



Cheshire West & Chester Council

Council Housing Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy Consultation Feedback



Building futures, opening doors



Cheshire West
and Chester

Background to the survey

Cheshire West & Chester Council retains ownership of 5,300 homes in the borough, concentrated in the areas of Ellesmere Port, Neston and Winsford. Although as a council we are both the owner and landlord, the management and maintenance of the stock is carried out by ForHousing who have signed a 10-year contract with the Council which runs from 2017 to 2027.

What is the draft Council Housing Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy?

The new draft Council Housing Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy sets out how the Council, working with its strategic housing partner ForHousing, will ensure tenants and leaseholders are placed at the very heart of the Council's housing service, setting out how they will have a clear role in, shaping, and scrutinising services and holding the Council to account to ensure the best outcomes for tenants and leaseholders and the communities in which they live.

The draft strategy also compliments and supports our council housing vision statement, namely:

"We aim to provide affordable homes of the right type and quality to meet the housing needs of those who are unable to meet their own needs in the housing market now and in the future. We will continue to work in partnership to support our tenants to prosper and improve their wellbeing and ensure neighbourhoods and communities are sustainable, safe and pleasant".

In developing the strategy, the Council commissioned the Tenant Participation Advisory Service (TPAS) to work with our tenants and leaseholders to ask them what good engagement should look like. As part of this exercise, TPAS engaged with a total of 109 tenants and leaseholders whose feedback, thoughts and opinions on how the Council engaged with its tenants and leaseholders were used to develop the draft strategy.

How the consultation was carried out

The consultation was open for 12 weeks, from 20 January to 13 April 2025.

The consultation followed a multi-method approach. These methods included an online survey and tenants/leaseholders were also able to attend a workshop with staff from both ForHousing and the Council which provided an opportunity to provide their views on how the Council should engage with its tenants and leaseholders as well as ask any questions. Paper copies of the survey were available on request for those who did not have access to the online version, and people were also able to respond to the consultation by email, letter or telephone.

To encourage feedback from people directly impacted by the Strategy, all tenants and leaseholders were sent either an email or letter which provided details of how they could share their views.

Communication methods to ensure that key stakeholders were made aware of the consultation and given the opportunity to have their say included a press release, Member Briefing, social media posts and presence of the consultation on the Council website.

The survey received a total of 195 responses, made up of 147 tenants and leaseholders and the workshop was attended by 13 tenants.

Overall key messages

The key messages to emerge from the consultation, were as follows:

- More respondents agreed than disagreed with the aim of the strategy, the objectives and the commitments.
- Several respondents mentioned that having a strategy with a specific action plan would help improve engagement between the Council and its tenants and leaseholders.
- Whilst agreeing with the Council housing aim, some respondents felt much more needed to be done to provide a better housing service.
- Some respondents commented that communication with tenants is vital and that the methods should allow for specific accessibility needs of tenants.
- Some respondents commented that engaging with tenants regularly to get their views would help to improve services.
- Several respondents mentioned that they wanted more face-to-face engagement with staff.

Detailed findings from the survey

The following pages detail the specific responses to the consultation questions as well as any key messages arising from respondent feedback.

Graph 1: Agreement with the aims of the Council Housing Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy

1. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the aim of the draft Council Housing Tenant/Leaseholder Engagement Strategy				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree		32%	68
2	Agree		31%	58
3	Neither agree nor disagree		21%	39
4	Disagree		6%	12
5	Strongly disagree		5%	9
6	Don't know		5%	9
195 responses received (Strongly agree 32%, Agree 31%, Neither agree nor disagree 21%, Disagree 6%, Strongly disagree 5%, Don't know 5%)				

Please note: Percentages may not sum up to 100% due to rounding.

The above chart shows that the majority of respondents (63%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the aims of the Council Housing Tenant/Leaseholder Engagement Strategy. Whilst 21% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents were also invited to give further comments or suggestions about the aims of the Council Housing Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy. 62 comments were received and the key messages from those comments were:

- Whilst agreeing with the Council housing aim, some respondents felt much more needed to be done to provide a better housing service.
- Some respondents mentioned that information should be accessible for all.
- Some respondents stated that the Council needed to listen to tenants views and allow these to help shape decisions.
- A few respondents said that more social housing needed to be built.
- A small number of respondents mentioned that they wanted to see more spaces designated for parking.

Graph 2: Agreement with the four objectives in the Council Housing Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy

2. Overall, to what extent do you agree or disagree that the proposed strategy should cover the four objectives listed above?

Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree		43%	88
2	Agree		30%	57
3	Neither agree nor disagree		8%	16
4	Disagree		6%	12
5	Strongly disagree		9%	18
6	Don't know		2%	4

195 responses received
(Strongly agree 43%, Agree 30%, Neither agree nor disagree 8%, Disagree 6%, Strongly disagree 9%, Don't know 2%)

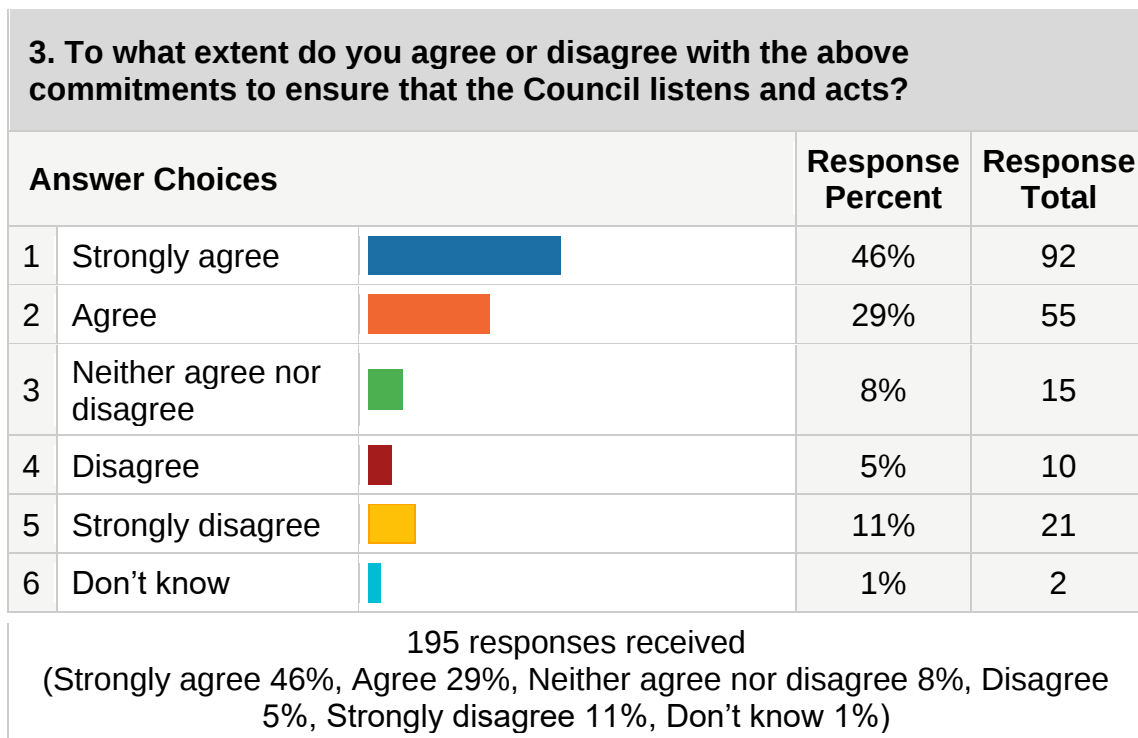
Please note: Percentages may not sum up to 100% due to rounding.

The above chart shows that the majority of respondents (73%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the four objectives detailed in the Council Housing Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy. Whilst 8% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed.

Respondents were also invited to give further comments or suggestions about the objectives in the Council Housing Tenant and Leaseholder engagement Strategy. 54 comments were received and the key messages from those comments were:

- Several respondents stated how the four objectives provided a good overview of what tenants and leaseholders want from the Council.
- Some respondents said that the current ways of reporting and communicating needed to be improved.
- Some respondents commented that communication with tenants is vital and that the methods should allow for specific accessibility needs of tenants.
- A few respondents felt that their views and opinions were not considered when decisions were made.

Graph 3: Agreement with the Listening and acting on feedback given commitments.



Please note: Percentages may not sum up to 100% due to rounding.

The above chart shows that the majority of respondents (75%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the Listening and acting on feedback given commitments.

Respondents were also invited to give further comments or suggestions about the Listening and acting on feedback given commitments. 58 comments were received and the key messages from those comments were:

- Several respondents stated that there must be mutual respect between the Council and its tenants and leaseholders.
- Some respondents stated that any promises made by the Council must be kept and timescales given.
- Some respondents stated how important it was for tenants and leaseholders to be listened to.
- A few respondents said that better communication was needed and there needed to be an easier way to get in touch.

Graph 4: Agreement with the providing information and feedback commitments.

4. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above providing information and feedback commitments				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree		43%	87
2	Agree		28%	54
3	Neither agree nor disagree		10%	20
4	Disagree		8%	15
5	Strongly disagree		8%	15
6	Don't know		2%	4
195 responses received (Strongly agree 43%, Agree 28%, Neither agree nor disagree 10%, Disagree 8%, Strongly disagree 8%, Don't know 2%)				

Please note: Percentages may not sum up to 100% due to rounding.

The above chart shows that the majority of respondents (71%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the: providing information and feedback commitments.

Respondents were also invited to give further comments or suggestions about the: providing information and feedback commitments. 46 comments were received and the key messages from those comments were:

- Some respondents said that there needed to be a variety of ways that information can be shared with tenants and leaseholders.
- A few respondents said that Information must be fully accessible.
- Some respondents said that the Council should go back to publishing a tenant/leaseholder newsletter.
- Some respondents mentioned that although they agreed with the aim in theory they needed to see it in action.
- A small number of respondents questioned whether this objective would be achieved.
- A few respondents said that there must be transparency with regard to how much the Council spends on its homes.

Graph 5: Agreement with the Developing creative ways to involve tenants and leaseholders commitments.

5. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above commitments to develop creative ways to involve tenants and leaseholders?				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree		37%	75
2	Agree		33%	6
3	Neither agree nor disagree		13%	24
4	Disagree		7%	15
5	Strongly disagree		8%	16
6	Don't know		1%	3
195 responses received (Strongly agree 37%, Agree 33%, Neither agree nor disagree 13%, Disagree 7%, Strongly disagree 8%, Don't know 1%)				

Please note: Percentages may not sum up to 100% due to rounding.

The above chart shows that the majority of respondents (70%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the: Developing creative ways to involve tenants and leaseholders commitments.

Respondents were also invited to give further comments or suggestions about the: Developing creative ways to involve tenants and leaseholders commitments. 39 comments were received and the key messages from those comments were:

- Some respondents felt that working together and good communication was the key to success in improving services.
- Several respondents said that greater involvement of all tenants and leaseholders is needed.
- Some respondents generally agreed with the commitments to develop new ways to involve tenants and leaseholders.
- Several respondents said that the Council needed to make it easier for tenants to engage with staff.
- A number of respondents stated that communication is the key to success.
- A few respondents mentioned that the Council needed to listen to its tenants and leaseholders and act on their suggestions.

Graph 6: Agreement with the Providing safe homes, safe communities commitments.

6. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the above safe homes, safe communities commitments?				
Answer Choices			Response Percent	Response Total
1	Strongly agree		44%	89
2	Agree		30%	57
3	Neither agree nor disagree		8%	15
4	Disagree		6%	11
5	Strongly disagree		10%	18
6	Don't know		2%	5
195 responses received (Strongly agree 44%, Agree 30%, Neither agree nor disagree 8%, Disagree 6%, Strongly disagree 10%, Don't know 2%)				

Please note: Percentages may not sum up to 100% due to rounding.

The above chart shows that almost three quarters of respondents (74%) either agreed or strongly agreed with the: Providing safe homes, safe communities commitments.

Respondents were also invited to give further comments or suggestions about the: Providing safe homes, safe communities commitments. 59 comments were received and the key messages from those comments were:

- Some respondents mentioned how there needed to be clear and reasonable timescales given to resolve issues.
- Several respondents felt that staff would require more training to fulfil the safe home, safe community commitments.
- Some respondents said that communal areas should be well maintained and safe.
- Several respondents said that repairs must be completed to a good standard.
- A small number of respondents said that there needed to be a better police presence in their community.

Tenant workshop feedback

In addition to the online survey, a tenant workshop was also delivered which provided an opportunity for tenants to give their feedback on the draft Council Housing Tenant and Leaseholder Engagement Strategy. 13 tenants attended the workshop and the key messages from their comments were:

- All attendees felt that when communicating everything should be in plain English.
- Some attendees felt that there needed to be a single point of contact for housing enquiries.
- A few attendees said that there needed to be a timeline for responding to repairs and that this timeline should be adhered to.
- Several attendees felt that the Council should respond to communication and keep tenants and leaseholders informed.
- Some attendees said that if the Council made an appointment, it must be kept and if the appointment time needed to change or be cancelled, it was important to make sure that this was communicated.
- Attendees mentioned that the Council needed to explore different methods of communicating with tenants and leaseholders such as: newsletter, local workshops more face to face interaction, Housing Officers to be more noticeable, different times for meetings as tenants work too.
- Attendees also felt that staff needed to show more empathy to understand tenants and leaseholder circumstances and their needs.

Action to be taken as a result of the consultation

The feedback from the consultation will form part of a report to be presented to Place Overview and Scrutiny in June 2025 and Cabinet in September 2025 which will help to inform Councillors decisions as they consider the strategy. The final strategy will be published in Autumn 2025.

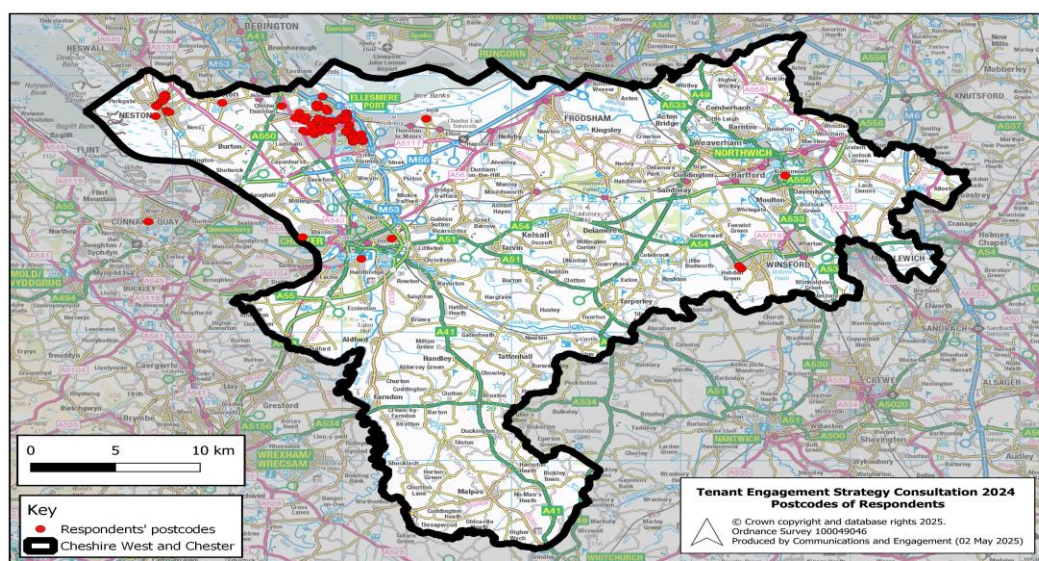
Appendix A - Profile of respondents

8. In what respect are you completing this questionnaire?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	I am a social housing tenant in Cheshire West and Chester and Chester	73%	147
2	I am a social housing landlord in Cheshire West and Chester Council	2%	8
3	I am a local Town or Parish Councillor	1%	1
4	I am an elected Member of Cheshire West and Chester Council	1%	1
5	I am a resident of Cheshire West and Chester	18%	27
6	I am an employee of Cheshire West and Chester Council	1%	1
7	I am a representative of a community or voluntary organisation	1%	2
8	I am a local business	0%	0
9	Other (please specify):	3%	8

Postcode of respondents

The map below shows all of the postcodes given by respondents that could be mapped (140 postcodes). 139 respondents lie within the Cheshire West and Chester boundary and one lies outside.



Gender

10. How do you identify?			
Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Male	42%	81
2	Female	54%	102
3	Prefer not to say	3%	10
4	Prefer to use own term:	1%	2

Age

11. Which age group do you belong to?			
Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Under 16 (please provide the name or email address of your parent/guardian/teacher below)	0%	0
2	16 - 24	0%	0
3	25 - 34	5%	9
4	35 - 44	12%	29
5	45 - 54	18%	37
6	55 - 64	36%	66
7	65+	26%	48
8	Prefer not to say	3%	6

Disabilities

Do you have a long term illness, health issue or disability that limits your daily activities or the work you can do?			
Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Yes 	58%	106
2	No 	32%	58
3	Prefer not to say 	10%	18

Ethnic origin

Which of these groups do you consider yourself to belong to?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	White - English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	86%	159
2	White - Irish	1%	2
3	White - Any other White background (please type in box below)	4%	7
4	Black or Black British - Caribbean	1%	2
5	Black or Black British - African	1%	2
6	Black or Black British - Any other Black background (please type in the box below)	0%	0
7	Asian or Asian British - Indian	0%	0
8	Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0%	0
9	Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi	0%	0
10	Asian or Asian British - Chinese	1%	2
11	Asian or Asian British - Any other Asian background (please type in the box below)	0%	0
12	Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	1%	1
13	Mixed - White and Black African	%	0
14	Mixed - White and Asian	0%	0
15	Mixed - Any other Mixed background (please type in the box below)	0%	0
16	Other ethnic group - Arab	0%	0
17	Other ethnic group - Other ethnic group (please type in the box below)	0%	0
18	Travelling community - Gypsy/Roma	0%	0
19	Travelling community - Traveller of Irish descent	0%	0
20	Travelling community - Other member of the Travelling community (please type in the box below)	0%	0
21	Prefer not to say	3%	5
22	Other (please specify):	2%	5

Religion

Which of these best describes your religious belief/faith?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Buddhist	1%	2
2	Christian	49%	89
3	Hindu	0%	0
4	Jewish	1%	1
5	Muslim	1%	2
6	Sikh	0%	0
7	None	32%	59
8	Prefer not to say	9%	17
9	Other (please specify):	7%	12

Sexual orientation

Which of these, best describes your sexual orientation?

Answer Choices		Response Percent	Response Total
1	Heterosexual/Straight	83%	149
2	Bisexual	0%	0
3	Gay/Lesbian	3%	6
4	Prefer not to say	14%	17
5	Prefer to use own term (please specify):	%	8