

## National Resident Involvement Conference, York

### Co- creation and Collaboration

19 June 2019,

#### Interactive Session with the Audience

## Questions for the Tables and their full flip chart responses

### Combined Notes from the 3-4 tables working on each question:

- a) What would a new consumer regulator do?
- b) What could you and your landlord do to reduce stigma in social housing?
- c) What are your ideas to overcome the challenges for a National Tenant Body to connect with & hear from tenants and tenant groups?
- d) What performance information should all landlords publish, that matters to tenants?
- e) What are the words/actions you would like to ban/are misused by staff, tenants and newspapers which feed the stigma of social housing?

### The great responses and combined wisdom we received in just 10 minutes

There is a little repetition.

Repetition has not removed it as it demonstrates the importance of some issues to our contributors.

#### **A What would a new consumer regulator do?**

1. Standards defined by tenants
2. Greater interaction with tenants
3. Back to inspections – but also ask for evidence from the landlord in advance – might highlight positives as well as areas of concern
4. Back to more of an audit commission approach
5. Effective at giving guidance on what is effective practice – focus on outcomes
6. Share best practice – make it widely available
7. 4 rights
  - a. Right tenancies
  - b. Right tenancies - accommodation matches need
  - c. Right places

- d. Right price
- 8. Health & Safety – as it affects customer – compliance
- 9. Set clear standards – but loss of local solution – somewhere in the middle of where it is now & how it used to be in inspections
- 10. Check that Boards are aware of these & monitoring compliance & canvas views of tenants.
- 11. Across all tenures
- 12. Minimum standards & increase focus on neighbourhoods
- 13. Consumer regulator should speak directly to tenants
- 14. Liaise with tenants/customers more and listen to what they are saying
- 15. Tell tenants/customer not just landlords what they can deal with
- 16. Regulator to look more closely at repairs within Social Housing
- 17. More inspections from housing regulators

## **B What could you and your landlord do to reduce stigma in social housing?**

- 1. We could work more with Council on this problem with social stigma
- 2. People are on Benefits due to job losses – no fault of their own - are put in this position
- 3. Remove the word social
- 4. Geography – town – estates - reputations take long time to change – need positive focus of these areas
- 5. Council says: “what’s wrong?” fix all the time – switch to “what’s going well” in area/positives
- 6. Change in use of language i.e. customer not tenant
- 7. Including the whole community not just tenants/customers
- 8. Promoting the good things about living in social via social media
- 9. Improve 2-way communication
- 10. Improve standards/estates – perception, cans etc. rubbish
- 11. Integrate community groups/educate hubs/younger people engage
- 12. Events bring people together – litter picks etc.
- 13. We could work with a council to see where the problem lies with social housing
- 14. People on benefits due job losses to no fault of their own are put in this position to no fault of their own
- 15. Make stigma awareness part of Customer Services training for all staff.
- 16. Change language used by organisation
- 17. Links to immigration in the media
- 18. Use Social Media to promote the positives

## **C What are your ideas to overcome the challenges for a National Tenant Body to connect with & hear from tenants and tenant groups?**

### Challenges

1. Communication – how do tenants communicate with Nat Body + vice versa
2. Overcoming apathy – encouraging people to be involved “some else” will deal with it
3. Connecting on a national level where local involvement is difficult/not well used/accessed
4. Regionalism – understanding difference in different LAs/Regions. – changing priorities
5. Differing needs of different customer groups – older families, support needs
6. Proving outcomes when people are engaged

### Communication

1. Regional difference ‘would need a regional structure’
2. Use different platforms/channels of involvement
3. Make ‘involvement’/issues as relevant to customers as possible > communicate these effectively in a range of ways
4. Be wary of an ‘outsiders looking in’ approach
5. Ensure we reach diverse audience that represents the region
6. Ensure ‘proper’ representation
7. To be fully inclusive e.g. traveller community
8. Effective communication methods – within panel + to other tenants
9. Could it build on existing networks?
10. Recruitment to the panel – will include travel
11. Debate over if this is a paid position
12. Don’t hold every meeting in London!
13. Ability to make a meaningful impact
14. Uncertainty around White Paper
15. Should it be government sponsored?
16. Parliament (representative)
17. Regional voice
18. Body to attend panel meetings
19. Must be led by tenants for tenants
20. Regional view point teams (Home Group N East)
21. Set up effective regional groups
22. Want a regional voice not a national one
23. Conferences brings people together but some tenants are excluded because of cost

24. Newcastle Independent Tenants Voice – learn from good practice set up
25. Involve everyone – tenants/shared owners/leaseholders
26. Communicate how above can get involved – they don't know
27. Regional imp. One National
28. Learn from good practice already in existence e.g. NITV + Regional, Newcastle Independent TV viewpoint Teams (Home Group)
29. Also use technology – virtual panels + traditional methods to share information.

## **D What Performance information should all landlords publish, that matters to tenants?**

1. STAR – overall satisfaction with the quality of home
2. Financial reports – how it is spent to benefit customers
3. Void property performance
  - More in depth
  - Timescales etc. why
  - Reasons behind a void property
  - Issue reasons for refusal
  - Re-let times
4. Housing providers should be regulated in exactly the same way regarding re-lets/void turnaround to provide an honest picture of nationally what's going on
5. Guidelines + organisations should be directly comparable
6. All of which should be shared with customers
7. STAR survey – satisfaction that landlords listen to and acts tenants' views?
8. Find out what tenants WANT to know
9. Complaints –incl. compliments + comments “you said we did” what is being done and what is the difference made?
10. Turnaround times for homes
11. Complaints, trends and what learning/changes have come out of this
12. Voids and what you are doing about them
13. Allocations Outcomes, customer experience of process
14. Customer satisfaction levels -the customer voice
15. Benchmarking with similar sized housing authorities and local housing providers
16. Institute of Customer Service – publish performance against this as part of our journey towards customers experience
17. KPIs – repairs – time taken
18. How much has been achieved against Business Plan
19. Savings made against 3-year Business Plan – Budget cuts of £5.3 million – where and what is the impact?
20. Service charges – any changes, breakdown – better explanations, more information
21. Complaints handling

22. Energy saving/carbon footprint
23. KPI – rent loss due to voids turnaround times – difference in turnaround times in housing association across the country
24. Percentage of rent collected v rent due
25. Customer satisfaction: call centre

## **E What are the words/actions you would like to ban/feel are misused by staff, tenants and newspapers which feed the stigma of social housing?**

1. Ban TV progs that sneeringly mock (take the piss) out of groups of difference. Why do they use extremes? Does adversarial argy-bargy make good telly?
2. Default assumption that all social residents are vulnerable/live chaotic lives/needly etc.
3. 15% of residents take most resource but all of us carry the label
4. Staff think they know what's best for us. Patriarchal sector? Patronising.
5. Going on site (site it's not a building site)
6. I'll do it and you don't (staff don't take repairs etc. seriously)  
(reframing words to describe poverty)
7. Only the successful get out of social housing
8. They should be/feel grateful. (tenants are paying rent)
9. No ball games syndrome – over control, over notice
10. Stop sensational headlines from newspapers
11. Unfair section 106 conditions
12. Not to stress 'benefits' so much
13. Words (banned from being miss-used rather than used altogether)
  - Allocated on basis of need
  - They are only tenants
  - Subsidised
  - Vulnerable in the wrong context

**Thanks Everyone, great contributions make a great conference.**

Thanks for your support.

See you again on **21<sup>st</sup> November 2019** in York, for our Tenant Panels Conference

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