

Purpose

This policy outlines how Pacific Link Housing Limited (PLH) plans and implements community engagement initiatives, gathers feedback for input to decision-making, develops capacity-building programs for residents and builds stakeholder relationships and partnerships.

Resident Community Engagement

PLH develops and maintains a Client Outcomes and Community Engagement Strategy that aims to support our tenants in addressing disadvantage, providing opportunities and developing aspirations. The Strategy has the following objectives:

- To ensure tenants' knowledge, views and needs are effectively captured in the ongoing development of PLH's service delivery.
- To provide tenants with opportunities for social inclusion and participation that are accessible and appealing, building our community's social capital.
- To provide targeted, sustainable programs that assist tenants in building their skills, confidence and capacity to take advantage of opportunities to better their lives.
- To challenge and change the traditional perception of community housing as a permanent solution and aims to take a leading role in highlighting the potential for tenants to transition through, and exit from, social housing given focussed and appropriate support services.

PLH's strategies and planning reflect these objectives and the company makes appropriate allocation of staff and resources to support in community engagement and resident program initiatives.

Input to Decision-making

PLH encourages and facilitates involvement in decision making about the planning and delivery of housing services policies and activities through a variety of methods:

- Tenant Forums Program – the aim is to provide an opportunity for tenants to have questions answered, face to face, and to receive up-to-date information on matters that affect their tenancy and current topics, to assist with everyday living. Forums may take the form of information provision by expert guest speakers or requesting feedback in development of new PLH services and programs. Forums are held at varying locations to ensure access for all tenants
- Place Activation Program - aims to ensure that the needs of tenants using PLH community spaces are met, building good neighbourhoods, reducing problems with loneliness or anti-social behaviour. The program targets the complexes where the larger cohorts of tenants reside and supports tenant group meetings as required to foster community engagement.
- Annual Survey – aims to gather feedback on matters including customer service, awareness of programs, program suggestions, preferred communication methods, demographics, wellbeing and is conducted independently of PLH. In accordance with our commitment to transparency, results of the annual Tenant Survey are published in PLH's Annual Report.
- Communication channels – including tenant handbook, factsheets, SMS messages, smartphone app, quarterly tenant newsletters, annual report, brochures, website and social media platforms.
- Supporting Innovation - tenants may request support to bring approved engagement activities or program ideas from concept to fruition. PLH can assist with applications for grant funding, work experience, study support to assist tenants where time and resources permit.

- Maintenance and Development – input, where feasible, to design of maintenance upgrades or new residential development.

Capacity Building Programs

The Client Outcomes and Community Engagement Strategy is formulated around the four key themes of:

1. Education
2. Employment
3. Opportunity
4. Community Engagement

Analysis of PLH's tenant and resident profile, feedback from tenant surveys and levels of program participation is conducted to understand and inform the development of targeted programs to address areas of need and cultivate maximum participation.

A range of structured programs self-funded from PLH surpluses includes:

- Transitional Tenancies Program - partnerships with support agencies to deliver living skills and support for sustainment of tenancy for participants nominated by the agencies.
- Support Referral Program - provides access to multiple local support services through referral arrangements. Refer CP59 Resident Services and Support Policy.
- Tenant Education Program - aims to improve residents' educational attainment, through partnership with local educational providers.
- Education Scholarship – provides assistance to economically disadvantaged tenants towards education costs.
- Learner Driver Program - support drivers with driving lesson packages
- Sports, Health, Exercise & Wellbeing (SHEW) program – financial support for the costs of health and wellbeing activities for tenants and their families.
- Laptop Purchase Scheme - to offer tenants affordable solutions to access technology, through interest-free loans.
- Events and Outings Program - encourage participation events, including annual garden competition, annual Christmas function and other social gatherings and outings. The outings program is designed to be accessible and appealing for all tenants and consideration is given to location and demographics. To ensure events and outings are safe and enjoyable for all, PLH may ask attendees to sign a Code of Conduct.

A range of other programs will be provided where collaboration with partners can provide appropriate resources to deliver services and information for residents.

Programs are developed to provide accessibility and address barriers to participation. Assistance with transport and child care may be provided, where appropriate. Gift vouchers may be offered to encourage participation. Planning of events will consider access for people with mobility issues. Factsheets are published to explain eligibility for programs for residents. Procedures for PLH employees to ensure consistency, transparency and fairness in allocation of program resources are approved by the CEO.

Programs are promoted through PLH's communication channels. Program participants may be asked to assist with promotion of the programs and contribute to PLH communications. Consent will be obtained where participant photos are used in communications material.

To bring academic rigour to the development and measurement of PLH's investment of time and resources in operating programs, a measurement tool will be used to ensure program effectiveness and continuing value for money.

Partnerships

Partnerships with community and corporate organisations are core to PLH's ethos for supporting tenants and improving social capital. Partnership arrangements may be formalised through joint venture agreements, service level agreements with support agencies and memoranda of understanding. Regular reviews of partnership arrangements will be conducted to ensure ongoing effectiveness in meeting objectives. Regular one-on-one meetings with partners will be held to obtain feedback as well as group meetings and forums to gain information for continuous improvement and encourage networking.

Pacific Link may also seek to develop joint ventures and partnerships for developing and constructing new social and affordable housing supply. These arrangements are formulated to meet strategic objectives and mitigate risk in collaborations with other agencies, government and local councils. Refer Policy CP52 Business Planning, Review and Development.

Local Community Engagement

PLH aims to grow the public awareness of the community housing sector and PLH's mission and activities to generate positive recognition from clients and stakeholders.

To achieve this objective Pacific Link has an active communications plan that includes the following activities:

- communication of positive outcomes from our programs in the local media, via social media channels, our website, our annual report and via our Link Newsletter and tenant newsletters.
- maintaining an advocacy plan to ensure regular ongoing contact with community representatives to influence affordable housing policy development in our region.
- planning for reputational risks that may arise.
- participation in state and local government committees, local agencies and workshops that have objectives relevant to our strategic plan and tenant needs.
- provision of information to local real estate agents and landlords on our services.
- promotion, through the Key2 Realty website, of property management services for private landlords.
- building relationships with local property developers, councils and landowners to identify opportunities for growth of affordable housing stock.
- being involved in local and regional planning matters by discussion with councils regarding affordable housing and planning strategies.

Donations & Sponsorships

Pacific Link supports our local community and projects which fit within our mission, purpose and values. We will consider requests for support from groups and organisations in community development, facilities and services for the disadvantaged, youth, aged and people with disabilities both in Australia and overseas. We do not provide support for political or sectarian organisations. Donations or sponsorships require approval of the CEO or Board. Requests for donation should include a brief statement of the organisation's purpose, governance and

achievements. The organisation's ABN and/or charitable fundraising number must be provided.

Community Housing Sector Participation

Pacific Link participates within the community housing sector and keeps itself informed of new initiatives and best practice by:

- Membership of various peak industry groups and other relevant organisations.
- Maintaining regular contact and building strong relationships with relevant statutory funding bodies to discuss our strategic plan, policy interpretation, funding agreements and programs and housing stock allocations.
- Regular contact with community housing policymakers and representatives of local, state and federal government
- Regular contact with other community housing providers through CEO forums and manager networks.
- Subscriptions to newsletters and bulletins.
- Attending relevant conferences, forums and meetings, seminars and training workshops.
- Participating in and lodging submissions.

Research Initiatives

To progress advocacy for social and affordable housing outcomes in our region, from time to time PLH will commission academic research into relevant matters, including demographic analysis of our operational locations, measurement of place-building initiatives and measuring outcomes from new programs.