

## **Board Meeting: Residents' Advisory Panel Report for Information**

**Title:** Annual Tenant Participation Report April 2018- March 2019

### **1 Purpose of the report**

- 1.1 To provide the Landlord Services Committee (LSC) and Residents' Advisory Panel (RAP) with an update on Tenant Participation at North Wales Housing from April 2018 to March 2019.

### **2 Action Required / Recommendations**

- 2.1 Report is for information and members are asked to review and note its contents.

### **3 Background**

- 3.1 What is Tenant Participation?

- 3.2 There are a number of definitions of tenant participation or engagement. A widely used definition is provided by TPAS Cymru:

“Tenants participation is a way in which tenants and landlords share ideas and co-operate. It is a way for the tenant to be involved in the decision making process that occurs during discussions about improving the standard of housing conditions and services”

### **4 Introduction**

- 4.1 Following the last annual report we carried out a consultation with both tenants and staff to identify what we are doing well and how we can improve tenant participation at North Wales Housing.

- 4.2 When reviewing the results of the consultation we identified the need to improve the following:

- Provide the Residents' Advisory Panel with greater opportunity to influence decision making
- Strengthen and promote the Sounding Board as a different option to the Residents' Advisory Panel
- Develop new ways of getting involved
- Increase the number of tenants getting involved
- Improve engagement with younger residents (aged 17 to 25 years old)
- Provide more support for tenants to increase skills and access training

- 4.2 We used the results of the consultation to help us develop a new Tenant Participation Strategy for 2018-2021. The strategy was developed around the views of our tenants and staff who helped us identify what we were doing well, and where we needed to improve.

- 4.3 The new Strategy was published on our website, and promoted on Facebook and Twitter, with articles also included in both the tenants and staff newsletters.

- 4.3 This report sets out what tenant participation opportunities are available and what activities have taken place from April 2018 to March 2019. It also sets out how we have begun to make inroads into the improvements identified as needed from the consultation.

## 5 Residents' Advisory Panel (RAP)

- 5.1 The RAP is a group of North Wales Housing residents with responsibility for scrutinising our services and performance to ensure all residents receive the highest possible standards of service.
- 5.2 The panel consists of 9 members who meet every two months and help drive improvement across our services.
- 5.3 During this reporting period the following has been on the meeting agenda's:
- Presentation and discussion with the Older People's Commissioner for Wales
  - Choosing which Performance Indicators to monitor
  - Attendance by Helena Kirk, Chief Executive – Discussion about the future role of the Panel and its Forward Work Programme
  - Annual Complaints Report 2017/18
  - 6 monthly Complaints Report April to September 2018
  - Attendance from Gareth Roberts, Data Protection Officer –GDPR discussion on North Wales Housing's responsibilities. Input from Panel on GDPR notifications being sent out to Tenants
  - Review Anti-Social Behaviour Standards, Policy and Procedures
  - Review new tenant sign up process
  - Review Adaption Service Standards
  - Finalised the Customer Care Charter
  - Input on Gwynedd Housing Allocations Consultation
  - Input on Tenant Participation Strategy
  - Attendance from Ruth Langham Wright, Interim Assistant Director Homes, and Wayne Williams, Repairs and Planned Maintenance Manager. Provide and update and a discussion on repairs and planned maintenance
  - The Panel also receive and comment on the Performance Report at every meeting. The Panel monitor the following performance measures:
    - Tenant Satisfaction – Satisfaction with Customer Services
    - Tenant Satisfaction – Customer Services survey return rate
    - Tenant Satisfaction – responsive repairs
    - Responsive Repairs Satisfaction – return rate
    - Complaints – The total number of complaints received in period
    - Complaints – The average time to respond to complaints
    - Complaints – The number of complaints resolved in the period
    - Complaints – The % of Stage 1 complaints responded to on target
    - Customer Services – The overall % of calls answered
    - Customer Services – Welsh Language Option – The % calls answered
    - Customer Services – English Language Option – The % calls answered
    - Customer Services – The average time to answer inbound telephone calls
    - Repairs – Average number of days taken to complete responsive repairs
    - Repairs – The % of emergency jobs completed within the service standard
    - Repairs – The % of routine jobs completed within the service standard
    - Repairs – The % of repairs completed on first visit

- 5.4 Panel members also attend Landlord Services Committee (LSC) meetings, and TPAS Cymru events.
- 5.5 Following this reporting period work has commenced on merging the RAP with LSC. The Chair of the LSC has attended a number of meetings and the first meeting of the new combined Panel will be after the AGM has taken place.
- 5.6 One of the Panel members said the following about why they wanted to get involved; *"I wanted to be involved in the discussions and the decision making that directly affects my life."*

## **6 Sounding Board**

- 6.1 The Sounding Board is a database of tenants who are interested in acting as a 'reader' of leaflets', forms, policies etc. and providing feedback.
- 6.2 There are 32 members and they were involved in the following areas of work during this reporting period:
- Customer Service telephone call answering system
  - Review of telephone call answering system developed into the launch of live chat
  - Reviewed draft Tenant Participation Strategy
  - TPAS Cymru circulars and surveys are distributed to members

## **7 Events and Activities**

- 7.1 We organise a number of events and activities to engage with our tenants. These events and activities should give tenants the opportunity to get involved at North Wales Housing and improve the quality of life in communities in which our tenants live.
- 7.2 Our gardening competition has continued to be popular with our tenants. A tenant can nominate themselves or a neighbour in the following categories:
- Best garden
  - Most improved garden
  - Best container garden
  - Best kept communal space/garden
- 7.3 During this reporting period we launched our Good Neighbour Award. The aim is to pay tribute to our tenants who have made a significant difference to the lives of their neighbours or the local community. We invite tenants to nominate another North Wales Housing tenant for the award.
- 7.4 Residents' Associations are not as popular as they were a few years ago, which is common across many social landlords; however, we still offer support to any established groups and those wanting to set up from new. Llys y Coed Residents Association was formed during this reporting period and are thriving, organising a number of activities on behalf of the residents of Llys y Coed. Although not a formal group, support was given to a group of residents in Maes y Llan to organise a small fun day on behalf of their neighbours.
- 7.5 At Parc Clarence we organised an event consisting of a clean-up of the communal garden area, and litter picking across the scheme.

- 7.6 A consultation was also undertaken at Parc Clarence to determine the future of the MUGA (Multi Use Games Area). The MUGA has fallen into disrepair and the tenants have been asked if they would prefer it to be removed or upgraded.
- 7.7 The Bus Stop Project delivers a number of activities on our behalf, which will be discussed in more detail in section 8
- 7.8 The outdoor activities project has continued during this reporting period, which will also be discussed in more detail in section 9.
- 7.9 The Older Persons Team use a variety of methods to engage with the residents at the Extra Care and Sheltered Scheme's:
- Resident Meetings - "You said we did" on issues such as gardening, management issues, and menus
  - Raising awareness and reassurance i.e. fire safety meetings
  - Tenants choosing activities for their scheme
  - Update on proposed refurbishment works and consulted on choice
  - Tenants Meetings - Listening to Tenants Views/Presenting Information/Consulting on priorities and acting on feedback
  - Regular questionnaires - Satisfaction with Services – opportunities to improve/change
  - Social Events/Activities – such as digital inclusion and health and well being
  - Age Connect Forums - Change attitudes to ageing and thereby improve older people's lives
  - The Bus Stop Project deliver session, e.g. arts and crafts to prevent loneliness and isolation
  - Age Connect Forums
  - Dementia awareness sessions
  - Hearing Loss Wales sessions
- 7.10 The Supported Housing team also deliver a number of events and activities to engage with their residents. See below just some of the events and activities organised at shared accommodation schemes:
- Regular house meetings are held at all the shared accommodation schemes. Service user's views are taken on board and have informed welcome notes, house rules, gardening projects, repairs requests etc.
  - Regular house meetings - Listening to service users' views/presenting information/consulting on priorities
  - Regular "healthy cooking and eating" sessions - Improved health and well-being, budgeting and planning skills, social inclusion, confidence building
  - Budgeting and planning skills
  - Film nights – Negotiating, social skills, social inclusion and confidence building.
  - Creative writing group
  - Music sessions

## **8 Bus Stop Project**

- 8.1 The Bus Stop Project is a mobile community development project.
- 8.2 North Wales Housing is a project partner along with Grŵp Cynefin, Cartrefi Conwy, and Conwy County Borough Council.

- 8.3 The Project offers a wide range of services and opportunities, including:
- Information and support on topics such as health and wellbeing, benefits, and bullying
  - Projects that encourage young people to positively engage in their communities
  - Projects that aims to reduce social isolation
  - Opportunities for people to share their thoughts and feelings in their local communities
- 8.4 The Bus Stop Project has delivered the following projects during this reporting period:
- Cae Bold Citizenship and Road Safety project (12 participants)
  - Cae Bold Environment and Recycling project (20 participants)
  - Cae Bold Health and Wellbeing project (21 participants)
  - Cae Garnedd Extra Care Scheme – Arts and Crafts sessions (22participants)
  - Gallt y Sil Citizenship and Road Safety project (19 participants)
  - Hafod y Parc Extra Care Scheme – Christmas Crafts sessions (8 participants)
  - Y Gorlan Sheltered Housing Scheme – Arts and Crafts sessions (13 participants)
  - Y Gorlan Sheltered Housing Scheme – Christmas Crafts sessions (8 participants)
  - Easter Holidays Sessions (One day sessions at Cae Bold, Gallt y Sil, Maes y Llan, Maes Myrddin, Parc Clarence, and Woodlands) (32 participants)
  - May Half Term Sessions (One day sessions at Cae Bold and Parc Clarence) (6 participants)

## **9 Opening the Doors to the Outdoors**

- 9.1 The aim of the project is to provide opportunities for those on low incomes and economically inactive to be able to participate in outdoor activities.
- 9.2 The project also aims to develop opportunities to gain employment and volunteering opportunities in the outdoor sector. During this reporting period tenants have had opportunities to participate in the following activities:
- Hill Walking (5 participants)
  - Canoeing and Kayaking (6 participants)
  - Mountain Biking (8 participants)
  - Indoor Climbing (9 participants)
- 9.3 All activities are led by fully qualified instructor and transport is provided to participants.
- 9.4 Paul who's taken part in many of the activities said; *"I'm really glad I took part in the outdoor activities, it's been really good to have a go at things I would not normally do, also the instructors were really helpful. Thanks to NWH and Iwan for organising it all."*
- 9.5 Another participant, Karl said; *"I feel more confident and want to get out more, instead of just staying in all the time. I have an interview next week to do some volunteering."*

## **10 Personal Development Grant**

- 10.1 Our Personal Development Grant has been developed to tackle financial barriers that may be preventing our tenants from accessing education, training or employment.
- 10.2 Examples of what can be funded include:
- Tools or equipment for a job or qualification e.g. hairdressing kit or books for college
  - Course fees

- Outfit suitable for an interview

10.3 We had two successful applications during this reporting period:

- An application to cover the cost of items to support starting a child minding business, including food hygiene level 2 course and appropriate membership fees
- An application to cover the cost of course books for a course at Coleg Menai

## **11 Community Fund**

11.1 Our Community Fund has been developed to provide funding to assist voluntary, community, recreational or resident groups.

11.2 These Organisations/groups should be developing projects and initiatives that benefit the local community. Organisations applying for funding must be:

- A constituted organisation/group and have a bank account with a minimum of two signatories
- Follow an open access policy towards membership, use of their facilities and participation in activities
- Be non-political

11.3 During this reporting period small grants have been awarded to:

- An application to assist in covering the costs of equipment for a local junior football team

## **12 Future Actions**

12.1 As discussed in section 5 the RAP will be merging with LSC to form the Tenants and Communities Panel. This process has already begun with discussions and planning undertaken during RAP meetings

12.2 Following the merger of the RAP and LSC we aim to develop regular Tenants Focus Group meetings. These meetings will be more informal than the Tenants and Communities Panel, and will be discussions to gain input and feedback from tenants on various issues.

12.3 We will require different areas within the organisation to consider items they would like our Focus Group to work on. It will be beneficial to develop some sort of Forward Work Plan, which should also assist in recruiting participants.

12.4 We need to make further use of our Sounding Board, and ensure they have more opportunities to provide their input, otherwise it could lose momentum. As with the Focus Group we will require different areas within the organisation to consider items they would like to forward to the Sounding Board for their feedback.

12.5 A Digital Transformation Group has recently been set up. This project group consists of tenants and staff, and will look at what the organisation offers digitally.

12.6 Linked to the above digital group we will be undertaking a tenant consultation on our website and how it can be improved.

12.7 We are currently looking into the possibility of working with TAPE Community Art &

Music about the potential to develop videos/visual content for our website. The intention is to get tenants involved in the work, and potentially give them the opportunity to gain a qualification/accreditation.

12.8 At the time of writing we have an upcoming event at one of our schemes. We are calling it a get to know your landlord event. We have done this at other schemes during the last reporting period. It will be an informal event, with a gazebo and staff present to answer any queries or deal with issues, from housing management to welfare benefits/rent issues. The local PCSO has been invited, as well as the Local Authority Mobile Recycling. Information Van. We will evaluate the event and look to replicate it in other areas.

12.8 The Tre Cwm Wall project has recently been launched, a partnership project between North Wales Housing, Call Culture Llandudno and Cartrefi Conwy. The aim of the project will be to come up with an artwork for the wall at one of the main entrances to Tre Cwm estate. Residents will be at the heart of the project and will also be invited to form a project group with the following roles:

- Documentary
- Artist Assistant
- Assistant Creative Producer
- Digital Design
- Wall Team Members

12.9 We are planning on starting a walking club for tenants. We will use the experience gained from the outdoor activities project to create this opportunity for tenants. It will be done as pilot with two of our sheltered housing schemes and endorses the 5 Ways to Well-Being Approach.

12.10 We will be producing some case studies from tenants who have taken part in some of tenant participation activities.

Additional Information
<b>Business Plan links:</b> Strategic Objective 1.5 – Increase engagement opportunities and ensure that the voice of the customer shapes the work that we do. Increasing engagement with young people and families in particular.
<b>Resource implications</b> <b>Financial:</b> Tenant engagement budget <b>Personnel:</b> Tenant Participation Co-ordinator
<b>Sustainability impact</b> – Effective business management; improvement to services, good public relations, and an improved reputation for the organisation.
<b>Equality impact assessment</b> – N/A
<b>Risk:</b> NWH does not listen to our tenants. Tenants are not given the opportunity to influence decision making. <b>Inherent Severity and probability:</b> Impact = 3 Probability = 3 Total = 9 <b>Risk controls:</b> Tenant Participation Strategy, and other documentation e.g. RAP Terms of Reference, Opening the Doors to the Outdoors project plan <b>Further actions:</b> None
<b>Confidentiality</b> – Not a confidential item

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**Appendices** –