

Address

Date

Dear Mr/Mrs

YOUR HOME, YOUR FUTURE, YOUR CHOICE

The council is consulting you on its proposal to directly manage housing services, which are currently run by Newark and Sherwood Homes. However, before any formal decision is made we need to understand what your views are.

An independent review was recently carried out into the best option for managing housing services. One of the main findings of the review is that savings of £1million each year can be achieved by bringing housing services back under direct council control. These savings will be reinvested in tenant services and used to deliver much needed new council homes for local people.

To undertake this consultation we have appointed an independent resident engagement specialist called **Open Communities**. They will be contacting you directly within the next few days.

It is important to note that this proposal will **not** affect your tenancy or lease. You will remain a secure tenant or leaseholder of the council. The council will continue to set your rent and charges within the same guidelines as it does now.

If the proposal to bring housing services back under direct council control is approved, we will:

1. increase involvement and engagement of tenants in decision-making about how services are developed and delivered;
2. be responsible for making day-to-day housing management decisions, such as how tenancies and leases are enforced and where money is spent on estates; and
3. be the single point of contact for housing issues – although the frontline staff that deliver these services will not change.

Newark and Sherwood Homes provides good services to our tenants, however there are costs in having a separate company to deliver the housing services. The council has a responsibility to get the very best value for money for tenants in the way the housing service is managed.

Over recent times funding for council housing has changed considerably. It is therefore vital that the council manages its housing finances in the best possible way for tenants, to plan ahead and ensure that sufficient funding is in place to maintain our existing homes and build new social housing.

In the next few days you will receive a short questionnaire from **Open Communities** on the proposal to bring the management of the housing service back into the council's control. This questionnaire is being sent to all council tenants and leaseholders.

You will be provided with a pre-paid envelope to return it to **Open Communities** or alternatively you have the opportunity to complete the questionnaire online. All responses need to be returned to **Open Communities**. This consultation is confidential and the council will not know how individuals have responded.

The consultation programme will run for eight weeks, from 26 June until 21 August 2019. Six drop-in sessions have also been arranged in venues across the district as detailed at the end of this letter. We would encourage you to attend one of these sessions to find out more about the proposal.

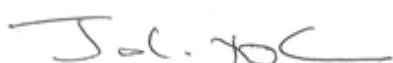
During the consultation you will be able to contact **Open Communities** on a Freephone number, which will be provided on the questionnaire, to answer any queries you may have.

The results of the consultation will then be considered by the council's Policy and Finance Committee in September 2019 and you will be informed of the outcome by letter.

It is important that you have your say on this proposal and I really hope that you will take the time to complete and return the questionnaire.

If you require this information in another language or format please contact us.

Yours sincerely



John Robinson
Chief Executive

DROP IN SESSIONS

Date	Venue	Time
Tuesday 16 July	De Lacy Court Community Centre, Ollerton, NG22 9RN	4:00pm - 7:00pm
Thursday 25 July	The Green Community Centre, Bilsthorpe, NG22 8QH	10:30am - 12:30pm
Thursday 25 July	Cambridge Close Community Centre, Rainworth, NG21 0AY	2:00pm - 5:00pm
Friday 26 July	The Bridge Community Centre, Lincoln Road, Newark, NG24 2DQ	4:00pm - 7:00pm
Tuesday 30 July	Cleveland Square Community Centre, Hawtonville, Newark, NG24 4HL	10:00am - 12:00pm
Tuesday 30 July	Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY	4:00pm - 7:00pm

ADDRESS

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YOUR HOME, YOUR FUTURE, YOUR CHOICE

Newark and Sherwood District Council - Test of Opinion

Dear Mr/Mrs,

Newark and Sherwood District Council would like your opinion on its proposal to bring housing services back under its direct control. They are proposing this after commissioning an independent review to look at the best option for managing the housing service, which identified savings of £1million each year if this was delivered directly by the council rather than through Newark and Sherwood Homes.

Before any formal decision is made the council would like to know your views by asking what is most important to you as a tenant or leaseholder.

Open Communities has been appointed by the council to consult with all council tenants and leaseholders. We are an independent resident engagement organisation.

This short questionnaire is your opportunity to give your views. **The consultation programme will run for 8 weeks, from 26th June until 21st August 2019.** Six drop in sessions have also been arranged in venues across the district. These sessions will be facilitated by Open Communities, staff from the council and Newark & Sherwood Homes will also be in attendance to answer any questions you have. The sessions are planned as follows:

Date	Venue	Time
Tuesday 16 th July	De Lacy Court Community Centre, Ollerton, NG22 9RN	4:00pm - 7:00pm
Thursday 25 th July	The Green Community Centre, Bilsthorpe, NG22 8QH	10:30am - 12:30pm
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Tuesday 30 th July	Castle House, Great North Road, Newark, NG24 1BY	4:00pm - 7:00pm

It is important that you complete the short questionnaire attached and return it in the pre-paid envelope provided. **If you lose your questionnaire you can call us on FREEPHONE 0800 073 1051 or contact us at enquiries@opencommunities.org to request a replacement.** If you require this information in another format/language please contact us.

All completed, returned questionnaires will be entered into a prize draw with three shopping vouchers as prizes. Only those completing the name, address section can be entered into the prize draw

1st prize	£100
2nd prize	£50
3rd prize	£25

- You can return your completed questionnaire in the prepaid envelope provided. You do not need a stamp
- To complete the questionnaire online go to www.opencommunities.org. Click on the 'Newark and Sherwood District Council' tab and complete the form. You will need your unique questionnaire code which can be found at the bottom right of your questionnaire.

If you have any queries with what the questionnaire is asking, then please contact us on the Freephone number **0800 073 1051** or by email enquiries@opencommunities.org .

We look forward to receiving your completed questionnaire.

Yours sincerely



R Coyle
Director, Open Communities

YOUR HOME.....YOUR VIEWS

HELP DECIDE THE FUTURE MANAGEMENT OF YOUR HOMES AND COMMUNITIES

Newark and Sherwood District Council's consultation exercise on the future management of your homes and communities.

Please complete the questionnaire below and return it as explained in the accompanying cover letter.

Q1 Are you in favour of the council bringing the housing service back under its direct control?

YES

NO

NO VIEW EITHER WAY

Q2 Generating £1 million in savings each year by bringing the management of your homes back to the council would enable more money to be invested in the services that matter to you. Which of the following would you like to see the council invest in? Highlight your top three – with '1' being your favourite option.

- Repairs and maintenance
- Dealing with anti-social behaviour
- Value for money for your rent/service charges
- Building new council homes
- Estate services overall
- Handling complaints/dealing with enquiries generally
- Tenant engagement/involvement
- Other (please tick and provide details)

Q3 If the decision is to return the management of the homes to the council, one of the primary objectives is to build on and strengthen the very positive work carried out by Newark and Sherwood Tenant Forum. The council would like to ensure tenants continue to be involved in every aspect of the management of their homes and communities.

Would you be interested in finding out more about how you can play a part in how your homes and communities are managed?

YES

NO

Please complete the below if you would like to be entered into the prize draw.

Name _____

Address _____

draft