



Resident co-design action group report

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Introduction

Peabody wanted to work with residents on what we'd like their future customer engagement offer to look and feel like. The co-design working group was created to help make this happen.

About us

We're a group of seven Peabody residents. Some of us are already actively engaged residents, and some are new to getting involved with Peabody.

An interview panel openly recruited us. The panel included an already involved resident, a Peabody engagement officer and an independent facilitator.

Of 20 applications, the panel shortlisted 14 residents to interview. Of these 14, they interviewed ten candidates, with the final seven invited to join the co-design action group. Peabody's Director of Community Strategy, Sahil Khan and Strategic Engagement Lead, Aisha Kimbugwe, were also part of the group.

Our purpose

Our main task was to support Peabody in co-designing a new approach to resident engagement and the expected standards for the new resident engagement structure.

Our approach

We held an introductory meeting on 22 May 2023, allowing members to meet each other, understand how the group would work and agree on team working principles.

We then organised five resident listening sessions across Peabody to help us hear your experiences first-hand.

- Session 1: Sandringham Hub, Houghton Regis - 2 June
- Session 2: The Nest, Thamesmead - 7 June
- Session 3: The Unity Centre, Brent - 12 June
- Session 4: Pembury Community Centre, Hackney - 19 June
- Session 5: Online - 21 June

The most popular session was our online event with nearly 200 residents. Around 60 residents and ten colleagues attended our face-to-face events.

Peabody's engagement team pulled together all your feedback from these sessions, which they added to a dedicated page on Peabody's online engagement platform - [The Garden](#). We also ensured that everyone who attended the sessions received a copy of the themes you highlighted.



Your voice – the listening sessions

We got a lot from the listening sessions and were touched by how open you were with us. It was clear to us throughout these sessions that Peabody's services and engagement were your main and recurring concerns.

You told us:

- You want to know more about Peabody services.
- Your local community is important to you.
- Peabody needs to provide easy and accessible ways for you to contact them.
- You need to be able to escalate issues or complaints quickly and effectively.
- You want to be heard and know Peabody will do what they say.
- Dissatisfaction with services is a significant driver for getting involved.
- Getting involved with Peabody helps you connect within your community.

Concerning resident engagement, you told us you want Peabody to:

- Demonstrate what happens after you've engaged with them. You don't want to attend a talking shop session or for your feedback to disappear into a black hole.
- Capture and respond to our resident voice in a variety of ways.
- Be clear about the standard of service you can expect when you get involved.
- Recognise engagement is a more than a one-size-fits-everyone approach. Everyone's circumstances are different, which needs to be recognised when asking people to get involved.
- Use available technology including The Garden.

Your voice – resident survey

We also sent out a survey for those unable to attend the listening sessions. Seven residents responded. They told us they want Peabody to:

- Have open and honest communications with residents.
- Showcase best practices for the delivery of Peabody services.
- Hold clear roles and responsibilities when dealing with resident complaints.
- Actively listen and act upon residents' concerns.

Co-design in action

Once we'd completed the resident listening sessions, we met over three Saturdays throughout July to review your feedback and agree on an action plan.

During these sessions, we reviewed:

- [The Better Social Housing Review Recommendations.](#)
- [L&Q Partnership of Equals.](#)
- A previous resident review of Peabody's engagement principles.
- [The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard.](#)
- The passing of the [Social Housing Regulation Act.](#)



There was quite a low turnout of colleagues (only two) at the first meeting, which raised concerns about Peabody's commitment to the co-design principle. Peabody acknowledged there had been unforeseen pressures on colleagues because of integration due to the recent merger. However, things got better, with four colleagues attending the second session and six attending the third session.

Together, we co-designed our recommendations and a charter of commitments.

Key engagement themes and findings

1. Culture

The level of dissatisfaction with local services at the listening sessions struck us. Peabody's board and leadership team need to experience this directly. Noting [L&Q's approach to commitment, in A Partnership of Equals](#), Peabody's engagement needs to be integral to their way of working rather than an additional extra.

Recommendation: Peabody needs to embed a cultural commitment to engagement.

We discussed how Peabody can demonstrate a cultural commitment to resident engagement. Some suggestions are:

- Peabody's board and senior management team (SMT) should commit to attending local visits that enable them to meet residents and understand their concerns. There also needs to be a commitment to feeding back on these visits at all board meetings.
- Peabody should consider resident participation in the recruitment process for senior-level, front-facing and local teams.
- All colleague appraisals should include resident engagement activities.
- Introduce a Resident engagement board champion. They could be the Chair or Vice Chair or someone other than a resident board member.
- Create colleague resident engagement champions at all levels of the business who are committed to engaging with us and including our voice.

Peabody must commit to clear resident engagement service standards and a charter of commitments.

The charter will ensure:

- [Peabody turns its purpose into reality](#) so that residents are at the core of everything they do.
- That resident engagement is not an add-on to what Peabody does.
- **Resident voice**

The impact of all engagement activity is captured and shared openly through an annual impact report and resident conference.

During the listening sessions many of you told us you felt ignored by Peabody. You told us that Peabody needs to demonstrate the impact of resident engagement. This can be as simple as undertaking assessments of an engagement activity to ensure there is a



straightforward sign-off process by residents. This will help to show the issues raised and the necessary actions.

"Peabody should set out how it hears and responds to resident voice in its decision making, ensuring it hears the seldom heard and identifies how it has responded to our voice." **Resident feedback**

Peabody should seek resident views through a range of channels. The terms of reference for each activity or project should identify how resident voices will be heard, captured, and shared within Peabody. There must be a mechanism for documenting resident voices and identifying the required actions and outcomes.

Peabody needs to pay particular attention to seldom-heard voices. They need to gather resident insight by region and understand residents by their demographic. This will support them in identifying which groups they're currently not hearing from and implementing additional mechanisms to ensure they do.

2. Resident engagement offer

Recommendation: A group of interested residents should be trained and supported to carry out resident-led activities and collaborative projects.

Recommendation: There should be a varied engagement offer. This offer should include opportunities to get involved at strategic, regional, and local levels.

Recommendation: Always close the loop and show residents what Peabody has done with their feedback.

Read our [charter of commitments](#) to learn more about how Peabody will fulfil these recommendations.

- **Clarity about roles**

Peabody needs to be clear when they feel it isn't appropriate for residents to undertake an engagement role. Some examples of when it may not be appropriate are:

- If you're in a dispute with Peabody.
- You aren't currently fulfilling your agreement around a payment plan.
- There's a conflict of interest in being involved.

Peabody and engaged residents will agree to a Project Initiation Document (PID) with terms of reference and an appropriate code of conduct for any engagement activity. Peabody will be clear about the support available for residents and groups.

"Peabody is clear about what is involved with any engagement activities for residents including time commitment, what route is used and the expectations for residents."
Resident feedback, online listening session



- **Training and support**

There should be a range of opportunities, including online and community-based events. Peabody will give all residents who want to be involved a one-to-one induction. This induction will consist of an explanation of Peabody's engagement approach and structure.

Each activity will include mandatory training and a profile of all resident roles. This should form part of the PID terms of reference at the start of an activity or project.

Peabody will provide an ongoing training programme for engaged residents to support them in their engagement activities and help their personal and professional development. We recommend they provide this through the Peabody Academy.

The engagement team will offer quarterly one-to-one review sessions with all engaged residents. These sessions will help ensure you're happy with your role and identify any further support and development opportunities.

All engagement groups will conduct annual assessments of their work and relationship with Peabody and other resident groups.

As part of their commitment to equity, equality, diversity, and inclusion (EED&I), Peabody will do all they can to remove potential barriers to resident engagement. This will include:

- Providing IT equipment and training.
- Committing to pay expenses within ten working days and considering schemes that allow residents to engage without incurring upfront costs.
- Ensuring expenses for childcare and caring costs are included.
- Being aware of and responding to protected characteristics and seldom heard voices.

- **Incentives and rewards**

Because of the potential time commitments and level of responsibility involved with some roles, we recommend that Peabody offer incentives to encourage involvement. If needed, the resident engagement team will make a business case for an incentive (such as a fair level of payment for a role) to be agreed upon.

Peabody will continue to offer small-scale incentives, as appropriate, for prize draws, payments to charities, providing refreshments and so on. All payment terms will be straightforward, such as declaring tax and income. Peabody would regularly review payments.

- **Tenure**

Peabody will take a joined-up approach that includes residents of all tenures and types of housing in engagement activities. This approach should have specific involvement for some types of tenure, such as leaseholders, shared owners, sheltered schemes, and street properties.



- **Engaged resident conference**

Peabody will introduce an annual conference for engaged residents. This conference will mark the contribution of residents to Peabody's strategic planning, celebrate the impact of including resident voices and plan for the year ahead.

- **Performance reporting and monitoring**

We understand that Peabody has started collating performance against the Tenant Satisfaction Measures (TSMs) and will publish their performance. We're also aware that additional internal service standards are in place to support monitoring services beyond the TSMs.

We'd like to see the development of service standards that are agreed across Peabody - regionally and locally. We'd also like to see performance on all measures broken down regionally, locally and by protected characteristics.

3. Local offer

The Local offer should include the following:

- Neighbourhood Customer Specialists (NCS) will build effective contacts with colleagues across Peabody to help them respond to any issues residents raise. This will support them in undertaking estate inspections and surgeries effectively.
- A transparent process that enables residents to escalate issues, including complaints.
- NCSs will work with resident-led approaches such as Tenant and Resident Associations and block champions.
- Peabody will support NCS' in creating their local neighbourhood improvement plans. They'll use the lessons from the pilot plans to implement core principles and processes for all neighbourhood plans.
- Awareness of the scale of work of the NCS in general and how this may impact their ability to support engagement activities.
- Regular resident consultation and the correct use of resources to capture resident feedback.
- All outcomes of resident feedback are shared with the residents and within Peabody.

4. Engagement structure

We considered how best to respond to the changing environment for resident engagement. The experiences from Peabody and Catalyst engagement structures and a Campbell Tickell resident engagement report from early 2023 identified issues with resident groups working in separation.

It's clear that there is a lot of useful information within the organisation and local resident groups that Peabody is missing on a wider strategic level. They could use this information to generate resident-led activity on scrutiny, service improvement, policy, and strategy development. One resident-led panel rather than competing or conflicting groups could help alleviate this issue.



Recommendation: Peabody should form a resident-led panel to oversee and connect resident engagement activities across Peabody.

- **Resident-led panel**

This panel will commission resident-led approaches to scrutiny, service improvement policy and strategic development based on performance information, insight, and resident feedback.

The proposed new engagement structure will allow resident oversight of information and the ability to commission resident-led activity. The panel will report any issues and recommendations to the board, through the Customer Experience Committee (CEC). If asked, the co-design action group is prepared to evolve to support this role.

We believe this resident-led panel should receive reports on the following:

- Performance information.
- Resident voice and engagement.
- Insight and impact.
- Regional and local feedback.

To ease the flow of information, we suggest that Peabody share the reports they already prepare for the CEC with the resident-led panel.

These reports will enable the resident-led panel to consider how best to respond through dedicated assigned activities. These activities could include:

- Resident-led scrutiny.
- Involvement in policy and strategy reviews.
- Initiation of policy and strategy reviews.
- Resident-led mystery shopping.
- Resident-led service improvement projects.
- Focus groups and surveys.
- Resident-led spot checks.

The resident-led panel will agree on terms of reference for all resident engagement activities. This will include time commitments, role profiles, resident expectations, and how outcomes are captured and actioned.

This pre-planning and agreement will help to drive recruitment from the following areas:

- Peabody's interested group of residents, known as - Peabody Voice, and their engaged resident database.
- An open offer to residents either regionally or on a local level.

All resident engagement working groups will report back to the resident-led panel. The panel will then consider how best to respond, including reporting outcomes to Peabody colleagues.

How the resident-led panel will work:

- The Panel will meet at least six times a year with an option to meet monthly.



- It will include 10-12 openly recruited residents.
- The panel will be able to form subgroups based on resident-driven priorities.
- Members will be able to hold portfolios on areas of resident interest.
- Members will receive rewards for their time.
- An annual report to showcase all engagement achievements will be produced.
- The resident-led panel members will be accountable through yearly appraisals.
- Recruitment will involve a resident, a colleague, and an independent person.

All members are expected to:

- Be collaborative and respectful.
- Work together to improve resident voice.
- Understand and appreciate their role.
- Follow the groups' code of conduct.
- Consider all residents and don't bring personal issues to the panel.
- Maintain equity, equality, diversity, and inclusion.

- **Scrutiny pool**

The scrutiny pool is one part of Peabody Voice. A resident, colleague, or independent person can recruit residents to the pool for a specific role. The resident-led panel will commission all scrutiny activity to review resident-driven topics.

These topics include any issues coming from the regional forums. Once the panel has finalised the topic and approach, they will set up a working group and agree on the actions they need to take.

Residents in the scrutiny pool will be offered training and support, with some paid roles and activities. We'll expect all members of the scrutiny pool to approach all scrutiny with the following:

- Fairness and objectivity.
- An evidence-driven perspective.
- A problem-solving attitude.

- **Regional resident forums**

There are four Peabody regions, headed up by managing directors. We noted positive feedback about this arrangement from the east resident forum, and previously the west resident forum.

Current forum members will be involved in the development of the regional forums. They'll draw on previous experiences to include the following:

- Allowing a route for residents to raise personal concerns to ascertain whether there are any local themes and wider issues.
- Forum meetings being open to all residents.
- Support for residents wishing to attend.
- Regular attendance by managing directors.
- Each region being allowed to consider the best way to meet for their area: face-to-face, online or a mixture of both.



- Support provided for any residents wishing to become Chairs of their regional forum.
- Support provided to help identify opportunities for regional engagement.
- Regional forums given the ability to escalate issues to the main resident-led strategic panel.

An overview of the process and groups

Insight Gathered through engagement activities, monitoring, voice, data, reports, surveys, and Tenant Satisfaction Measures.
Peabody Voice A group of interested residents supported by the Customer Engagement team.
Local engagement Resident associations, neighbourhood improvement plans. Supported by local neighbourhood teams.
Regional engagement Undertaken through the resident forums. Supported by the managing directors.
Strategic engagement The resident-led panel will commission resident engagement activities across Peabody, regionally and locally. Supported by residents from Peabody Voice.

Next steps

Our report marks the end of the co-design action group. We're presenting this report and our recommendations to the CEC on 19 October 2023. The CEC will then consider and respond to the specific recommendations and actions we've identified.

We enjoyed listening to residents and collaborating with Peabody colleagues. As a group, we're prepared to help develop the recommendations of this report into a working action plan and support the formation of the proposed resident-led panel.

Thanks to all the residents and colleagues who attended the listening events and co-design meetings to share their views and input.