

# MEMBERSHIP STRATEGY 2020-23



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<b>Strategy Grouping/Directorate(s)</b>	Resources
<b>Strategy Title</b>	Membership Strategy
<b>Owner</b>	Representative Body
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<b>Approved By:</b>	<b>Date:</b>
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Rochdale Boroughwide Housing Limited is a charitable community benefit society.

FCA register number 31452R.

Registered Office: Sandbrook House, Sandbrook Way, Rochdale OL11 1RY.

Registered as a provider of social housing. RSH register number: 4607

## **1. Introduction**

This strategy outlines Rochdale Boroughwide Housing's approach to how it engages with its membership in order to bring our mutuality to life.

## **2. Context**

2.1 RBH was the first housing provider in the UK to become a co-owned mutual. This document outlines how RBH will continue to make its membership meaningful to its tenant and employee owners.

2.2 This strategy is established, maintained and monitored by the membership, through its Representative Body

## **3. Methodology**

3.1 Over the last three years RBH has been working to understand the difference that mutuality brings to being a social housing provider. The outcomes from that research has informed the development of this strategy, along with surveys of the membership to test that learning and consultation with employees, tenants and Representative Body members.

3.2 This Strategy has been developed alongside the Engagement Strategy. In developing the two strategies in parallel we recognise that customer voice, customer involvement and the opportunity to influence and shape service delivery sits within the Engagement Strategy. Member voice and member involvement is focussed on influencing and shaping RBH corporate priorities, strategy and direction of travel and sits within the Membership Strategy.

3.3 We aspire, and will work towards, 100% of the membership within RBH being knowledgeable, engaged and active about mutuality and tenant/employee ownership. We recognise however that this is not attainable for a variety of legitimate logistical, cultural and practical reasons. To measure progress meaningfully therefore targets have been set for each objective based on a baseline survey conducted in May 2020.

At the time of the baseline survey there were 6192 members, of whom 5755 were tenants and 437 were employees. 680 tenants completed the survey (12%) and 221 employees (50%).

The targets included in the Strategy are based on 20% of tenant members and 90% of employee members completing the survey in 2023.

#### **4. The aim of this strategy is to**

Celebrate people succeeding together at RBH. We want to bring focus on how tenant and employee members work together within the governance structures to create great places to live and work. To do this we want to make mutuality meaningful to members by

- Ensuring all members understand how members voice, consultation and involvement influences and shapes corporate priorities, strategy and direction of travel;
- Celebrating the unique role of RBH tenant and employee members in shaping our mission, values and corporate strategy;
- Ensuring RBH values reflect the values and aspirations of the membership
- Creating pride and ambition in our membership model as an exemplar in placing customers and employees at the highest level of governance within a housing provider.

We will do this by

- Improving understanding of the governance of RBH through clear and impactful communication of the role of the Representative Body, the work it does and the decisions it makes;
- Championing the unique opportunity of tenants and employees to be elected to, or vote for a fellow tenant or employee to be elected to, the Representative Body;
- Working with members in a review of the values of the organisation, based on the feedback received from customers during the Together with Tenants consultation and the recent telephone survey to ensure RBH is aligned to the behavioural aspirations of its members;
- Demonstrating how tenant and employee members work together to achieve results.

The outcomes we want to achieve are

- A clear understanding of mutuality, demonstrating how the Representative Body involves people with a stake in RBH, either as a tenant or employee, can influence and shape strategy, policy and corporate priorities;
- Achieving closer relationships between the Representative Body and its membership by improving communication. Specifically we want to continually demonstrate the role and impact of mutuality through an active and effective Representative Body;
- High levels of tenant and employee engagement thereby increasing member motivation to get involved;
- Increasing numbers of members voting in the Representative elections;
- Increasing numbers of involved and diverse tenants and employees standing for election to the Representative Body;

- Review of RBH values;
- Creating pride how mutuality shapes RBH.

## 5. Improving understanding of mutuality

Using the research we have collated and in conjunction with the delivery of the Engagement Strategy and Together with Tenants, we will design and deliver a new customer centric approach to delivering services. This will be made of five core themes, which will be delivered through innovative media, workshops and discussions. Tenants will be able to access the material through workshops and the website, with both 'bite sized' and full versions available. For employees workshops will be delivered at extended team meetings. It will also become part on the onboarding process for new employees.

The five themes will explore

- Feedback from Together with Tenants, customer experience surveys, complaints, understanding personas and other customer insight etc. We will build pride into how we develop better services by tenants and employees working together, listening and sharing;
- See the Person – challenging the stigma of social housing, appreciating each tenant's and employee's uniqueness, talents, motivations and values;
- Mutuality and its characteristics, demonstrating the benefits tenant and employee co-ownership brings to RBH;
- personal values and motivations and what matters to each individual and how these align to mutuality and the aspirations of RBH
- Discussion of our current values and whether these, post Together with Tenants and COVID19, still reflect the essence and aspiration of RBH.

### Measures of success:

In the Annual Members Survey in 2023

- 80% of members understand the benefits of RBH being a co-owned mutual
- 80% of members know the Representative Body appoints Board Members
- 80% of members understand the Representative Body's role in deciding RBH's future plans and activities

Current baseline

- 63% of members understand the benefits of RBH being a co-owned mutual
- 70% of members know the Representative Body appoints Board Members
- 56% of members understand the Representative Body's role in deciding RBH's future plans and activities

## **6. Achieving closer relationships between the Representative Body and the membership by improving communication**

We will introduce new ways for the Representative Body to communicate with the membership.

- Following Representative Body meetings, representatives will be supported to give meaningful feedback to their members detailing, as appropriate, matters that have been discussed on their behalf, the decisions that were made and the impact they have had;
- Representatives will be encouraged and supported to seek the views of members on an ongoing basis about corporate priorities, the delivery of those objectives and the differences that are being made
- Building on the success of the Together with Tenants consultation, introducing a 'Let's Chat' element to the Annual Members Meeting, giving members the opportunity to talk to Representative Body members, the Board and the leadership team about the delivery of the corporate strategy objectives, progress and future plans.

### **Measures of success:**

Following each Representative Body Meeting there will be an informative and interesting communication to members.

In the Annual Members Survey on 2023

- 80% of members agree that RBH is better as a result of having tenant and employee members
- 80% of members feel valued
- 80% are proud to be a member
- 80% of members know what the Representative Body has achieved

Current baseline

- 70% of members agree that RBH is better as a result of having tenant and employee members
- 58% of members feel valued
- 65% are proud to be a member
- 40% of members know what the Representative Body has achieved

## **7. High levels of tenant and employee engagement thereby increasing member motivation to get involved**

Working alongside the delivery of the Engagement Strategy and People Strategy we will build on the motivation of customers and employees to get involved with RBH. We will seek to grow the membership by recruiting members from the tenant and employee base. In doing this the focus will be not just on increasing the number of members, but on ensuring members are informed and fully understand the

mutual model, its characteristics and the unique opportunity it gives tenants and employees to be involved at the highest level of governance and decision making. We aspire to every member becoming a 'champion' for mutuality who inspires and encourages others to join.

All customers and employees will be advised on entry to RBH (either on sign up for customers or during induction for employees) of the opportunity to become a member and encouraged to not only sign up but to use their membership to make a difference to RBH. We will encourage every member, as a minimum commitment, to use their vote in the Representative Body elections by considering each of the candidates on merit and actively using their vote.

**Measures of success:**

60% of tenants and 95% of employees to be members by 2023  
20% of tenant members and 80% of employee members to vote in Representative Body elections by 2023

Current baseline

40.1% of tenants and 75.5% of employees are currently members  
16.9% of tenant members voted in the 2019 election  
53.2% of employees voted in the 2019 election

In the Annual Members Survey in 2023

- 80% of members feel more engaged with RBH as a direct result of membership

Current baseline

- 45% of members feel more engaged with RBH

**8. Increasing interest from tenants and employees to be elected onto the Representative Body**

The Representative Body works alongside the Board of Directors to secure good governance of RBH. Specifically it has responsibility for

- Appointing the Chair and other Non-executive Directors and deciding their terms of office, including remuneration;
- Approving the appointment of the Chief Executive;
- Approving the corporate strategy and policy framework and monitoring performance against this;
- Receiving the annual report and accounts and appointing the auditor;
- Providing advice, support and guidance to the Board of Directors, based on their 'lived experience' of being an RBH tenant and/or employee

Working alongside the delivery of the Engagement Strategy and People Strategy, we will seek out those people from across the membership who are passionate and

energised about bringing about real and tangible improvements to the services offered by RBH, the quality and choice of homes, the communities it serves and its role as an employer. We will build a pathway through to the Representative Body so tenant and employee members can build their knowledge, skills, capability and confidence to successfully stand for election to the Representative Body. For tenant members the pathway will be through more flexible and meaningful customer involvement activities (as outlined in the new Engagement Strategy). For employees, active involvement in the Employee Forum, as a Wellbeing Champion or RBH Ambassador will be routes to engage and develop candidates for the role of Employee Representative.

We will seek to engage people from across the membership to create an inclusive Representative Body with a diversity of views. We recognise that harnessing views from tenants from different communities, neighbourhoods, backgrounds, ages and outlooks is essential to influencing and shaping strategy, policy and future plans. It is also how the Representative Body can achieve their role in providing meaningful advice, support and guidance to the Board.

**Measures of success:**

- A contested election for both tenant and employee representatives each year.
- Diversity of candidates and elected representatives are reflective of the membership.

**9. Review of RBH values**

Following the Mutuality Conference that took place as part of RBH's five year birthday celebrations, the development of Together with Tenants and the COVID19 response, the Representative Body have expressed a wish to test whether the current values of RBH are still relevant and meaningful. This review will seek the views of employees and tenants. There will also be consultation with the Board, Leadership team, partners and other stakeholders.

**Measures of success:**

Values tested and verified/reviewed  
Values re-energised across RBH

In the Annual Members Survey 2023

- 80% of members feel more engaged with RBH

Current baseline

- 45% of members feel more engaged with RBH
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**10. Creating pride how mutuality shapes RBH**

RBH will continue to promote and champion the benefits of membership and the achievements of members, to a range of stakeholders using a variety of channels.

**Measures of success:**

6 positive communications each year about mutuality outside Rochdale and social housing, which may include award submissions

2 enquiries a year from different organisations about our mutual model

**11. Monitoring**

Establishing, maintaining and monitoring the Membership Strategy is the responsibility the Representative Body.

The Membership Task and Finish Group are reviewing their terms of reference with a view to becoming the Membership Working Group and overseeing the delivery of the Strategy. They will meet at least quarterly and develop performance and feedback reports for the Representative Body.

Additionally, an annual report will be presented to members at the Annual Members Meeting which shall include the following:

- Actions regarding ensuring the membership is representative of those eligible for membership;
- progress in implementing the Membership Strategy; and
- any changes to the Membership Strategy

**12. Review**

All RBH strategies, policies, service standards and procedures are reviewed on a regular basis in order to ensure that they are 'fit for purpose' and comply with all relevant legislation and statutory regulations.

This strategy will go through the full policy approval process every 3 years and will undergo a desktop review annually. This is to ensure that it is fit for purpose and complies with all relevant and statutory regulations.

**13. Links with other RBH Documents:**

This strategy links to the following relevant documents:

- Engagement Strategy
- People Strategy

**14. Action Plan**

All actions contribute to the Improving theme of Together, the Corporate Strategy. The Year One Action Plan is given below.

Reference No.	Action	Outcome	Responsible Lead	Deadline
5	Deliver a programme of interactive events which brings to life the Engagement Strategy, involves, informs and inspires members about mutuality and provides a forum for a discussion of the values	Improved understanding of mutuality  Involvement by tenants and employees in the values review	Alison Rigby Elaine Johnson Sharon Cooper Stephen Edwards	31 March 2022
6	Introduce feedback mechanisms after Representative Body meetings to inform the members about the activities of the Representative Body	Achieving closer relationships between the Representative Body by improving communication	Elaine Johnson	30 September 2020
6	Introduce 'Lets Chat' into the AMM	Achieving closer relationships between the Representative Body by improving communication	Steve Edwards	31 December 2020
7	Robust processes in place for informing new tenants and employees about mutuality	High levels of tenant and employee engagement thereby increasing member motivation to get involved	Steve Edwards	30 September 2020
8	Mechanisms in place to identify potential candidates for Representative Body	Increasing interest from tenants and employees to be elected onto the Representative Body	Steve Edwards	31 December 2020
9	Review of RBH Values	Values tested and reviewed and/or re-energised	Steve Edwards	31 March 2021