

Resident Involvement Policy

We've now come to a point in the Church Grove Project where we need to clarify the relationship between the residents group and RUSS. We now have planning consent for the Church Grove scheme which brings us one step closer to our goal. The consent has in turn released grant money enabling the project board to confirm the appointment of our operations director for RUSS. With critical management resource in place, the project team are now getting themselves ready to deliver the project.

It's essential that, as we enter the next stage of the project, RUSS as an organisation, including the Board of trustees and the Residents, work well together to bring the project to fruition and deliver housing in line with RUSS's principles. It's time for the residents group to become more actively engaged in the process. The agreement below sets out the mutual expectations. This includes residents committing our time and making a financial commitment to the project now. This is a symbolic act: a statement from each resident that they are willing to commit themselves to the project and do what it takes to deliver it, to the best of our ability.

The Resident's Involvement Policy is a binding agreement between the residents of Church Grove and the RUSS Board of Trustees, and is subject to future amendments pending written approval between both parties.

A. Allocations to residents group

For information on eligibility, application process, allocations and waiting lists refer to RUSS and CGP Allocations Policy and associated allocations documents on the Resources page of RUSS's website: www.theruss.org/resources.

B. Resident involvement (pre-construction phase)

For this project to be delivered successfully it needs everyone's active involvement. Before construction begins, residents will involve themselves in a range of aspects related to the project by engaging in the process generally, including;

- Read emails from RUSS and representatives to stay informed of the project's progress and activities
- Provide a response (where required) to emails within 7 days
- Attend co-design sessions and other project events, sending apologies if unable to attend
- Attend residents group meetings on a regular basis, sending apologies if unable to attend (plus any points for discussion or questions you have about the project)
- Complete all surveys, assessments and requests for information from RUSS fully and within the timescales requested
- Attend self-build training sessions and related meetings, sending apologies to event organiser if unable to attend

C. Resident volunteering (pre-construction phase)

Before construction begins, residents will volunteer with RUSS for an average of 6 hours per month (according to the organisation's need and each resident's availability in any given month). These 6 hours per month could be shared within a household, for example one resident could offer the full 12 hours for their household of two adults. This may be on project-related, RUSS School or core

RUSS activities as the need and priorities arise. Residents will actively engage with, identify and put themselves forward for volunteering tasks through regular residents meetings, RUSS members meetings or by contacting the resident representatives, RUSS Trustees and Operations Director.

D. Resident involvement (construction phase)

During construction, residents will continue to contribute to RUSS through volunteering, to the best of our ability, alongside any self-build work they are committed to.

E. Resident financial commitment

Residents in Pools 1-6 (shared ownership and shared equity dwellings) will make a minimum £1,000 financial commitment per household in the form of purchasing RUSS shares to this value. Residents in Pools 7-9 (rental dwellings) will make a £1,000 financial commitment per household (for Pool 9 this is £333 per person) in the form of purchasing RUSS shares to this value.

Residents will make this financial commitment shortly after the second financial assessment of residents is complete. At this point they will be given two months' notice to purchase RUSS shares.

The resident financial commitment will be deducted from the purchase price or rental value of RUSS homes upon sale/let.

The financial contributions will be held in a separate ring-fenced Deposits Account so that residents can be confident that any monies paid in can be repaid if a resident decides they no longer wish to be involved.

RUSS has not and will not be relying on the resident's group contributions as part of its development cash flow. Whilst RUSS may ask for a loan to help fund shortfalls in the Church Grove budget, this would be on a repayment basis.

RUSS shares are refundable if a resident decides to leave the project.

F. RUSS commitments to residents

RUSS commits to engaging and updating residents on project progress in an ongoing way, and exercising all reasonable efforts within the resources available to deliver the project in a timely and well managed way. Residents can expect RUSS to:

- Provide a short progress update by email on a two-monthly basis, including any significant changes to the project finances or financial model
- Provide an informal verbal progress update to residents group meetings, where these are attended by the Project Manager, *operations director* and/or a member of the Project Board
- Offer residents the opportunity to become resident representatives and/or join the Project Board, as capacity permits
- Facilitate residents to volunteer with RUSS
- Seek ways to offer residents opportunities to support the self-build in ways other than physical labour, for example through administrative work, organising tool hire or feeding everyone on site
- Apply this policy fairly and equally with due process

If residents believe that RUSS is not meeting these expectations they have the right to raise this as a complaint to be handled by the RUSS Board of Trustees in line with RUSS's published complaints process.

G. Positive working environment

RUSS is committed to creating an environment of positive working relationships. RUSS believes that every resident has the right to be treated with equality, dignity and respect and is committed to

providing a supportive working environment to foster such a culture. All residents should be valued for their different skills and ways of working and be treated with dignity. All residents are entitled to a working environment free from bullying, harassment or victimisation, to experience no form of discrimination.

This statement should be read in conjunction with the RUSS Equality and Diversity Policy: <https://www.theruss.org/resources/>

H. Commitment and involvement (pre-construction stage)

We plan to manage any difficulties in our group through conversation and with sympathy, while also expecting residents to remain actively engaged in the project. For example, if a resident is unable to participate because of personal circumstances, they could appoint a relative or friend as a proxy, to stand in for them during this time where it's practical to do so. If a resident has stopped participating, as described in this policy, or has not met the financial commitment there will be a formal process to go through and the RUSS Board will decide whether or not the resident must sacrifice their place in the project:

1. RUSS will notify the resident by email
2. The resident has 14 days to explain the reasons for their lack of participation
3. The RUSS Board will then consider the case at its next available meeting.
4. If the RUSS Board decides so, the resident will be removed from the residents group. This will terminate any stake, rights or obligations the resident and their household have in the process and project.
5. Any shareholding in RUSS will be refunded upon written request from the resident.

Signatures

RUSS Chairs:

Name

Date

Signature

Name

Date

Signature

Resident:

Name

Date

Signature
