



**14<sup>th</sup> Annual  
Resident  
Involvement  
Conference**

**Achieving value  
for customers and  
landlords**

**#nhcri14**

**14<sup>th</sup> Annual Resident Involvement – conference & exhibition  
5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> June 2014 – Hilton Hotel Blackpool**

In association with:





# 14th Annual Resident Involvement Conference

## Achieving value for customers and landlords

**5th & 6th June 2014 - Hilton Hotel Blackpool**

Times are tough for customers and landlords - this not to be missed conference will help tenants and residents respond to changes affecting them. Find out how to support fellow customers and make the most of services and assistance provided by landlords, including stronger engagement and innovative ways to maximise income. **Value for money** is a key issue and this year landlords have delivered their value for money (VfM) statements for the first time. The regulator has been critical of some landlords and there is an obligation to involve residents in the statement process - so come and find out what is required and what works well.

Hear from headline speakers, improve your skills and knowledge at interactive workshops, and be challenged by what you hear and what you see – especially from our drama professionals Shontal: challenging debt through theatre!

### **By attending the conference you will:**

- Learn about challenging your landlord to deliver value for money - what it is, what can be achieved for tenants and landlords and practical examples which can make a major impact
- Hear 'One Family's Story' – about a family being caught up in a spiral of Debt – Shontal
- Find out more about Tenant Reward – examples of schemes in operation and why they were chosen
- Want to campaign on welfare reform? Find out about involving your residents from one of the biggest campaigners
- Hear lessons on Universal Credit Pilots – how to engage and inform residents and the lessons learned to date
- Find out what is happening in the legal world which impacts on tenants – the less than wonderful world of the 'spare room subsidy'
- Hear about digital inclusion – encouraging residents to get online
- Find out about supporting and engaging the most vulnerable to understand the current issues and engage with you
- Learn about fuel poverty training - residents supporting other residents by being trained as energy advisors
- Quick and effective service reviews run by residents
- Engaging young people in financial management

### **Who should attend?**

Resident, tenants and leaseholders engaging with their landlord. Any landlord interested in staying ahead of the latest thinking on resident engagement and value for money (VfM) including Directors and Managers of Service Improvement, Performance, Finance and Transformational Change; Policy and Performance, Community and Customer Involvement.

### **Continuing Professional Development**

Delegates will be able to record 6 Continuing Professional Development hours for attending this conference.





## Programme Day 1

### 10.00 Registration, refreshments and exhibition viewing

### 11.00 Chair's Introduction and welcome

**Nigel Wilson**, Chief Executive, Wythenshawe Community Housing Group  
**Irene Bailey**, Tenant and Board Chair, Preston Community Gateway

### 11.10 Keynote speakers: What is all this fuss about Value for Money?

#### What is expected and what is it about – a view from the regulator

**Graeme Foster**, Strategic Regulation Manager, Homes and Communities Agency

Graeme will confirm the regulatory requirements for boards, staff and tenants and give the Homes and Communities Agency perspective on:

- the value for money statements submitted by landlords in 2013, and
- where improvements are required in future

#### What can be achieved by landlords and how could residents be involved?

**Tony Bryan**, Managing Director, Vantage Business Solutions

**Jon Mallen-Beadle**, Managing Director, Gateshead Housing Company

Tony will explain the work he undertakes with landlords to investigate the opportunities for significant budgetary savings and give examples of what has been achieved by landlords striving for value for money, including:

- repair service transformation
- housing management and improvements in satisfaction

Jon will explain the approach to Value for Money (VfM) at the Gateshead Housing Company, including:

- the impressive savings achieved in the major works programme
- how they achieved this
- how residents have been engaged in achieving those savings

### 12.00 Question Time Panel: Achieving value for money

Graeme, Tony and Jon will take questions from the audience

### 12.20 Lunch and exhibition viewing





### 1.35 Theatre Performance: One Family's Story

This drama piece concerns two members of the same family caught up in a spiral of debt. There is nothing unusual about the way the family live: they have similar lifestyles to those of us in the wider community. We see the likely outcome of this situation if neither character addresses the problem.

Shontal are a not for profit organisation that specialises in 'Financial Literacy using Live Theatre'. Working across the community, their aim is debt prevention through education.

### 2.40 Workshops: session 1

#### 1. Encouraging tenants to go on-line and get the best deals

**Dean Slavin**, Customer Involvement Manager, Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG) and a resident who is a digital champion

For a significant minority of people, the lack of online access and the essential skills needed to use online services means that they are not only missing opportunities to use online services, but are becoming disproportionately disadvantaged and excluded as digital becomes more integral to the majority experience of everyday life. This session will explain:

- How they are helping residents enjoy the benefits of the internet by providing a new computer recycling service, access to affordable computer equipment and connectivity.
- How they are supporting digital inclusion through computer skills courses.
- How residents have been involved in shaping and delivering as digital champions.
- How these digital champions have been involved in providing peer support for their fellow tenants.
- How 'Get Online Wythenshawe' is designed to support access to online services such as Welfare Benefits, the Housing Register, employment opportunities, getting the best energy deals and many more everyday services

#### 2. Achieving positive engagement with hard to reach groups

**Richard Hargrave**, Operations Manager, Habinteg

**Tracy Jagger**, Senior Corporate Services Officer, Habinteg

**Sandra Ruddick**, Resident of Habinteg

Habinteg have over 40 years' experience in neighbourhoods allowing everyone to live independently, whatever their age, impairment or cultural background. They remove barriers to enable wider participation, and will explain:

- How Habinteg make adjustments to enable tenants with differing needs take part in involvement activities through:
  - i) Flexible travel and accommodation arrangements
  - ii) Always endeavouring to accommodate differing needs
  - iii) Making use of in-house occupational Therapy provision
- How they make provision for carers and assistants





**3. Engaging young people through Know your Money**  
**Susan Borrow**, Project Manager, and a young volunteer from Erimus Housing

Erimus Housing will explain their exciting "Know Your Money - Keep The Change" - KYM project. KYM is a Big Lottery funded project in Middlesbrough. The project works with young people aged 16-24 in social housing (and in other housing sectors too) to improve their financial confidence. The project opened in August 2013 and has had great success, engaging and supporting more than 800 young people in its first 8 months of operation. They will explain:

- Methods used to involve and engage young people
- Encouraging and enabling young people to shape and deliver services/activities/events
- The use of live performances, creative workshops and training
- Partnership working and the provision of incentives supported by partners
- Thinking outside the box - hints and tips for engaging young people

**4. Raw Talent: enabling peer-to-peer learning**  
**Andrew Wilson**, Director at Foldup CIC and a Raw Talent group member

Raw Talent is a volunteer-run community group in Huddersfield, which provides adult learning opportunities for residents in the area. The group was first set up under the guidance of community workers, and had funding to pay for course tutors. However the group now organise peer-to-peer learning opportunities in which they teach each other new skills. They will explain:

- How members organise peer-to-peer learning opportunities
- The roles of members in deciding the direction of the group
- How a self-help network has developed and is connecting people
- How voluntary activity is increased and how this grows social networks and social capital
- How the project reduces dependency on high cost, high value health and social care services

**5. Customers giving energy advice to alleviate fuel poverty**  
**Antony Jarvis**, Social Responsibility Co-ordinator and a resident of Knowsley Housing Trust (KHT)

KHT have led the way in tackling fuel poverty in a number of ways. In this workshop they will explain:

- How they trained apprentices to deliver energy advice in their homes, communities and online/ over the phone
- Why they use new technologies and invest in warm homes
- How they work with other landlords and local authorities through the Viridis partnership to reduce fuel poverty in Merseyside
- Why working with volunteers is essential to facilitate successful uptake of advice and technologies
- The volunteer perspective, motivations and barriers
- What can be done to support volunteers





### 3.30 Refreshments and exhibition viewing

### 3.50 Workshops – session 2

## 6. Undertaking a full value for money review of customer involvement services

**Natalie Pryor**, Customer Involvement Officer and **Sheila Fitzpatrick**, Customer from Liverpool Mutual Homes

Liverpool Mutual Homes completed a Value for Money (VfM) review of their customer involvement methods. They will explain:

- How they approached the VfM review of their service
- How they involved tenants and staff in reviewing the value of services
- The outcomes from their review
- Hints and tips for completing a value for money service review

## 7. VIPs – a short intensive customer value for money service review

**Jonathan Cannon**, Customer Involvement Officer and **Jackie White**, Customer from the Thirteen Group

Thirteen have experimented with tenant-led short service reviews. They will explain:

- The project and the role of VIPs
- How these reviews achieve value for money for customers involved and for the landlord
- How they engaged managers in bringing projects forward for service review
- How VIPs support the scrutiny panel
- How the project has been embraced by customers and managers alike
- Training and embedding VIP work into the heart of the partner landlords.
- Hints and tips for running your own quick project to support business critical issues

## 8. Engaging young people through Know your Money

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## 9. **Raw Talent: enabling peer-to-peer learning**

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- How the project reduces dependency on high cost, high value health and social care services

## 10. **Customers giving energy advice to alleviate fuel poverty**

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## 4.45 **Keynote speakers: Tenant Reward Schemes – different options and approaches**

### **The Orbit Community Reward Services**

**Gwyn Gascoigne**, Income Strategy and Operations Manager, Orbit Heart of England

Orbit looked over the water to France and the Netherlands to consider how they would reward their tenants and encourage payment of rent. Orbit will explain:

- The Orbit pro-points tenant reward programme
- How tenant reward schemes can change tenant behaviour
- Why they wanted to reward tenants
- How the scheme works
- How the scheme allows tenants to gather and spend points across a range of flexible options
- Hints and tips for developing your own reward scheme





## **The Irwell Valley Diamond Service**

**Tom Manion**, Chief Executive, Irwell Valley Housing Association

Irwell Valley introduced their gold service to reward positive behaviour in tenants over ten years ago. They will explain what their latest Diamond reward scheme and cover:

- Why they wanted to reward tenants
- How the gold scheme has now gone diamond
- How the scheme works and the requirements and benefits of the reward scheme
- How tenants were engaged in the development of the scheme
- Hints and tips for developing your own reward scheme

### **5.15 Question Time: Tenant Reward**

Gwyn and Tom will take questions from the audience

### **5.30 Close of Day One**

### **7.00 Conference dinner – followed by the popular late night disco**







## Programme Day 2

### 9.45 Chair's welcome

**Nigel Wilson**, Chief Executive, Wythenshawe Community Housing Trust

### 9.50 Delivering Value at the Housing Ombudsman Service - You pay for me, what do I do for you?

**Mike Biles**, Housing Ombudsman

The Housing Ombudsman undertakes dispute resolution for landlords from the Local Authority, Housing Association and some Private Sector providers. Mike will explain:

- The role of the Ombudsman
- The strategic objectives to fulfil that role
- How the Ombudsman Service strives to remain relevant, make an impact, and add value
- Top tips to make the Ombudsman happy

### 10.20 Sub Plenary sessions:

**Delegates can choose to attend one of two plenary sessions:**

#### 1. The less than wonderful world of the 'bedroom tax'

**Ian Alderson**, Partner, Brabners LLP

Ian will discuss the recent case law, the legal challenges to the bedroom tax and what this means for tenants, including:

- The debate on what is a bedroom
- The challenges on exempt accommodation
- Challenges on disability and human rights

#### 2. Practical Ideas for involving customers in value for money

**Yvonne Davies**, Director, Scrutiny and Empowerment Partners Ltd

**Kevin Ohane**, Customer, Nehemiah United Churches HA

Yvonne will discuss the practical ways landlords have involved customers, and will cover:

- Examples of different approaches taken from across the country
- Hints and tips to tenants on influencing VfM

Kevin will discuss the Nehemiah United Churches HA Customer 'Value for Money Panel', including:

- Why participating in the Panel is important to customers
- What has been achieved
- How customers influence the business priorities and spend from





efficiency gains

### 11.10 Refreshments and exhibition viewing

### 11.30 Let's talk about Welfare Reform

#### **Universal Credit Pilots – lessons learnt**

**Kevin Dodd**, Chief Executive, WDH

Wakefield was a pilot for Universal Credit and produced a report into the first 200 days of the 'bedroom tax'. Kevin will explain:

- What WDH learnt about the implementation of the bedroom tax, its impact on tenant and the business "Life on the Edge - 200 days and counting the cost"
- How they involved their residents in planning for welfare reform
- Why WDH chose to be a pilot to implement Universal Credit
- Lessons learnt to date and advice for landlords and tenants

#### **Campaigning on Welfare reform - how can you help?**

**Iain Sim**, Chief Executive at Coast and Country Housing

Coast and Country have led the way in supporting their tenants to campaign about issues relating to welfare reform. Iain will explain:

- Why Coast and Country have stuck their head above the parapet and campaigned against some of the elements of welfare reform
- How they support residents subject to welfare reform
- How they have worked with other North East landlords to build a voice for residents
- How they share information across landlords and tenants
- How you might replicate a similar campaign

### 12.10 Question Time: Welfare Reform

Ian and Kevin will take questions from the audience

### 12.25 Chair's closing remarks

### 12.30 Close of conference





# 14th Annual Resident Involvement Conference

## Achieving value for customers and landlords

5th & 6th June 2014 - Hilton Hotel Blackpool

### Delegate fees:

Residential (staying at Hilton Hotel)	£469 + vat
	£419 + vat Member Rate*
Non-residential	£389 + vat
	£339 + vat Member Rate*

### **Book 3 places only pay for 2!**

(Third delegate place excludes accommodation and conference dinner which will be charged at £80 and £39 respectively, plus vat)

### **\*Member Rates available to members of:**

Northern Housing Consortium/Scrutiny and Empowerment Partners  
SCRUTINYnet/TPAS/TAROE

### Booking:

To book your delegate place at this event and to view our full terms & conditions and cancellation policy, please visit the Events Booking page of our website – click on the link below:

<http://www.northern-consortium.org.uk/ViewEvent?EventID=77>

### Contact us

For further information or if you have a query please contact a member of the events team:

Telephone: 0191 566 1000 Option 2

Email: [events@northern-consortium.org.uk](mailto:events@northern-consortium.org.uk)

