

Tenant Engagement Strategy 2022-27

WORKING TOGETHER



Grove Community
HOUSING ASSOCIATION



**Let's all work
together to make
a difference**



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TENANT ENGAGEMENT

OUR MISSION

“To provide quality homes and services for our tenants and wider community”



The association consulted with the Tenant Voice Group who agreed that printing costs for this document are reallocated to Fuel Vouchers. This document will be available online.





We are delighted that the Tenant Voice Group helped develop this new strategy and the document has now received their seal of approval.

This logo was designed and chosen by our Tenant Voice Group. The logo represents their work and involvement in reviewing and developing policies and activities.

Through this strategy, GCHA plans to empower more tenants to take an active role in the Tenant Voice Group, provide opportunities for training, improve service delivery and support the development of sustainable communities.

Below are some reasons why tenants have become involved:

“

I joined the Tenant Voice Group because I wanted to be a voice in the community. I am passionate about my community, and I have enjoyed developing and shaping the Tenant Engagement Strategy for the present and future of the Association.

Tenant Voice Group Member

”

“

The Tenant Voice Group has helped improve my interaction with others, I enjoy being part of a group with similar views and goals. Grove have put the Tenant Voice Group at the center of this Strategy.

Tenant Voice Group Member

”

“

Grove have presented tenants with a menu of involvement which is an excellent idea. Tenants can get involved at a level which they feel most comfortable.

Tenant Voice Group Member

”



Grove Community
HOUSING ASSOCIATION



Grove Community Housing Association

PROVIDING QUALITY HOUSING AND SERVICES FOR OUR TENANTS AND COMMUNITY

Grove Community Housing Association

PROVIDING QUALITY HOUSING AND SERVICES FOR OUR TENANTS AND COMMUNITY

Welcome & Introduction

- Welcome
- Staff
- Board
- Tenants
- Services
- Governance

INTRODUCTION & WELCOME

Welcome to our Tenant Engagement Strategy 2022 – 2027 which has been produced as a result of delivering on our commitments set out in our Tenant Participation Vision Strategy 2019 – 2020. The Vision Strategy set out the steps we would take to consult tenants to achieve good tenant engagement in housing services and seek a wide range of views and develop involvement. We are proud of our achievements and thankful to our tenants, Board, and many others for collectively supporting and engaging in our work. This strategy builds significantly on our history of a positive, friendly working relationship with our tenants and supporting the wider community.

Our Tenant Engagement Strategy for 2022 - 27 includes a clear and achievable action plan which will help ensure that tenants are at the heart of being involved in our work.

As we emerge from a global pandemic and watch the tragic events of the war in Ukraine, we are very mindful of the impact felt at local level. The soaring costs of food and energy are at an all-time high, putting immense pressure on people financially and their overall wellbeing. At GCHA we are committed to supporting tenants to alleviate fuel poverty and provide greater comforts within their homes.

It's really important to us that tenants' voices are at the forefront of everything that we do and that residents feel that they can connect with us. We want to continue to provide the best quality housing services in the safest way as possible. As a Grove tenant your feedback helps us



shape the housing services we provide. This Tenant Engagement Strategy ensures that together we will continue to develop and expand the ways you can get involved and have your say. We hope you enjoy reading it, especially the contributions from our tenants.

Agnes Crawford
Chief Executive

TENANT ENGAGEMENT

Tenant engagement is an essential part of the work of a social housing organisation. It means that all tenants have a range of opportunities to have a say about how their housing services are delivered. It is a two-way process where landlords value the engagement and recognise it as a vital component to improving their business. Tenant engagement should build meaningful relationships between landlords, tenants and the wider community.

There are a number of levels of tenant engagement ranging from operational to strategic. These are broadly represented as information, consultation, involvement and partnership. All levels of engagement are equally important in the effective delivery of services.

Traditional methods of conducting meetings are not always the most suitable for a variety of reasons. Some tenants may be quite happy to complete surveys, provide feedback on literature from the comfort of their own homes. Others may want to scrutinise services or indeed apply to sit on our Board. This Strategy commits to delivering a wide range of opportunities for tenant engagement.

Our Tenant Voice Group meets regularly. If you'd like to join us please contact Paul the Senior Housing Officer on 028 9077 3330 to take part.



A BRIEF HISTORY OF GROVE

A Word from our Tenants

Arosa resident **Esther Lunn** has spent most of her adult life in the Grove area. Originally from the Shankill Road, Esther moved with her family at a young age to Skegoneill as her mother owned a grocery store at the corner of Arosa Parade. After briefly living in Rathcoole when she got married, Esther and her husband moved to a property at Harrisburg Street which her father bought for them for the sum of £250. The young couple repaid the loan at £1 a week and Esther can still recall the condition of the property when they first moved in:

“ *The interior of the house was completely wrecked and I was pregnant with my third child at the time. The previous occupants had taken a hammer to the floor and smashed up some of the tiles, there was oil cloth on the floors, broken glass from the windows in the kitchen and the wardrobes were lying in pieces in the bedrooms. My father and my husband both worked on the property and we made it into a home. We got a loan to put in a shower, toilet and a tiny sink as we had no bathroom and the roof space was converted into a third bedroom.*

In 1999 the property was vested and I was initially offered a house on Glasgow Street, before eventually moving into a new property in Arosa when Grove Housing Association acquired 40 homes from the developer. ”



Esther Lunn
Tenant & Member of
Tenant Voice Group

Former Grove committee member **Kay Brown** was first introduced to life in Grove when she met and married her husband who was from Bute Street in 1963. The couple set up home in No. 13 Bute Street where Kay remained until she secured her present accommodation at York Road in 2001. Reflecting on life on Bute Street in the late 1970's, Kay recalls:

“ *There were a number of houses where the families had moved out and these had been bricked up but it was always a good street, you knew your neighbours and they were happy homes, happy times. I remember the properties being renovated by Grove Housing Association and we moved to St Aubyn Street while the work was being carried out. We got our first bathroom built out in the rear yard with a shower fitted. I always liked Bute Street, everyone worked hard but there was a great sense of community spirit.* **”**



Kay Brown
Tenant & Former Board Member



No.s. 1-39 Fife Street, September 1979

Principles for Tenant Engagement

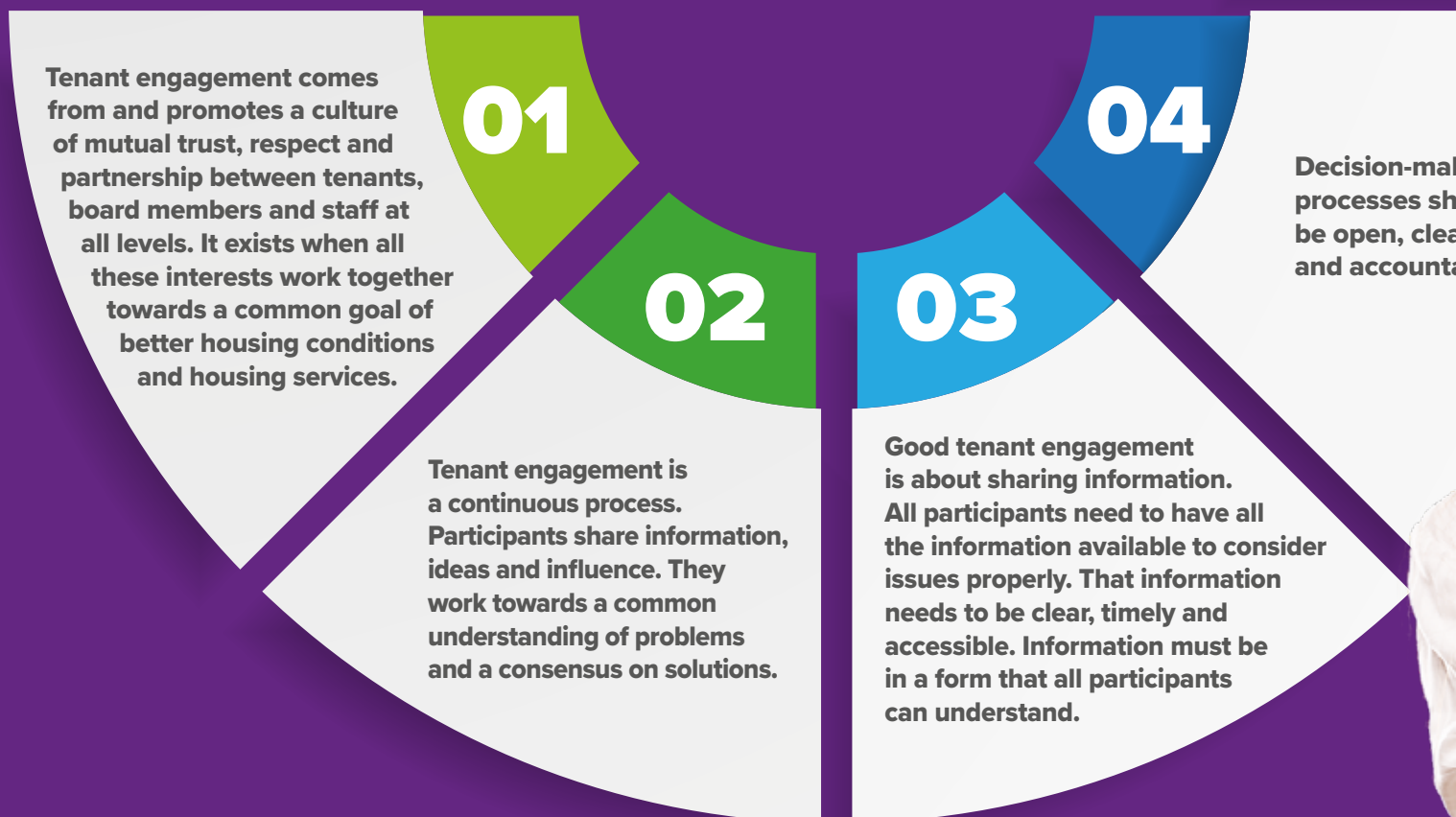
The Tenant Engagement Strategy for Northern Ireland 2015 to 2020 states that Housing Associations must:

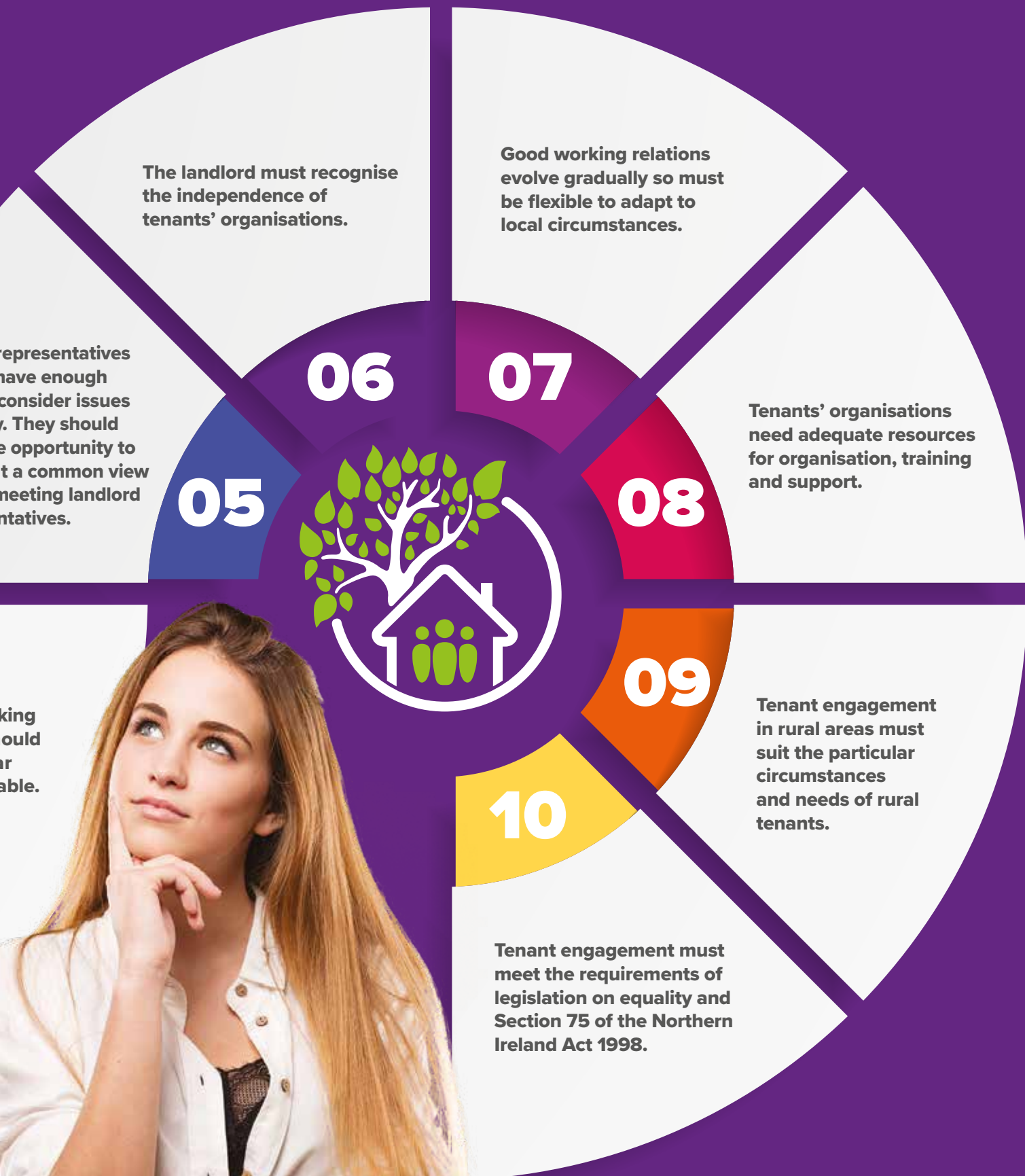
- Consult their tenants on issues affecting their tenancies;
- Have a complaints procedure in place; and
- Survey tenants annually.

It sets out 10 principles of good engagement in Northern Ireland. These are based on:

- What social landlords should do;
- How tenants' capacity for greater engagement will be developed and supported;
- What government will do further to lead this development.

The 10 principles are:





Levels of Engagement

We recognise that not everyone wants to engage with us in the same way or at all due to their personal circumstances. However, others may be interested in having a say in how our policies and practises are developed or how we perform as a social housing provider.

We have therefore developed a “menu” of engagement levels that are available to every tenant wishing to get involved.

These engagement levels are summarised below:



LEVEL 1:

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION

Just by engaging with us at this level, and by taking an interest in how we perform, you can provide the platform that influences and enables us to improve. For example, by simply responding to our annual tenant satisfaction survey, you will give us a steer on how to make improvements to the services you receive.

You will be provided with regular information on service satisfaction levels, performance standards or any other latest news which relate to the services we deliver.

This is done through residents' meetings, website, annual report, intermittent mail shots, personal letters and face to face meetings. Communication methods will include email, text messaging, social media and smart phone applications.

TENANT COMMITMENT

Level 1 does not involve a great deal of commitment but can bring many benefits. We would ask that you take the time to:

- Respond to our customer service surveys and consultations;
- Attend tenant meetings;
- Provide up to date information on your email, text, and personal details to facilitate automated communication;
- Follow us on social media;

TENANT BENEFITS

- Deliver service improvement;
- You will help us meet your needs through communication and information that is available when you need it;
- Help us meet our environmental goals in the production of less waste paper;
- You will help us achieve value for money

LEVEL 2:

GROUP STRUCTURE

Level 2 will require a higher level of commitment. You will be required to help group become established or participate in already formed groups. Developing relationships and engagement opportunities for tenants and others within the community.

Local tenants' groups can not only have a greater impact on influencing service delivery, but can also impact positively on the broader community as well as enhancing your own personal organisational skills. Grove Community Housing Association is committed to provide the appropriate training and support to tenants.

TENANT COMMITMENT

Level 2 engagement will enable the group to develop, and this commitment would extend to:

- Being involved in organising or attending regular meetings;
- Being involved in organising or attending community activities;
- Representing tenants at Grove Community Housing Association focus groups and other such activities;

TENANT BENEFITS

- Feel more involved and take ownership of your work;
- Feel more empowered;
- Make a positive impact locally for you and your neighbours;
- Help improve community cohesion

LEVEL 3: ★★☆☆

FORMAL BASED TENANT GROUP

GCHA TENANT VOICE GROUP

At this level you will be required to attend regular tenant forum meetings, seminar's, training sessions and other organised events. Tenant's forums can have a significant impact and influence on an organisation's strategy and direction if properly managed and supported.

TENANT COMMITMENT

Level 3 engagement involves a greater deal of commitment, as you will be required to:

- Be involved in regular meetings;
- Be involved in reviewing policy and providing feedback;
- Attending formal meetings with the Grove Community Housing Association;
- Attending conferences, seminars or training;
- Reporting back to tenants;

TENANT BENEFITS

- Hold Grove Community Housing Association accountable for their performance, decision making and conduct.
- Help in driving value for money within the organisation
- Regularly seeking the views of tenants, being responsive to and considering those views;
- Offering tenants a menu of engagement activities so that they can participate as individuals, within formal or informal group structures or as specialist posts;



- Providing opportunities for tenants to scrutinise the services they receive and the decisions that impact them;
- Providing the appropriate training and support to tenants and staff to encourage, promote and provide the skills required to make engagement an integral part of the organisation; and
- Developing relationships and engagement opportunities for tenants and others within the community or those whose role has an impact on tenants e.g. other government departments or housing organisations.

LEVEL 4: ★★★★★

GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE

A tenant who becomes a full member of a management board has a primary duty to the housing association as a board member. By joining the management board there are opportunities to scrutinise our policies and activities and provide strategic direction for the Association.

TENANT COMMITMENT

Board member's would be required to commit to:

- At least 4 Board meetings annually, A.G.M. and often Sub-Committee meetings;
- Be available for training events, seminars and review meetings.

TENANT BENEFITS

- The benefits of having tenants on management boards include:
- Being involved in making decisions that will affect their homes and environment;
- Enabling management board members, staff and tenants to work together towards a common goal;
- Providing a better understanding between board members and tenants;
- Making the board more accountable;
- Helping the landlord to obtain the views of tenants on policy issues and service delivery;
- Enabling tenants to influence the policies and practices that affect the way their homes are managed.



EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES STATEMENT

We value involvement that reflects the whole of our tenant population.

To this end, and in accordance with Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, we actively seek to remove barriers to tenant engagement arising from people with:

- **Different religious beliefs**
- **People of different political opinion**
- **People of different racial groups**
- **People of different ages**
- **People of different**
- **Sexual orientation**
- **Men and women generally**
- **People with a disability and people without**
- **People with dependents and people without**
- **People of different marital status**

We aim to ensure that our involvement opportunities are accessible, that our written material is clear and easy to understand, and that we do not present any other barriers to involvement.

We will provide information for tenants in other languages and format such as audio or large print where tenants need it.



We will provide information in ways that are easy to understand for tenants with limited or no reading skills where tenants need it.

We will ensure that all of our tenant groups recognise the importance of equal opportunities and seek to involve all those who are eligible to join them.

For further information on Grove Community Housing Association's Equality Policy and Equality Scheme please contact our office for details. Also get in touch if you require this document in a different format.

QUESTIONS & FEEDBACK



Grove Community
HOUSING ASSOCIATION

Grove Community Housing Association welcomes all feedback and questions you may have on this Strategy. If you may wish to submit feedback to us regarding the strategy or you wish to become more involved in our work; please contact us:

In writing, phone or in person:

Grove Community Housing Association
171 York Road
Belfast BT15 3HB

Telephone: 028 9077 3330

Email: enquiries@groveha.org.uk

Website: www.groveha.org.uk

Grove as a community based Housing Association are committed to enabling our tenants to learn and grow. We work alongside fantastic organisations like



**Supporting[™]
Communities**
Empowering Society

We support our residents in their ambitions to learn with Grove. We commit to promoting opportunities for all to get involved in our work.



BLOOMING MARVELLOUS

Tenant Wellbeing Gardening Event

(Kindly funded by Belfast City Council)



Supported by

Belfast
City Council

Supporting the youth within the Grove Community



'TIS THE SEASON TO BE JOLLY

Our tenants love seasonal events, why not volunteer and take part. We would love to see you there.



YOUR COMMUNITY GARDEN



Our tenants enjoy getting together in the Grove Community Garden. If you want to be involved with the Community Garden, there are lots of volunteering options available. Come along and have a go at growing your own flowers or fruit 'n' veg. Get in touch with Paul or Margaret at the office, we'd be delighted to hear from you.







Grove Community

HOUSING ASSOCIATION

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facebook.com/grovecommunityhousing



twitter.com/housinggrove



If you would like your own copy or in a different format (such as larger print or different language) please contact our office.