

Customer Scrutiny Terms of Reference

These Terms of Reference identify and formalise the role and responsibilities of the Customer Scrutiny Panel.

1. Purpose of Scrutiny Panel

- Enable ForHousing to work in partnership with tenants to bring about positive changes to services
- Support ForHousing to improve tenant influence and accountability
- Create an independent, resident-led approach to bring positive changes to services for staff and tenants
- Ensure a smooth process for Scrutiny, whilst meeting with tenants' expectations, the TPAS Scrutiny Standards and regulatory requirements
- Provide assurance that outcomes are delivered through effective governance

2. Principles of Scrutiny

- Be independent- separate to Governance structures
- Be inclusive- engaging a wide diversity of tenants in a way that suits them
- Be transparent - being open about the process of scrutiny and sharing the outcomes with staff and tenants
- Be accountable - holding the organisation to account and having clear recommendations for service improvement which are monitored and publicised

3. Scrutiny Panel Membership and Roles

<p>Scrutiny Partners</p>	<p>There will be a panel of Scrutiny Partners with a maximum of 12 and a minimum of 6 members. Scrutiny Partners will be tenants or leaseholders of ForHousing.</p> <p>There will be ongoing recruitment as part of the scrutiny programme.</p> <p>Scrutiny Partners will hold an open recruitment event every 3 years if needed.</p> <p>There is no maximum term for a Scrutiny Partner.</p> <p>All Scrutiny Partners will agree to participate in an annual check-in with the Chair and ForHousing Customer Scrutiny Partner.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Partners are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • developing the programme of scrutiny • drafting the scope for review • supporting the recruitment of Core Members for a review • supporting ongoing communications • buddying up with tenants interested in getting involved <p>It is anticipated the time commitment for a Scrutiny Partner will be an average of 3 days per month but may be more if the programme requires it.</p>
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<p>Chair</p>	<p>The panel of Scrutiny Partners will elect a Chair. Nominations and votes will be triggered by the expiry of a term and/or the resignation of the Chair.</p> <p>Scrutiny Partners interested in being a Chair will express an interest.</p> <p>The term of the Chair is three years, with a maximum of two terms to be served. Once the maximum term is reached, the Chair can remain on the panel of Scrutiny Partners.</p> <p>The panel shall have a Vice Chair. The term of the Vice Chair is three years, with a maximum of two terms to be served. Expressions of interest and votes will be triggered by the expiry of a term or the resignation of the Vice Chair.</p> <p>The maximum of two terms served by the Chair and Vice Chair do not have to be consecutive.</p> <p>The Chair is responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • agreeing the agenda for the meetings • ensuring smooth running of the meeting in a fair manner • ensuring that members of the panel are adhering to the involved tenant code of conduct and treating both members and colleagues with respect • speaking to members in regard to attendance and conduct if required • undertaking an annual review of scrutiny with members and on a one to one basis • ForHousing will work alongside the Chair to facilitate these responsibilities <p>The Chair will be supported at an annual check-in by ForHousing's Customer Scrutiny Partner.</p>
<p>Core Group</p>	<p>Scrutiny Partners will recruit a defined number of Core Group members to undertake each scrutiny review. This will include tenants who have recently received the service subject to the review or have a particular interest in the subject of the review and will be subject to an open recruitment.</p> <p>The Core Group are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • conducting the primary research • reviewing and analysing the secondary sources and • reporting findings and making recommendations <p>Whilst the time commitment will vary dependent upon the Scrutiny Review, it is anticipated the time commitment for Core Group members will be between 21 and 50 hours per exercise.</p>
<p>Wider Tenants</p>	<p>Wider tenants will get involved in each scrutiny exercise by sharing their lived experience and their views on how the service can be improved.</p>

	<p>The wider tenants will carry out some or all of the below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participating in a focus group • sharing their story on social media • completing a survey • doing an interview • any other relevant scrutiny activity <p>It is anticipated the time commitment will range from 10 minutes to 4 hours depending on the chosen activity.</p>
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4. Meetings

It is expected that the panel will hold a core meeting quarterly either in person or via video conference. These core meetings will be set in advance at the start of the calendar year.

Quorum for core meetings shall be no less than half plus one of the Scrutiny Panel and shall include either the Chair or Vice Chair.

The panel will determine their own schedule of meetings throughout a scrutiny exercise.

Scrutiny Partners must attend all core meetings unless there are mitigating circumstances. Members agree to send apologies at least 24 hours in advance of a meeting if they are unable to attend unless circumstances mean this is not possible.

Scrutiny Partners will also be expected to support at least one scrutiny exercise within a 12 month period.

Core Group members will be expected to support the scrutiny exercise they are involved in through attendance at meetings and any other agreed activity, such as desk top work, research etc. If participation involves attendance at meetings, apologies for meetings should be sent at least 24 hours in advance unless circumstances mean this is not possible.

If there are concerns about attendance and/or contribution to scrutiny activity, this will be discussed with the member by the Chair and ForHousing Customer Scrutiny Partner and the member may be asked to stand down.

All Scrutiny Partners and Core Group members agree to abide by the involved tenant code of conduct. If there are concerns about conduct this will be addressed via the Chair and ForHousing Customer Scrutiny Partner.

5. Scrutiny Exercises

A minimum of two reviews will take place each year. These reviews will be planned by the Scrutiny Partners and ForHousing based on the following trigger information:

- ForHousing performance information
- Themes from data/ insight eg. Complaints
- Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- Commissioned by Customer Committee or other Involved Customer Group

- Commissioned by Service area
- Proactive response to Ombudsman Spotlight report
- Call to Action from tenants/ service area (verified by other insight)
- Spotlight on a Together with Tenants Charter Priority- providing the customer insight and verifying the performance information through primary research into the customer experience
- Support for internal audit programme

Further reviews can be undertaken in response to any issues that may arise.

Scrutiny exercises will follow the attached scrutiny process.

All Scrutiny Partners, members of the Core Group and staff will attend a reflective practice session following each review.

All Scrutiny Partners, Core Group members and wider tenants involved in a scrutiny exercise will be updated against the action plan on a quarterly basis.

6. Reporting and Review of Effectiveness

Customer Committee will approve the action plan developed to address the recommendations. Quarterly updates will be given to Customer Committee against the action plans.

An action plan progress report will be delivered to Scrutiny Partners on a quarterly basis.

A communication plan will be developed for each scrutiny exercise.

An annual report of scrutiny will be produced as part of the Tenant Voice Impact reporting to include impact on service area and customer experience.

Scrutiny partners will attend an annual away day with other involvement groups to strengthen relationships.

The Terms of Reference will be reviewed every two years.

7. Support from ForHousing

ForHousing will support members to access ForHousing and external training relative to the scrutiny role based on engagement with members.

ForHousing will support Scrutiny Partners with a £15 contribution per month towards Broadband costs.

Any other rewards, incentives and recognition will be in line with ForHousing's Rewards, Incentives and Recognition framework.

8. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

ForHousing aims to provide opportunities and services that challenge inequity, promote diversity and empower people and communities to improve their circumstances and fulfil their potential.

Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) is a guiding principle in everything we do, with everyone treating each other with respect. This is required to ensure that no individual or group of people with shared characteristics is treated less favourably and that the benefits of diversity are realised.

The Scrutiny Panel will take steps to ensure a broad range of representation in all scrutiny activity.

Approved by Scrutiny Partners	Date 24/04/2025
Date of the next review	April 2027