

α **guidetoo**

# how to get involved



...how **you** can help make things better

## ► Our policy

This leaflet explains our approach to involving customers in what we do. Involving customers means providing a range of ways for you to influence and improve the products and services that we provide and the community you live in.

Our policy sets out our commitment to involving the community in what we do. We want to create sustainable communities with excellent facilities, where people are proud to live and feel safe. To achieve this, we believe it is important to involve customers and communities in what we do. We understand that everyone has individual needs and we plan and provide services based on those needs. We will promote equality to make sure that people are represented properly. We will also work with other agencies to make sure that the people we involve in our services are supported so they can achieve their full potential. We will build upon the success of our 'menu of involvement' and come up with new ways to work with communities.

We want all members of our communities to know we are an open, efficient and successful organisation.



## ► Our service standards

We will make sure our involvement methods result in improved products and services in local communities and across our organisation. We will do this by:

- making sure that involvement is a part of all our relevant processes; and
- creating opportunities for all our customers to be involved in what we do.

We will make sure that the way we make decisions throughout our organisation is open at all levels. We will do this by:

- making sure we agree on the level and extent of community involvement throughout our organisation with relevant customers and stakeholders (people with an interest in our organisation);
- telling customers about the benefits of getting involved;
- making sure we develop our service standards and relevant targets with our customers; and
- working with customers to provide appropriate and accessible information for all the services we provide.

We will provide people and groups with the skills and resources they need to play a part in improving our services and their local communities. We will do this by:

- providing appropriate support, skills and training for all people and groups who want to get involved in our work; and
- working with partners to develop and provide effective ways of getting people involved in what we do.

## ► **Get involved in your local community**

Being involved in your local area can help to make things better where you live. There is a range of ways to have your say and make a difference to the products and services we provide.

### **Information**

Reading newsletters, such as our Wear Living Magazine, or visiting our website, **[www.gentoosunderland.com](http://www.gentoosunderland.com)** can tell you more about what is happening in your area.

### **Consultation**

Going to a housing surgery, social event, or being involved in an estate inspection can help us to find out about issues on your estate.

Estate focus groups are a way for you to have your say on specific local issues.

When you make a comment, a compliment, a formal or informal complaint, or fill in a satisfaction survey, you influence our services, both locally and throughout our organisation.

### **Participation**

We can help you to start, join or promote a residents' association to represent your area. We can also help you to improve community spirit, and the quality of life for all residents. As a member of a local customer panel or community voices (postal) panel you will be involved in shaping the future of your local services, as well as recommending future improvements.

## ► **Get involved across the city**

Being involved can also help make things better for tenants and residents across the city.



## **Information**

Customer leaflets and the Annual Customer Report tell you what we are doing, and how you have played a part.

Visit our website, **[www.gentoosunderland.com](http://www.gentoosunderland.com)** and find out more about different services.

## **Consultation**

If you go to the customer conference, you can help to develop new ways of getting people involved in what we do.

We now have a group called G2cru that all young people can go to.

## **Participation**

If you join the Sunderland Residents' Federation, you can help support different residents' associations to work together to deal with issues that affect tenants and residents across the city.

You could become a mystery shopper and help to test the quality of our services. This is where you pretend to use a service to measure how well it is provided.

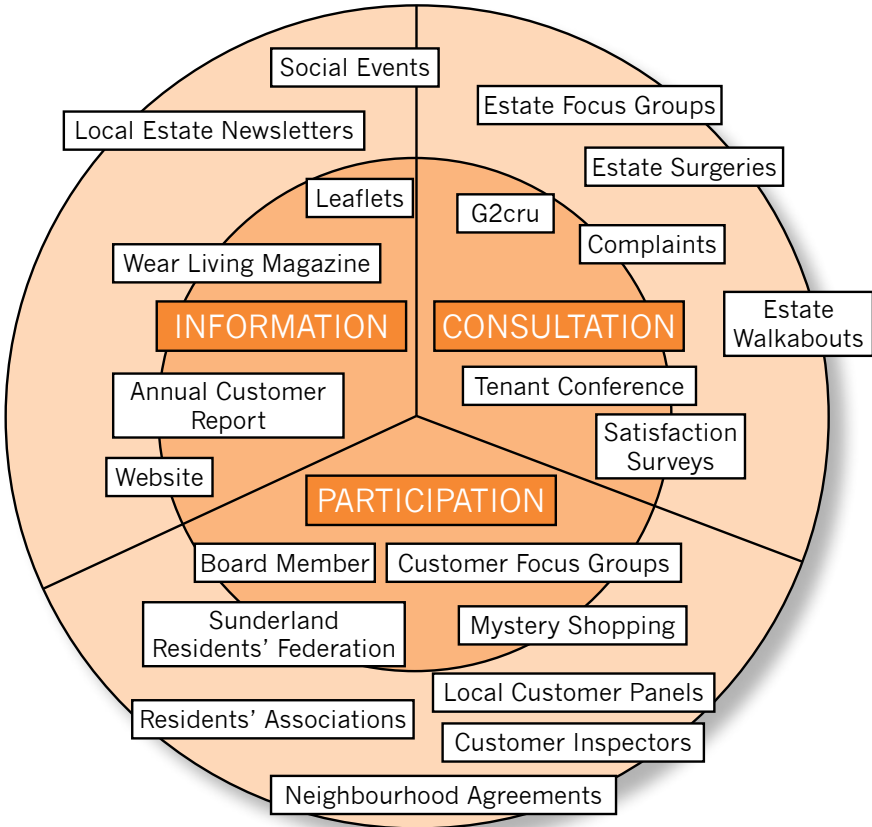
If you join a service-improvement customer focus group you can work with staff to monitor our performance and recommend improvements to our services. You can choose to be a postal or online member if you can't go to meetings.

If you become a tenant board member you could be involved in making and approving decisions at the highest level.

# ► Menu of involvement – how you can be involved

Below is a diagram to show the different ways you can be involved and what sort of involvement it is: information, consultation or participation.

**Note:** Plain English Campaign’s Crystal Mark does not apply to this diagram.



○ in your local community      ● City-wide

The colours used above are to show which way you can be involved. Some involvement types run across the colours, meaning you can be involved both locally in your area and citywide.

## ► **Your questions answered**

### **1 How can I have my say and be involved?**

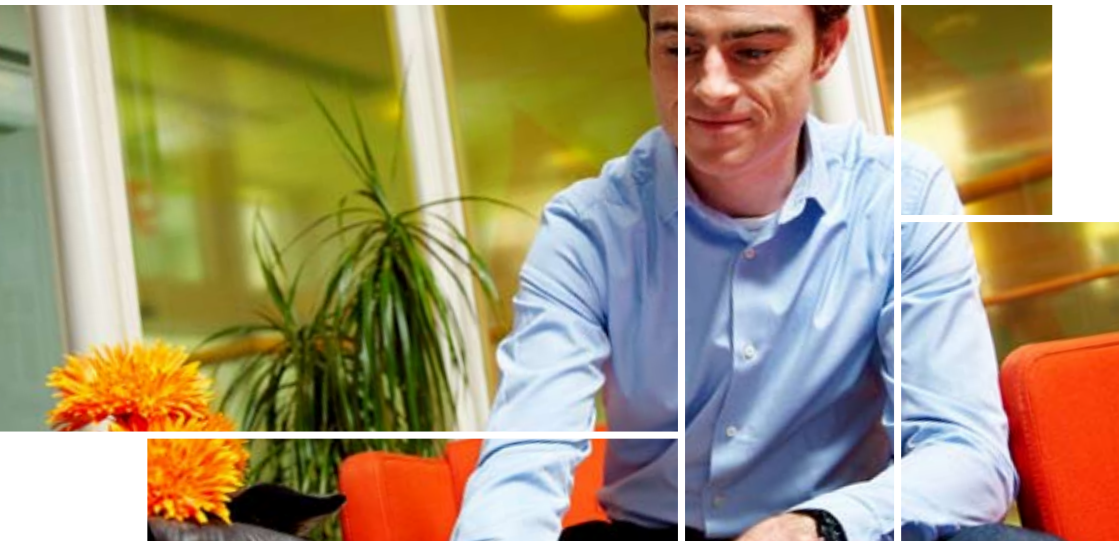
We want to make it as easy as possible for you to be involved in the things that interest you and in the ways you prefer. We have a range of ways you can get involved and are always creating new opportunities. For more information, please ask at your local office, contact us on **0191 525 5000** or email us at **[citeam@gentoogroup.com](mailto:citeam@gentoogroup.com)**

### **2 I don't have any experience – can I still be involved?**

Yes. It is your experience as a customer that counts and your interest in helping to improve services for the benefit of all customers.

### **3 I don't have much free time – is there a way I can still be involved?**

Yes. For most of our methods of getting involved, you have the choice of going to an activity and taking part, or taking part by post or online. This means if you don't have time to come along you can receive information about the services you are interested in and send us your comments.



#### **4 Will my views make any difference?**

Yes. Every time you give us your views, we will tell you how your views have made a difference. We may not be able to carry out every suggestion you make, but in these cases we will always explain the reasons why. You can see the difference customers really make by looking at the 'You said, we did' information displayed in local offices and in newsletters.

#### **5 How do I find out when meetings are taking place?**

You can get a copy of the community involvement calendar from any of our offices. It has details of the events that are taking place. You can also get the calendar from our website, or contact the Customer Involvement Team for more information.

### **Help us to help you**

We are proud of the service we provide and want to make sure that you receive the best possible service. If you need support with carers or childcare costs to allow you to go to meetings, please contact us. If you have any compliments or comments about the service we provide, please let us know.

**Phone: 0191 525 5000.**

**Text: 07725 151515.**

**Email: [citeam@gentoogroup.com](mailto:citeam@gentoogroup.com)**

**Website: [www.gentoogroup.com](http://www.gentoogroup.com)**

## how to get involved

Please tell us if you need help to read or understand this information. Interpretation services are available. Contact the Communications Team on **0191 525 5000**.

এই তথ্যাবলী পড়তে বা বুঝতে আপনার যদি সাহায্যের প্রয়োজন হয়, অনুগ্রহ করে, আমাদের তা বলুন। অনুবাদকারী পরিষেবা উপলব্ধ রয়েছে। কমিউনিকেশন্স টিমের সাথে 0191 525 5000 নম্বরে যোগাযোগ করুন।

(Be)

如果您需要阅读或理解这一信息的帮助，请告诉我们。  
口译服务可供使用。拨打**0191 525 5000**联系沟通部。

(Ch)

Sdělte nám prosím, zda potřebujete pomoc s přečtením a pochopením těchto informací. K dispozici jsou tlumočnické služby. Obraťte se na komunikační tým na čísle 0191 525 5000.

(Cz)

در صورتی که برای خواندن یا درک این اطلاعات به کمک نیاز دارید لطفاً به ما اطلاع دهید.  
با شماره 0191 525 5000 تماس بگیرید. روابط عمومی خدمات ترجمه موجود است. با تیم

(Fa)

ئەگەر ئۆ خوئندنەوه یان تیگەیشتن لەم زانیاریانە پێویستتان بە یارمەتی هەیه تکایە پێمان بێنن. خزمەتگوزاری وەرگێران هەیه. لە ریگای ژمارە تەلەفۆنی 0191 525 5000 پەیوەندی بکەن بە تیمی پێوەندیە گشتییەکانەوه.

(Ku)

Prosimy poinformować nas, jeżeli potrzebują Państwo pomocy w odczytaniu tych informacji lub zapoznaniu się z nimi. Dostępna jest usługa tłumaczenia ustnego. Z Zespołem ds. Komunikacji (Communication Team) można skontaktować się pod numerem 0191 525 5000.

(Po)



**Please tell us if you need help to read or understand this information. If you need this information in large print, on CD, in Braille or in another language, please contact the Communications Team on 0191 525 5000.**

Gentoo Group would like to thank all of the residents, staff and community groups who participated in the production of these leaflets.



business for neighbourhoods



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

Statex - please place  
FSC logo here!

Crystal Mark  
to go here