessible venues for meetings, translating information, providing hearing loop systems, etc.</li> <li>Has a range of local compacts/ involvement statement in place and a clear plan for introducing the remainder where service users want them.</li> </ul>	<p>dependants, unrelated criminal activities, being HIV positive or having AIDS, or any other matter which causes a person to be treated with injustice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provides a range of support to enable residents with specific needs to be involved, for example by offering travel or carers' allowances, using accessible venues for meetings, translating information and providing hearing loop systems.</li> <li>Has a few local compacts/ involvement statement in place and but no clear plan for introducing the remainder where residents want them.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Resources for resident involvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How does the level of resources and training for service users demonstrate the organisation's commitment to resident involvement?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has the funding and staff in place to make effective resident involvement happen either through dedicated staff resources or through mainstreamed resident involvement service delivery.</li> <li>Delivers high-quality, and ongoing, training to facilitate resident involvement in technical matters.</li> <li>Provides significant resources for resident training, which is developed with service users.</li> <li>Has set up training for potential service user board members to widen the scope of possible applicants.</li> <li>Makes training and support such as mentoring an integral element of being a resident board member (in ALMOs/ housing associations).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Has some funding and staffing in place to make resident involvement happen, generally through dedicated staff resources, but rarely through mainstreamed resident involvement service delivery.</li> <li>Provides some, often one-off, training generally to service user representatives from formal associations.</li> <li>Does not publicise training outside of the traditional avenues and is focused on a small number of committed tenants. May make some support available (eg, budgets for resident involvement costs), but does not widely promote its availability.</li> <li>Makes training available, but it is limited to specific service areas and is not flexible to tenants' needs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Impact of resident involvement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is there clear evidence that resident involvement has led to improved services and</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is clear about the purposes of involving residents and evaluates the organisation's efforts against its resident involvement objectives.</li> <li>Can demonstrate that service users have used training opportunities and/ or their skills and abilities to make a real impact in improving services.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Is clear about the purposes of involving residents, but does not systematically evaluate, and therefore understand, the organisation's efforts against its resident involvement objectives.</li> <li>Can demonstrate some limited evidence of resident involvement affecting service planning and delivery, but</li> </ul>

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<p>outcomes for service users?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has delivered improvements to the service as a result of resident involvement.</li> <li>• Can demonstrate links between resident involvement and community development and takes part in projects that promote sustainable communities.</li> </ul>	<p>examples are isolated and not co-ordinated against a clear resident involvement project plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has delivered some improvement to housing services as a result of resident involvement, but there is evidence of missed opportunities in gaining further benefit from meaningful resident involvement.</li> <li>• Does not effectively link resident involvement and community development work and their roles in promoting sustainable communities.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Value for money</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well does the organisation maximise the impact from its resources for resident involvement?</li> <li>• How effectively has the organisation established partnerships geared to achieve value for money and improving its performance to service users?</li> <li>• Has the organisation used procurement to achieve value for money in delivering services that benefit service users and others?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collects accurate information on resident involvement costs and benefits and uses it to decide priorities and to strategically manage resources in the context of a formal procurement strategy.</li> <li>• Provides service users with comprehensive and accurate information on resident involvement, including costs and benefits, when presenting options for improvement.</li> <li>• Is able to demonstrate significant cost savings and/or quality improvements through partnerships and have investigated partnerships with other organisations wishing to procure similar services (Collective Procurement) such as other housing associations/ councils/ ALMOs.</li> <li>• Provides clear and well understood information on costs and how these relate to the quality of services delivered.</li> <li>• Has low overall costs and unit costs for resident involvement compared to other organisations providing similar levels of services and allowing for the local context (service users may have agreed to pay more for higher quality services).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not collect accurate or sufficient information about its services, or use it to effectively review cost effectiveness or performance in the context of a formal procurement strategy.</li> <li>• Provides limited, or some inaccurate information on costs and benefits to service users.</li> <li>• Does not systematically use information on costs and benefits to review cost-effectiveness or to improve services.</li> <li>• Does not systematically inform service users about costs and performance for services, or does not inform them in an appropriate, easily understandable manner.</li> <li>• May have isolated examples in place, but otherwise shows limited understanding of the value and purpose of partnership service delivery.</li> <li>• Has either high overall and unit costs for services compared to other organisations providing similar levels of services and allowing for the local context or has low costs, but services are also of a low quality.</li> <li>• Has a reasonable corporate and service procurement strategy, but does not fully implement it or monitors it</li> </ul>

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can demonstrate competitiveness of internal service provision when compared with external providers and has carried out a review of procurement capacity within the organisation.</li> <li>• Follows good practice in procurement and understands where the greatest potential benefits can be gained, internally and externally.</li> <li>• Is aware of, and successfully bids, for appropriate additional resources to deliver resident involvement (for example, Housing Corporation grants).</li> <li>• Consistently meets or exceeds targets specified in service standards and performance indicators on resident involvement.</li> </ul>	<p>ineffectively.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shows a lack of understanding of the benefits of partnering arrangements and has therefore not made full use of them.</li> <li>• Often fails to deliver programmes and projects on time, to target and to service users' satisfaction, in terms of either cost or quality.</li> <li>• May be aware of, but fails to successfully secure, all available resources to deliver resident involvement.</li> <li>• May have good performance compared to its own targets but these do not compare well with comparator groups.</li> <li>• May deal with one aspect of the service well but not another. Eg, it may remedy the problem quickly, but not identify and resolve/ deter the cause of the problem.</li> </ul>