



**Foundation Housing Association**

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**Resident Involvement Strategy 2009**

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|                      | <b>Resident Involvement Strategy</b>                   |
| <b>Author</b>        | <b>Community Development and Projects Coordinator.</b> |
| <b>Date approved</b> | <b>January 2009</b>                                    |
| <b>Review Date</b>   | <b>January 2010</b>                                    |



## FOUNDATION HOUSING ASSOCIATION RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT STRATEGY 2009

### 1. Policy Statement

Through the implementation of our resident involvement strategy, we aim to:

- Ensure that our customers have genuine influence over the housing services we deliver;
- Work in partnership with our customers to improve the way we work;
- Understand what our customers want, and to seek and welcome their opinions;
- Offer choice wherever we can;
- Recognise that our customers are individuals, and that they have a diverse range of views, circumstances, needs, abilities and cultural backgrounds;
- Be flexible enough to enable all of our customers to get involved as they wish;
- Communicate effectively with all of our customers;
- Let them know how their views have been taken into account and what impact they have made on our performance, and on the choices we make;
- Help our customers to bring about the changes they want for their neighbourhoods;

And to

- Avoid acting as though '*we know best*'.

Wherever possible, written reports will be made available on audio tape and in translation.

## 2. Developing an appropriate organisational culture

2.1 We believe that in order to engage successfully with our customers the Association must nurture an organisation-wide culture of **listening, learning, and being open to ideas**, and a culture in which involving customers in decision making is **second nature**.

2.2 Our strategy for bringing about such a culture includes:

- Demonstrating within our **Business Plan** the strategic role resident involvement plays in ensuring the Association meet its corporate objectives;
- Acknowledging as a clearly stated **Business objective** the need to listen to our customers and involve them fully in the management of their homes and in the provision of services to them;
- Enabling residents to play an active role in the **governance** of the Association;
- Setting clear **aims and targets** for residents involvement: measuring and reporting performance against them;
- Making appropriate staff accountable for resident involvement via clear clauses in **job descriptions**, including those of the Senior Management Team;
- Continuously monitoring resident **feedback** from complaints, compliments and satisfaction surveys, and ensuring channels exist for such feedback to influence the way we work;
- Providing effective **training** to support resident involvement;
- Adequately **re-sourcing** resident involvement activities in terms of staff and via a dedicated resident involvement budget;
- Having clear and published **standards of service** that are agreed with residents, and involving customers in measuring their delivery;
- Ensuring that resident involvement is central to the Association's approach to **best value, quality and continuous improvement**

### **3. Overcoming barriers to involvement**

3.1 The Association acknowledges and will work to overcome some significant potential barriers to promoting resident involvement.

- Appendix B sets out the strategy for involving difficult to reach residents;

3.2 Traditional methods of resident involvement, such as residents associations are not always appropriate or easy to sustain. All residents are now given a 'Menu of options' from which they can choose the most appropriate and meaningful way that they can become involved.

**This includes:**

- Sounding board
- Customer excellence panel
- Mystery shopping
- Estate walkabouts/inspections
- Residents group
- Supported housing focus group
- Newsletters
- Website
- Surveys
- Tenants meetings and associations
- Contact FHA formally

3.4 Through the implementation of our resident involvement strategy, we aim to encourage the involvement of Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) residents, people with disabilities and new emerging communities.

Our strategy for achieving this aim includes:

- Having in place clear and comprehensive strategies for involvement.
- Ensuring that barriers to involvement are understood and removed

- Targeted initiatives to involve and build capacity.
- Targeted initiatives to involve hard to reach and new emerging communities
- Targets for BME resident involvement.

We will achieve this by:

- Helping residents understand how FHA is structured, how we operate and the services we provide;
- Working with residents and service users to develop realistic and deliverable expectations;
- Developing the capacity of residents and service users to be involved in and influence decision making;
- Developing models to achieve effective involvement of supported residents and those in temporary accommodation and receiving housing related support service;
- Developing the role of staff to facilitate wider resident and service user involvement.
- Encouraging FHA, its staff and residents and service users to work in partnership;
- Agreeing standards and targets for resident and service user involvement;
- Working with residents and service users to develop new and innovative ways and opportunities for them to be involved;
- Continuous evaluation and consultation on the effectiveness of this strategy.

#### **4. Methods of involvement**

Opportunities exist for resident involvement in the following areas;

- Individual involvement;
- Involvement at scheme level – including decisions about local services;
- Corporate involvement – including involvement in governance structure;

- Regional and national resident participation groups and forums;

#### 4.1 Involvement includes:

- Quality Information Services – providing clear information about opportunities for involvement and the activities of the Association; in a tailored and accessible format;
- Consultations;
- Exercising choice;
- Active involvement, such as through membership of residents' groups, or participation in focus groups etc;

#### 4.2 Appendix A sets out the resident involvement action plan for FHA. The principle aims of this plan are to:

- Improve and develop involvement of residents and service users within the Association;
- Involve tenants in planning, monitoring and reviewing how services are delivered and in setting and checking service standards;
- Introduce a range of ways of consulting and involving residents locally;
- Make sure that all people have equal opportunities to take part in resident involvement.

### **5. Monitoring and measuring the impact of resident involvement**

5.1 The action plan set out in Appendix A will be reviewed annually along with the strategy and progress reported to the Board at the year end.

5.2 We are committed to measuring the impact of resident involvement in our activities, and to reporting this back to residents. This will be done via an annual report to all residents outlining:

- The impact that residents' views have had on our choices during the year;
- the number and nature of complaints received in the year, their outcomes, and lessons learnt;
- a progress report on the Association's Best Value Review programme;
- key performance indicators for the Association;

- a summary of feedback from customer surveys and questionnaires completed during the year;
- a summary of feedback from focus groups or other resident based research undertaken during the year;

**6. Resident involvement in the production of this strategy**

- 6.1 Residents have been involved in the production of this strategy and are supportive of the approach. Where residents bring alternative approaches or new ideas throughout the year, then these will be incorporated.

**Appendix A: Foundation Housing Association – Resident Involvement Strategy Action Plan 2009**

| <b>FOUNDATION HOUSING ASSOCIATION: RESIDENT INVOLVMENT STRATEGY</b> |                              |  |  |  |
|---|------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <b>Activity</b>   | <b>Nature of involvement</b> | <b>Summary</b>   | <b>Action required</b>   | <b>Target date</b>   |
| Customer profiling  | Information gathering        | Maintain information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ who tenants are,</li> <li>➤ what they are interested in,</li> <li>➤ ethnic origin</li> <li>➤ language needs</li> <li>➤ preferred method of communication with FHA</li> <li>➤ skills which they can/wish to bring to the association</li> </ul> | Customer service advisers to continually update profiles when new tenancies commence or details change.<br><br>Team Leaders to check 10% of customer profiles on a bi monthly basis.<br><br>CDPC to find ways of utilising information for benefit of FHA and its clients.<br><br>CDPC to find | January 2009<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>Bi-monthly<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>May 2009<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>March 2009 |

| FOUNDATION HOUSING ASSOCIATION: RESIDENT INVOLVMENT STRATEGY |                       |  |   |   |
|--|-----------------------|--|---|---|
| Activity   | Nature of involvement | Summary  | Action required   | Target date   |
|  |                       |  | ways of monitoring how we have tailored our service as a result of customer profiling.  |   |
| Newsletter Production  | Information           | <p>To produce four newsletters per year that are relevant to residents and service users and which assist them to make choices that help sustain their tenancies and make a positive contribution to their community.</p> <p>The newsletter will consistently and successfully:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Communicate corporate information, objectives and outcomes.</li> </ol> | <p>4 newsletters per year</p> <p>Editorial panel including CDPC, staff and residents to run newsletter production (2 meetings per newsletter)</p> <p>Increase no of residents involved to double figures.</p> | <p>March 2009<br/>June 2009<br/>September 2009<br/>December 2009</p> <p>December 2009</p> |

| <b>FOUNDATION HOUSING ASSOCIATION: RESIDENT INVOLVMENT STRATEGY</b> |                              |  |                                 |                    |
|---|------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Activity</b>   | <b>Nature of involvement</b> | <b>Summary</b>   | <b>Action required</b>          | <b>Target date</b> |
|   |                              | <p>2. Have relevant and high quality input from our customers.</p> <p>3. Build confidence in our service and inspire involvement of customers in the Association and the wider community.</p> <p>4. Reach a wider community readership including community partners and agencies.</p> <p>5. Ensure the Newsletter is cost effective as well as</p> | Tender Foundation news for 2009 | February 2009      |

| <b>FOUNDATION HOUSING ASSOCIATION: RESIDENT INVOLVMENT STRATEGY</b> |                              |  |  |                    |
|---|------------------------------|--|--|--------------------|
| <b>Activity</b>   | <b>Nature of involvement</b> | <b>Summary</b>   | <b>Action required</b>   | <b>Target date</b> |
|   |                              | continuing to be a high quality and attractive publication.  |  |                    |
| Annual performance report to tenants                                | Information                  | Annual performance report to include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual resident involvement impact assessment</li> <li>• Performance indicators (including trend info for pervious years)</li> <li>• Feedback from surveys/questionnaires</li> <li>• Feedback from surgeries/estate walkabouts</li> <li>• Information on complaints and outcomes</li> <li>• Annual rent comparisons (with other RSLs in Local Authority)</li> </ul> | Produce and distribute<br><br>Seek feedback from residents on content/format | December 2009      |
| Develop Residents'  | Consultation and             | Develop the active residents' database in  | Promote scheme and   | March 2009         |

| <b>FOUNDATION HOUSING ASSOCIATION: RESIDENT INVOLVMENT STRATEGY</b> |                              |   |  |   |
|---|------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <b>Activity</b>   | <b>Nature of involvement</b> | <b>Summary</b>  | <b>Action required</b>   | <b>Target date</b>  |
| Sounding Board  | Customer profiling           | to fully functioning sounding board. To be run in line with schedule of policy and procedure consultation. (Appendix C)   | recruit members and begin consultations  |   |
| The ONE GROUP, FHA Residents' Association                           | Consultation                 | <p>Support group to become fully constituted residents group.</p> <p>Utilise as focus group for consultation topics in 2009 in line with schedule of policy and procedure consultation. (Appendix C)</p> <p>One Group to check the service being delivered in key service areas, including: Repairs, voids and arrears performance; Complaints, compliments and</p> | <p>Develop &amp; implement programme of meetings with resident led themes for 2008</p> <p>Take out on the road in 2009 with at least 3 meetings in new venues in other areas of the city</p> <p>Benchmark with Rockingham Forest Residents</p> | <p>January 2009 – meetings</p> <p>April 2009 – full constitution</p> <p>October 2009</p> <p>June 2009</p> |

| <b>FOUNDATION HOUSING ASSOCIATION: RESIDENT INVOLVMENT STRATEGY</b> |                              |  |  |   |
|---|------------------------------|--|--|---|
| <b>Activity</b>   | <b>Nature of involvement</b> | <b>Summary</b>   | <b>Action required</b>   | <b>Target date</b>  |
|   |                              | <p>suggestions.</p> <p>Ensure One Group feeds in to the new EMH Group Customer Council.</p> <p>Ensure One Group feeds in to the TSA National Conversation</p> <p>Engage with 50 residents across the year</p>  | Group  | <p>September 2009</p> <p>February 2009</p> <p>December 2009</p> |
| Residents' Associations – area meetings                             | Active involvement           | <p>Continue to support area tenant groups as required.</p> <p>This includes existing groups: Woodsawe Rise, Kirby Frith, Coleman Road, Conifer Court, Male and Female Hostel, Disabled Service User Group, Joint EMH/FHA Elders Group Women's Group and Floating Support</p> | <p>Encourage attendance at area meetings and support to reach desired outcomes.</p> <p>Support and enable groups to become constituted residents groups as required.</p> | <p>January 2009</p> <p>June 2009</p>                            |

| <b>FOUNDATION HOUSING ASSOCIATION: RESIDENT INVOLVMENT STRATEGY</b> |                              |   |  |                    |
|---|------------------------------|---|--|--------------------|
| <b>Activity</b>   | <b>Nature of involvement</b> | <b>Summary</b>  | <b>Action required</b>   | <b>Target date</b> |
|   |                              | Focus Group.<br><br>New Groups:<br>Towers Development<br>and Hamilton mutli-<br>agency group                          |  |                    |
| Estate<br>Inspections   | Consultation                 | FHA Officers to carry<br>out full estate<br>inspections inviting<br>residents, local<br>councillors, L/A<br>partners. | Agree and<br>implement<br>timetable for<br>all appropriate<br>schemes.<br><br>Where<br>possible and<br>practical set<br>up or join<br>more multi<br>agency<br>walkabouts<br>and<br>inspections to<br>make process<br>more<br>meaningful<br>and to lead to<br>better<br>outcomes. | February 2009      |

| <b>FOUNDATION HOUSING ASSOCIATION: RESIDENT INVOLVMENT STRATEGY</b> |                                    |  |   |                    |
|---|------------------------------------|--|---|--------------------|
| <b>Activity</b>   | <b>Nature of involvement</b>       | <b>Summary</b>   | <b>Action required</b>  | <b>Target date</b> |
| Tenant surveys  | Consultation                       | Status postal survey (every 3 years)                               | Complete survey & publish results & action plan   | April 2009         |
|   |                                    | Responsive repairs survey (continuous monitoring)                  | Publish results annually to tenants along with any resultant action                                       | August 2009        |
|   |                                    | New tenant survey (continuous monitoring)                          | Publish results annually to tenants along with any resultant action                                       | August 2009        |
| Cyclical maintenance  | Information, consultation & choice | Advise residents of when their home is next due for a repaint.     | Develop ways of offering residents' choice, and involving them in the project (contractor selection etc). | January 2009       |
| Resident conference   | Communication & consultation       | To ensure residents are fully aware of the Associations activities | Annual group residents' conference  | August 2009        |

| <b>FOUNDATION HOUSING ASSOCIATION: RESIDENT INVOLVMENT STRATEGY</b> |   |   |  |   |
|---|---|---|--|---|
| <b>Activity</b>   | <b>Nature of involvement</b>                  | <b>Summary</b>  | <b>Action required</b>   | <b>Target date</b>                                    |
|   |   | and opportunities for involvement   |  |   |
| Resident led improvements   | Consultation/<br>Estate funding opportunities | Residents can submit a bid for improvements to the area in which they live. | £6,000 annual grant to be allocated from FHA budget.<br><br>Panel to be established to consider all bids.<br><br>Launch scheme in Spring Newsletter. | April 2009  |
| Website development   | Information/<br>Consultation                  | Seek tenants' views on content and format of website                        | Agree & implement consultation strategy.<br><br>Promote in Spring newsletter.<br><br>Aim to get resident representation to feed into                 | April 2009<br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>August 2009 |

| <b>FOUNDATION HOUSING ASSOCIATION: RESIDENT INVOLVMENT STRATEGY</b> |                              |   |   |                           |
|---|------------------------------|---|---|---------------------------|
| <b>Activity</b>   | <b>Nature of involvement</b> | <b>Summary</b>  | <b>Action required</b>  | <b>Target date</b>        |
|   |                              |   | website working group   |                           |
| Customer excellence panel   | Consultation                 | Encourage involvement of FHA residents onto the group CEP.  | The group CEP meets each quarter and is open to attendance from FHA and EMHA residents. | January 2009              |
| Involvement of BME tenants.   | Active involvement           | Monitor and ensure that BME residents are equally represented in all aspects of resident involvement, and that resident involvement activities are inclusive and accessible to all. | Six monthly update to Equality & Diversity Scrutiny Panel.                              | February & September 2009 |
| Training  | Active involvement           | Assess training needs of active residents.  | Develop training plan to meet tenants' needs  | July 2009                 |
| Resident Board Members  | Active involvement           | Ensure two resident Board Members in post and develop and support them.   | Appointment and develop training package  | February 2009             |
| Benchmark performance   | n/a                          | Seek examples of best practice in resident  | Survey BME associations   | September 2009            |

| <b>FOUNDATION HOUSING ASSOCIATION: RESIDENT INVOLVMENT STRATEGY</b> |                              |  |  |                    |
|---|------------------------------|--|--|--------------------|
| <b>Activity</b>   | <b>Nature of involvement</b> | <b>Summary</b>   | <b>Action required</b>   | <b>Target date</b> |
|   |                              | involvement amongst other BME associations with similar client groups and feed in to 2010 strategy.  | through chairing of NHF BME benchmarking group.  |                    |
| Monitoring of RI impact and performance                             | N/a                          | Every resident engaged in 2009 able to feedback to FHA the success or otherwise of the meeting/activity to ensure continuous improvement and integrity and effectiveness of involvement. | Use new evaluation forms at every involvement activity alongside existing event/project management documents. (Appendix D) | January 2009       |

## APPENDIX B: potential barriers to involvement 2009

| Potential Barrier   | Group likely to be difficult to reach as a result of this barrier                          | Action currently taken to overcome this barrier   | Further action required   |
|---------------------|--|---|---|
| Language            | BME residents, especially older residents, or those who have recently entered the Country. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Use plain language and avoid Jargon</li> <li>— Promote Language Line</li> <li>— Provide information in translation where resources allow and there is proven demand</li> <li>— Provide interpreters for meetings or one to one interviews with residents</li> <li>— Guide to setting up a residents' association includes a section on making meetings accessible to all</li> <li>— Monitoring and targets exist to ensure residents' association membership is representative of the communities they serve.</li> <li>— Recognised residents' associations must adopt an equal opportunities policy.</li> </ul> | See Kaleidoscope Action Plan  |
| Culture or religion | Mixed faith neighbourhoods, and/or cultures and religions that restrict mixed sex groups.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Where appropriate, host single sex meetings</li> <li>— Avoid holding meetings on holy days</li> </ul>  | Develop a deeper corporate understanding of the different religions of our residents, and develop a strategy to understand and work |

| Potential Barrier        | Group likely to be difficult to reach as a result of this barrier | Action currently taken to overcome this barrier   | Further action required  |
|--------------------------|---|---|--|
|                          |   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>— Be sensitive to the requirements of religious festivals and calendars when planning resident involvement events</li> <li>— Ensure refreshments provided reflect the cultural needs of residents and staff</li> </ul>   | within any restrictions to resident participation that these might present.                              |
| Rural or dispersed stock | Residents living in remote villages, or small isolated schemes.   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—Transport provided for meetings</li> <li>—Sounding Board does not require attendance at meetings</li> <li>—Support for community based residents associations enables residents to link to groups that do not have an exclusively EMH membership or remit.</li> </ul>   | Develop opportunities for internet technology to help overcome problems associated with dispersed stock. |
| Physical disabilities    | Elderly residents and/or residents with disabilities              | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—Choice of accessible venues for residents' meetings</li> <li>—Individual consultation with residents unable to attend sheltered housing consultation meetings (see annual scheme plan)</li> <li>—Sounding Board does not require attendance at meetings</li> <li>—Offer within literature to discuss individual requirements with residents to help overcome any</li> </ul> | Involve residents in the current Kaleidoscope review of disabled services                                |

| Potential Barrier   | Group likely to be difficult to reach as a result of this barrier        | Action currently taken to overcome this barrier   | Further action required   |
|---------------------|--|---|---|
|                     |  | <p>potential barriers to their involvement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—Provision for carers or advocates to come along to meetings to assist with participation</li> <li>—Guide to setting up a residents' association includes a section on making meetings accessible to all</li> </ul>   |   |
| Sensory impairments | Elderly residents and/or residents who are visually or hearing impaired. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—Choice of venues with loop systems for residents' meetings</li> <li>—Annual Sheltered Housing Scheme Plan provides a framework for local plans to overcome barriers associated with sensory impairment</li> <li>—Guide to setting up a residents' association includes a section on making meetings accessible to all.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>—Information on options available for resident involvement to be put onto audio tape, large print, or Braille as required</li> <li>—Clear print styles and sizes to be used to ensure all printed information is accessible</li> <li>—Website to be developed to meet requirements of DDA</li> <li>—Audio libraries to be provided in each sheltered housing scheme</li> <li>—Loop systems to be provided in each sheltered housing scheme</li> <li>—Further action items to be developed under current Kaleidoscope review of disabled services.</li> </ul> |
| Mental health       | All resident groups, but   | —Sounding Board does not require  | Further action items to be developed  |

| Potential Barrier                         | Group likely to be difficult to reach as a result of this barrier | Action currently taken to overcome this barrier   | Further action required   |
|---|---|---|---|
| problems                                  | especially special projects and sheltered housing                 | attendance at meetings<br>—Individual Support Plans help address residents’ needs if living in supported or sheltered housing<br>—Annual Sheltered Housing Scheme Plan provides a framework for involvement of residents who are “difficult to reach” because of depression, dementia etc.    | under current Kaleidoscope review of disabled services.                                   |
| Literacy or general learning difficulties | All resident groups, but especially special projects              | —Use of plain language<br>—Making information available on audio tape<br>—Telephone consultations are included as an option under the Sounding Board – do not require a response to written material<br>—Consultations via residents’ meetings do not require a response to written material. | Develop an information policy to address barriers associated with literacy in more depth. |

### **Appendix C Schedule of Consultation 2009**

| <b>Policy and Procedure/Topic</b>                           | <b>Consultation Period</b> | <b>Date To Board</b> |
|---|----------------------------|----------------------|
| Resident Involvement Strategy and Action Plan 2009          | December 2008              | January 2009         |
| Resident Involvement Impact Assessment 2009                 | December 2008              | January 2009         |
| Supported Housing Risk Assessment Policy                    | Dec 2008-January 2009      | January 2009         |
| Protection of Supported Housing Residents and Service Users | Dec 2008-January 2009      | January 2009         |
| Easy Move Project   | January 2009               | March 2009           |
| Void Policy and Procedure /Relet Standard                   | February 2009              | May 2009             |
| Rent Arrears  | March 2009                 | May 2009             |
| Maintenance Policy  | March 2009                 | May 2009             |
| ASB   | May 2009                   | July 2009            |
| Environmental Issues  | July 2009                  | September 2009       |
| Furniture Packs   | August 2009                | September 2009       |
| Service Charge Policy                                       | September 2009             | November 2009        |
| Resident Involvement Strategy and Action Plan 2010          | October 2009               | January 2010         |
| Resident Involvement Impact Assessment 2009                 | October 2009               | January 2010         |

**Appendix D**



**FOUNDATION HOUSING ASSOCIATION  
RESIDENTS & SERVICE USERS EVALUATION FORM**

Event/project, date, time and venue

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

Did the event/project meet our objectives?

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |
|  |  |

What was not so good?

|  |
|--|
|  |
|--|

**What worked well?**

**Should we do it again?**

**Please tell us your age:**

- 16 - 24     25 - 34     35 - 44     45 - 54     55 - 59  
 60 - 64     65 - 74     75+

**Your gender:**

- Male                       Female

**Your ethnicity**

- |   |  |   |  |
|---|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> White: British         | <input type="checkbox"/> White: Irish            | <input type="checkbox"/> White: Other   | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed: White and Black  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed: White and Black | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed: White and        | <input type="checkbox"/> Mixed:         | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian         | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian British: | <input type="checkbox"/> Asian or Asian | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black British: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black         | <input type="checkbox"/> Black or Black          | <input type="checkbox"/> Chinese        | <input type="checkbox"/> Other                   |

**Do you consider yourself to have a longstanding illness, disability or infirmity?**

- Yes                       No

**Name**

**Thank you for completing this form.**