**Board Meeting: Residents’ Advisory Panel**

**Report for Information**

**Title:** Annual Tenant Participation Report April 2019- March 2020

**1 Purpose of the report**

1.1 To provide the Tenants and Communities Panel with an update on Tenant Participation at North Wales Housing from April 2019 to March 2010.

**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 Our tenant participation work for this reporting period is based on our Tenant Participation Strategy for 2018-2021. The Strategy is available to view on our website.

4.2 Following a consultation 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 key priorities in the Tenant Participation Strategy are:

* 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
* Improve engagement with younger tenants
* Provide more support for tenants to increase skills and access training

4.4 This report sets out what tenant participation opportunities are available and what activities have taken place from April 2019 to March 2020. We hope it also demonstrates inroads that have taken place into the improvements identified as needed from the consultation, and that we are responding to the key priorities in the Strategy.

**5 Residents’ Advisory Panel (RAP) and the Tenants and Communities Panel**

5.1 In this report we usually have an update on the work undertaken by RAP.

5.2 During this reporting period, the RAP and the Landlord Services Committee (LSC) have merged to form the Tenants and Communities Panel; therefore, our former RAP members are now sitting on the Tenants and Communities Panel alongside board members and senior members of staff.

5.3 The purpose of this merger was get rid of any duplication between RAP and LSC, and strengthen the role of tenants within our governance, providing more influencing in decision making and the scrutinizing of services.

**6 Tenants Forum**

6.1 Due to the RAP merging with LSC, creating the Tenants and Communities Panel, we

wanted to create and offer an alternative option for residents to meet and provide their

input.

6.2 The Forum will be less formal the Tenants and Communities Panel, and will

concentrate on one topic of interest per meeting. It could be a stepping stone for

someone wishing to get further involved and join the Tenants and Communities Panel

in the future if vacancies become available.

6.3 The Forum will meet regularly with staff, and provide participants with an opportunity to

obtain information, influence our decision making, and strengthen our services.

6.4 Following a period of promoting this new way of getting involved and a recruitment

drive, we held the first meeting in early March 2020. The meeting was attended 11

tenants, one of which from one of our Extra Care Schemes, one young person from

one of our Hostels, and the rest from General Housing properties.

6.5 This meeting was more of an induction, explaining the background as to why are

creating the Forum, and the importance of tenant participation at North Wales Housing.

We also discussed potential areas of interest, suitable times and locations for

meetings, and a code of conduct.

6.6 The feedback from those attending was very positive and all indicated they would like to

attend future meetings. James who attended said – “I enjoyed the meeting and have

not done anything like this before. I look forward to when meetings can start again.”

6.7 Following this reporting period our tenant participation activities have been on hold due

to Covid-19; however moving forward as North Wales Housing begins to return to

some normality all members of the Forum are on email, or we could explore what could

be done virtually until social distancing restrictions are lifted.

**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 34 members and they were involved in the following areas of work during

this reporting period:

* Looked at potential new layout designs for our website
* Review our Tenant Participation report
* TPAS Cymru circulars and surveys are distributed to members

6.3 Following this reporting period tenant participation has been on hold due Covid-19;

however moving forward the Sounding Board should be utilised further to gain tenant

input as social distancing will not be an issue.

**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 This reporting period was our second 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. Teressa nominated her neighbour Robert who was

this years winner. Teressa said: “When I moved here I didn’t know anyone in the area. I

had no family here. He’s a truly kind man who lifted my spirits and helped me back on

my feet. He’s also been like a grandad to my daughter.. We invite tenants to nominate

another North Wales Housing tenant for the award.

7.7 The Bus Stop Project delivered 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 Digital transformation group – This is a working group including staff and tenants. We

have 2 tenants as part of the group, and have been looking at the following:

* Reviewing our website and tenants portal
* Digital communication:
* Asses where we are currently at
* What else do we need to consider?
* Live chat
* Digital Strategy

7.10 Get to know your landlord/Pop up events – During the last reporting period we indicated

we wanted to make these events a part of our tenant participation activities. The

purpose being to increase presence on our schemes; learn more about our tenants;

and listen to their views regarding what is happening on the schemes and in their

communities.

7.11 The areas were chosen through discussing with the staff with issues such as fly tipping,

anti-social behaviour, rent arrears taken into account. The events were attended by

Housing Officers, Welfare and Financial Inclusion Officers, Rakes and Ladders staff,

Local Authority recycling teams, and PCSO’s. During this reporting period we attended

the following scheme’s:

* Gerddi Morfa
* Cae Bold (twice – once with a gazebo on the scheme, and another occasion

as a door knocking exercise to undertake a consultation regarding a caretaker

for the scheme)

* Llain Cytir
* Llys Afallen
* Planned events for Bethesda and Llain Deri were postponed due to Covi-19

7.12 The Older Persons Team use a variety of methods to engage with the residents at

the Extra Care and Sheltered Scheme’s:

* Resident Meetings – discussing issues such as gardening, and scheme management issues. Listening to views and presenting information
* Working closely with schools in the local community
* Raising awareness and reassurance i.e. fire safety meetings
* Tenants choosing activities for their scheme
* Regular questionnaires - Satisfaction with Services – opportunities to improve/change
* Social Events/Activities – e.g. health and well-being, digital inclusion
* 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
* Dementia awareness sessions
* Hearing Loss Wales sessions
* Llys y Coed has a thriving residents association, which organises a number of activities on behalf of all the residents.

7.13 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.
* Residents looking after garden/communal spaces

**8 Bus Stop Project**

8.1 The Bus Stop Project is a mobile community development project, and this was the

final year of the project.

8.2 North Wales Housing has been a project partner along with Grŵp Cynefin, Cartrefi

Conwy, and Conwy County Borough Council.

8.4 The Bus Stop Project has delivered the following projects during this reporting period:

* Attlee Close Citizenship and Road Safety project (11 participants)
* Cae Garnedd Extra Care scheme Arts and Crafts (4 participants)
* Hafod y Parc Extra Care scheme Arts and Crafts (5 participants)
* Cae Garnedd Extra Care Scheme – Arts and Crafts sessions (22participants)
* Llain Cytir Respecting the community and ASB (8 participants)
* Llys y Coed Extra Care scheme – Arts and Crafts (12 participants)
* Maes y Llan Citizenship and Road Safety project (13 participants)
* Uxbridge Court Sheltered Arts and Crafts (3 participants)
* Woodlands Citizenship and Road Safety project (9 participants)
* Woodlands Environment and Recycling project (12 participants)
* May Half Term Sessions (One day sessions Gallt y Sil and Parc Clarence) (8 participants)

**9 Opening the Doors to the Outdoors**

9.1 This is a project in partnership with an Outdoor Partnership. 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 Being active and taking part in outdoor activities can be of benefit to both physical and

mental health.

9.2 The project also aims to develop opportunities to gain employment and volunteering

opportunities in the outdoor sector. During this reporting period tenants were able to

participate in the following activities:

* Hill Walking (8 participants)
* Electric biking (9 participants)
* Canoeing and Kayaking (5 participants)
* Indoor Climbing (9 participants)

9.3 All activities are led by fully qualified instructor, and transport is provided by North

Wales Housing to participants.

9.4 Adam who’s taken part in many of the activities during this reporting period said; “*I’m*

*really grateful for the opportunity. I’ve now joined my local climbing wall in Llandudno*

*and hope to carry on and get better at climbing.”*

**10 Tre Cwm Wall Project**

10.1 This a partnership project with Catrefi Conwy and CALL (Culture Action Llandudno)

10.2 The Tre Cwm housing estate in Llandudno consists of North Wales Housing, Cartrefi

Conwy, and a small number of private properties. This housing estate is encompassed

by a wall, segregating the community living there from the surrounding town. This is

the wall around Churchill Close.

10.3 The aim of the project has been to develop artworks with the community which

transforms this wall, addressing issues of exclusion, division and social isolation.

10.4 The project has also developed informal partnerships with Tre Cwm Action Group,

Llandudno Museum, Llandudno Archives, Ysgol John Bright, and Llandudno Football

Club. Llandudno Town Council and North Wales Police have also given their support to

the project.

10.5 CALL were successful in securing a grant from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation to fund

the project. The funding has also gone towards the commissioning of two artists to

deliver the project

10.6 A number of activities have been arranged to engage with young people on the estate,

such art workshops, treasure hunt around the estate, and open days at the local

community centre. Some of the participants have also deliver a presentation about the

project at Mostyn Gallery, and have appeared on Tudno FM to discuss the project.

10.7 The final design will require approval from North Wales Housing as well as planning

permission from Conwy Council.

**11 Video Project – Guides on carrying out “basic repairs”**

11.1 We are working with TAPE Community Music and Film to develop brief videos with

guides on basic ‘repairs’ that are tenants responsibilities to carry out. The hope is that

it also reduces phone calls. The videos will be uploaded to our website.

11.2 The aim is to attract younger residents who don’t always take part in our events and

activities; however it is open to all tenants.

11.3 The participants are involved in the planning of the videos as well as production; with

also the possibility of gaining an accredited qualification. The videos will be on the

following:

* Changing a light bulb
* Checking a boiler
* Bleeding radiators
* Tips on avoiding/dealing with condensation (asset management have provided

11.4 5 residents signed up to take part in this project; however we entered lockdown soon

after the first session held in March.

**12 Personal Development Grant**

12.1 Our Personal Development Grant has been developed to tackle financial barriers that

may be preventing our tenants from accessing education, training or employment.

12.2 Examples of what can be funded include:

* Tools or equipment for a job or qualification e.g. hairdressing kit of books for college
* Course fees
* Outfit suitable for an interview

12.3 We’ve had 3 successful applications during this reporting period:

* An application to assist with costs in enrolling on Jewellery course at Coleg Menai
* An application to cover the cost of work safety boots for new employment
* An application to assist with costs in enrolling on Music Technology course at Coleg Menai

**13 Community Fund**

13.1 Our Community Fund has been developed to provide funding to assist voluntary,

community, recreational or resident groups.

13.2 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

**14 Future Actions**

14.1 Develop a plan for tenant participation as lockdown restrictions ease.

14.2 It’s expected that social distancing could be in place for some time; therefore the

Sounding Board should be used more by the organisation to obtain tenant input.

14.3 Social distancing measures should encourage the organisation to further develop online

and virtual opportunities to get involved.

14.4 Our current Tenant Participation Strategy will come to an end in March 2021; therefore

we will need to begin consulting with tenants and staff in the coming months regarding

a new strategy. The consultation will be looking at what are doing well, what we are not

doing so well, and how we can improve.

14.5 Before lockdown a planning meeting had taken place to discuss bringing back our

rownd a rownd intiative. The aim would be to increase staff presence on schemes and

improve relationships and trust with tenants.

14.6 We have developed a template to help us plan and evaluate our events and activities

(See appendix 1). This will be used with all our future events and activities to ensure we

meet the aims of our tenant participation strategy, and also determine value for money.

It has been based on a template provided by TPAS Cymru.

14.7 This report will be translated and published on our website.

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| **Additional Information** |
| **Business Plan links:** Strategic Objective 1.5 – Increase engagement opportunities and ensure that the voice of the customer shapes the work that we do. |
| **Resource implications**  **Financial:** Tenant engagement budget  **Personnel:** Tenant Participation Co-ordinator |
| **Sustainability impact –** Effective business management; improvement to services, good public relations, and an improved reputation for the organisation. |
| **Equality impact assessment –** N/A |
| **Risk:** NWH does not listen to our tenants. Tenants are not given the opportunity to influence decision making.  **Inherent Severity and probability:** Impact = 3 Probability = 3 Total = 9  **Risk controls:** Tenant Participation Strategy, and other documentation e.g. RAP Terms of Reference, Opening the Doors to the Outdoors project plan  **Further actions:** None |
| **Confidentiality –** Not a confidential item |
| **Contact Officer –** Iwan Evans Tenant Participation Co-ordinator  Tel: 01492 563232 |
| **Appendices –** 1 document |