

TENANT PARTICIPATION

Fed up with not having a say in what happens in your neighbourhood?

Fed up with trying to communicate effectively with your neighbours and/or Housing Tasmania?

Tenant Participation may be your answer!



DEPARTMENT of
HEALTH and
HUMAN SERVICES

What is Tenant Participation?

Tenant Participation is about decision-making by tenants in relation to their accommodation. In other words it is about people making decisions for themselves in their own lives.

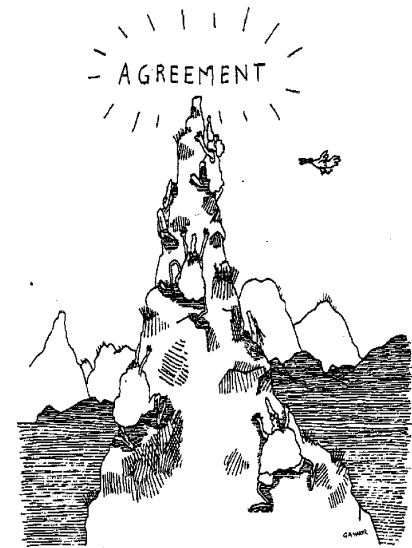
Tenant Participation involves the development of a Tenant Participation Group. This group consists of public housing residents in a particular unit complex or area. Through the Tenant Participation Group, residents are able to unite, share concerns, resources and information.

“Contact with Housing Tasmania is a lot better now and they seems to be taking a lot more interest in us”

As a group, you can look at the common problems you are experiencing as a result of your tenancies and consider the solutions you would like to see. As a group you can then share your ideas with Housing Tasmania and other agencies.

And as a group, you are harder to ignore.

Tenant Participation helps public housing residents to have a say in what happens in their neighbourhoods.



Who can organise a Tenant Participation Group?

Any public housing tenant or group of public housing tenants can form a Tenant Participation Group.

If you are motivated and enthusiastic and want to make some positive changes in your area, you are able to set up a Tenant Participation Group.

You don't need any prior experience. You don't need a lot of spare time. You don't need a lot of money.

Why bother?

Tenant Participation Groups have succeeded in making many improvements to their public housing areas.

These achievements have included:

- a breakdown of barriers between Housing Tasmania and tenants;
- improved tenant interaction;
- installation of speed humps;
- reduction in vandalism;
- tree planting;
- newsletters;
- baby sitting clubs;
- training sessions;
- food co-ops;
- tool co-ops; and
- activities for young people.

“The age barrier doesn’t seem to exist here anymore . . . we tend to accept people for what they are”

Your Tenant Participation Group will be unique, with its own aims and objectives. You might decide to do some of the things other groups have done, or you might have a totally different plan - its up to your group to decide what it wants to achieve.

If I start a Tenant Participation Group, how many tenants need to be involved?

Tenant Participation in VOLUNTARY for all tenants within your area /estate. You will not need to have every tenant involved in your group.

However, you must give every tenant the opportunity to be involved, and you will need to provide all of the tenants in your area with information about what the group is doing. Generally the more representative your group is the more notice Housing Tasmania and other agencies will take of you.

Have there been any successful groups set up in Tasmania?

The most well known Tenant Participation Group in Tasmania is the Stainforth Court Residents’ Action Group (Newtown). This group formed in 1993 and has been very successful in improving the conditions at Stainforth Court.

One resident at Stainforth Court described the changes there:

“Its got a village feeling going, which definitely wasn’t here before”.

Where can I get more information?

More information about Tenant Participation is available from your local Housing Tasmania Service Centre.

If you are interested in setting up a Tenant Participation Group in your area, Housing Tasmania will help you.

The illustrations on this flier were drawn by Gaynor Cardew, and were taken from the publication *How to start a Tenant Group: a kit for Public Housing Tenants* produced by the Queensland Department of Housing, Local Government and Planning

Quotations were drawn from comments made by residents at Stainforth Court after the formation of the Stainforth Court Residents’ Action Group (S.C.R.A.G).