



Turning goals into reality

Tenant participation is at the heart of BVT - it's part of our culture and we are committed to involving our tenants. Our tenant participation strategy is the first stage of turning goals into reality. It is not an end in itself but a means to an end, resulting in better decision making and more responsive, higher quality services:

- + We want to empower our tenants and encourage them to share in the decisions that affect their communities.
- + We will use traditional and innovative techniques to promote tenant participation. We recognise that tenant participation is voluntary and we respect the wishes of those tenants who do not wish to be involved.
- + We will promote and demonstrate equality of opportunity for all our tenants, treat them fairly and with respect.
- + We will demonstrate commitment and continue to provide a wide range of resources to support tenant involvement.
- + We want to overcome any difficulties that may exist and break down the barriers that may hinder or put tenants off becoming involved.
- + We will work in partnership with other organisations and tenants to develop new initiatives and tailor participation to suit people's needs.
- + We want to improve communication and build good relationships with our tenants and introduce new and closer ways of working that will complement our existing structures.

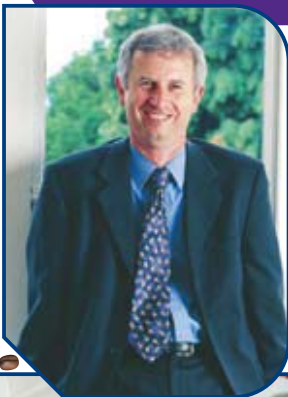
I am delighted to provide a few words of introduction to our new Tenant Participation Strategy. The most successful organisations are those that listen to their customers, and whose customers help to shape the services which they deliver.

At BVT the emphasis is very much on continuous improvement and it is important that we aim to work with our tenants to help guide us in that respect. We already do a great deal of good work involving our tenants but there is a long way to go and I believe the launch of our new Tenant Participation Strategy is a big step in the right direction.

Peter Roach
Chief Executive

Zoey Stanton
Tenant Participation Officer

Your community needs you... to participate



Stake your housing benefit claim today!

Every year millions of pounds of benefits go unclaimed. By following these rules you can help the Benefit Service to make sure you get the right amount of Benefit as quickly as possible.

Housing Benefit claim forms are available from your Local City Council Neighbourhood Office, where staff will help you fill in your claim form if you have difficulty.

You **MUST** provide original, current documents to support your claim, without these the Benefit Service will not be able to process it!

Proof of Identity

The Benefit Service will need to see TWO original documents to prove your identity. Examples of documents accepted are:

- Benefit Books
- Birth Certificate
- Driving Licence
- Medical Card
- Passport

National Insurance Number

You will need to provide original proof of your National Insurance Number - this can be found on your Benefit book, letters from the Pension Service, wage slips or from the Job Centre.

Proof of Income

In most circumstances you will have to provide proof of ALL your income, including:

+ **EARNINGS:** original payslips for the last two months or five weeks.

+ If you are **SELF-EMPLOYED**, you will need to provide your accounts.

+ **ALL BENEFITS:** for example, Working Family Tax Credit, Child Tax Credit, Child Benefit, Incapacity Benefit, Child Maintenance.

+ **PRIVATE OR OCCUPATIONAL PENSIONS:** you will need to provide proof of the two most recent payments.

+ **SAVINGS & INVESTMENTS:** you will need to provide the last two monthly statements received from your Bank or Building Society, or the paying-in books if you have a Deposit or Savings account.

+ **OTHER PEOPLE** who live with you - make sure that you have put on the form all the people who normally live with you.

Change in Circumstances

You must contact the Benefit Service straight away if any of your personal circumstances - or circumstances of anyone who lives with you - change as it may affect your benefit entitlement.

YOU CAN TELEPHONE THE BENEFIT SERVICE ON 0121 464 7000 FOR MORE ADVICE.

A Fun Day for tenants and local residents of Doseley in Telford was organised jointly by BVT staff and the Beth Johnson Housing Association. Despite mixed weather, a good turnout of children and parents enjoyed the attractions which included a bouncy castle, on site DJ, children's entertainer 'Tombo' and bouncy football.

Seen here (left to right) at the fun day are Sue Davies and Phil Davies and Lord and Lady Grocott. Lord Grocott commented that since he had moved to the House of Lords - where he is Government Chief Whip - it was pleasant to be able to stay a while and not rush from event to event on his weekend back in town.

Lack of sun didn't stop the fun

