

Grant Stories



A selection of grant stories from April 2012 to March 2014 from the Tenant Futures Programme delivered by The National Communities Resource Centre based at Trafford Hall

As part of the programme funded through the Department for Communities and Local Government we deliver a small grant programme. Grants vary in size up to £1000.00.

The main aim of the grants are to enable tenant groups to take-back learning to their community which encourages them to lead change in their community or neighbourhood.

I am always amazed by the innovative and interesting ways in which groups use this small grant programme to further the work in their communities.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Findlay', written in a cursive style.

Jon Findlay
Assistant Chief Executive

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EAST RIDING TENANTS PARTICIPATION FORUM

The group attended *Wider World* training in January 2012.

Their landlord is East Riding of Yorkshire County Council.

Although they are consulted by their landlord, they have no way to challenge via a dedicated Complaints or Scrutiny Panel.

The group decided to apply for a grant to enable them to visit their 'neighbouring' Local Authority (North Lincolnshire) who already have a scrutiny panel. The groups have worked together before and they felt the North Lincs groups would be able to give them support in setting up their own panel.



The group were awarded a grant of £255 to cover the cost of a mini-bus for the day plus a small amount per person to provide a lunch.

The group's report stated:

"We arranged a visit for 10 committee members and one Forum member to visit the Tenant Scrutiny Panel members of North Lincolnshire Homes for the purpose of learning how they had set up a Scrutiny Panel and for a report on their progress. There was then an open Q&A session for our members to ask as many questions as necessary.

Our next step is to give a presentation to our full Forum to tell our members all that is entailed in setting up Scrutiny Panels, why residents are being encouraged to do this.

Our aim is to eventually set up a Tenant Scrutiny Panel in the East Riding of Yorkshire. We are exploring/researching a local authority that is similar to ours (i.e. Unitary Authority) so that we can make a measured decision on where we go from here.

Although only 11 members were involved in the visit, a report from this visit will go in the ERYC Newsletter to 11,313 units of accommodation. The newsletter of the Forum also goes out to all tenants, and all minutes go out to any tenant who has asked to be on the mailing list. We inform Housing Management, Council Executives and Housing Maintenance Units of all we do.

We regard this very much as a 'work in progress' and think we will need to do more research before taking the next step, so we are grateful of for the fact that you have offered to hold over the additional £245 for us for now, in order that we can make a decision later in the year regarding the additional research we need to do.

As well as looking at Scrutiny Panels, we are currently looking at taking over one of the services currently offered by our landlord – grass cutting – where many tenants are dissatisfied with the current provision.

LEE VALLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD AND SCRUTINY BOARD

(Formerly Lee Valley Area Board)

Members of this group attended Working with Your Landlord in February 2012.

They work as a scrutiny panel – scrutinising local services delivered by the landlord (Riverside) and making recommendations for improvements. They are consulted by the landlord on regeneration projects taking place in the local area and have representation on the steering groups for these. Board members have also been on the selection panel for contractors carrying out work in their local area.

They have been a Scrutiny Board since April 2012 and have clear terms of reference about how they operate. They want to improve their members' skills so that they can perform to their optimum ability.

There are roughly 14 committee members and a member of the landlord's staff works with them. They have been active in the area for over 10 years but have only recently taken on the scrutiny role. They had just recruited some new members and so wanted to make sure that everyone understands what scrutiny is and how they can carry out the role to the best of their ability, maintaining the good relationship they have with their landlord and working together to positively influence the services provided to local people.



They applied for a grant of £717.50 to bring the whole board to a one-day training session at Trafford Hall, run by Rachel Vernelle of Burkitt -Vernelle Training (one of the Trafford Hall programme trainers). The grant paid for the trainer costs and the landlord provided funding for the hire of the venue for the day.

COAST AND COUNTRY TENANTS PANEL

Middlesbrough

The Tenants Panel shape and review new policies at Coast and Country Homes.

The panel attended the Wider World course in February 2012 and found the in-depth information about the Localism Bill and Welfare Reform useful, easily understood and yet very detailed.

They applied for funding of £350 to pay for transport costs, marketing and promotional costs and refreshments for a 'Forum' for local tenants. The panel put together a leaflet with the information learnt from the course and the group themselves set up a presentation for the Forum where they did their own 'training session' on the issues. The venue and support was provided by Coast and Country.

Outcomes

The group arranged the Forum meeting and invited members from tenant and resident groups from across Redcar and Cleveland Borough. 17 delegates attended. The Chair and Vice Chair of the Panel put together a presentation with their learning from the Wider World course at Trafford Hall and worked with Coast and Country marketing to develop a leaflet for the tenants regarding Welfare Reform and the Localism Bill.

Many people have asked for further information since the Forum and this has improved the working relationships between tenant/resident groups and the Tenant Panel. The group have only used about half the grant and intend to hold another Forum in early 2013 to update on issues. This report will be updated following that second Forum.

In the second phase of the project the panel visited three residents groups and provided an update for members who had missed the initial forum. The group delivered a presentation to 28 members from across Redcar and Cleveland Borough. During this phase the group worked closely with Coast and Country's Leadership team to collect the views of those within their community regarding the Bedroom Tax. The group then went on to create a Facebook page and also an e-petition.

BILLING VIEW COMMUNITY GROUP

Rawdon, Leeds

Members of the group (tenants of West North West Homes) attended *Spreading Your Knowledge* in February 2012.

They have one committee member on the Area Panel, 2 who are Tenant Inspectors; they are members of the Involvement Group and also have two members on the Sheltered Housing Forum for WNW Homes.

They applied for funding of £500 to cover the cost of extending the distribution of their newsletter, and also to enable them to produce recordings of meetings, and to put "spoken" copies of the newsletter out to those tenants who are not able to read the printed version (this is a sheltered scheme and they have a high proportion of tenants with sight difficulties).

From the report from the group (October 2012):

"We purchased a microphone, amplifier and voice recorder to help with sending our newsletter out in different formats for blind and deaf people, and approx £200 of the grant has gone towards increased production of the hard copy of the newsletter.

The newsletter now reaches approx 200 people and is also used as a guideline for other groups from all over Leeds. It has had a measurable result of more people joining in the activities of both the tenant issues group and social groups locally.

The microphone and amplifier are a godsend for us all, particularly the hard of hearing and the blind group.

We now run a computer club which is very successful. With the voice recorder they are learning to upload a recording of the newsletter on to disc for use by blind and partially sighted people. This is quite new to the group, but it is an activity which helps them understand another dimension of computers and at the same time to help their fellow members.

Although part of our grant was a small amount for travel expenses, because of the success of the newsletter and the computer group activities, people are returning their travel expenses and asking us to spend it on paper and ink.

We have also just purchased a binding machine and binders.



Our group is developing all the time. Recently the Lord Mayor of Leeds opened our new kitchen and gardens. Monies for the gardens were raised by applying for grants from the local area Wellbeing budget. The new kitchen was supplied by the landlords and white goods were donated by Morrison's

and our local repairs team. Joan and Trevor Roberts were given an Achievement Award for Work in the Community by the Lord Mayor.

We are now a UK Online Centre and will be encouraging new learners during Get Online week by holding a cream tea in October 2012. We are holding intergenerational activities in October and November (2012) and will hold a community Halloween party. We have new Art and Photography groups set up and this has encouraged more men to join in the activities. Our next aim is to encourage more people to join our exercise classes."

Although this grant is for a sheltered housing project and has a higher than normal average age for members, the tenants are very involved with local social and tenant issues and the award of this small amount of funding has enabled to be involve more tenants in housing issues and also to extend their social and community events, which as everyone knows are vital to encourage continued involvement from tenants who would not normally immediately get involved in 'harder' housing issues.

The group goes from strength to strength.

THEAKER LANE TENANTS

Leeds

A representative of Theaker Lane Tenants group (who are involved in working groups and linked to a scrutiny panel) attended Tenants on the Web in March 2012, following which the group had their own web-site-set up on the course.

Following the course, they were trying to update their website on an extremely old pc and were becoming frustrated at constantly losing updates. Consequently, they decided to apply for a grant for a laptop, for the MS Word package for the computer and for a Publisher package. The group also use the laptop to take round to those tenants who do not have web access, to use for such issues as updating benefit information, and it will be extremely useful in helping local people to register on-line for the changes to benefit.



They are also training up additional tenants to use the laptop to update the website (www.theakerlanetrg) and are giving additional training to those interested tenants in an area where many are not computer-literate at all.

Using their computer packages, the group have also produced a Theaker Lane Calendar for 2013 which has been provided free to all local tenants.

A can probably be recognised from the photo, this is a group which has found it hard to get 'into' technology, but they are working hard to encourage more participation and the laptop is proving exceptionally useful in the present Universal Credit situation.

They are encouraging younger members to get involved who are already computer literate and are finding that, as well as improving what they can do with the laptop, that it is providing a key into cross-generational work locally.

SOHA TENANT INSPECTORS AND TENANT FORUM

SOHA IS BASED IN Didcot Oxfordshire.

5 tenants involved both as Tenant Inspectors and as members of the Tenant Forum attended *Wider World* training in March 2012.

The Tenant Inspectors check how SOHA delivers service standards. They report to the Tenant Forum and to the Board. The Tenants Forum is the elected body of tenants that hold the Board to account and have an active role in decision making. There are 40+ people involved across the two groups (17 Inspectors, around 24 on the Forum).

They put in a joint application for one day's training from Engage Associates on Changes to Regulation of Social Housing and the (then upcoming) Changes to Welfare Benefits.

Their identified outcomes were:

- Better informed tenants (especially those currently involved)
- To allay anxiety amongst tenants regarding new legislation
- To improve the co-regulation model by better understanding between tenants and landlord

The grant of £900 paid for:

- 2 x ½-day training sessions on the above, from Tim Morton of Engage Associates
- Overnight accommodation for the trainer
- Travel expenses for the trainer
- Training materials

Lunch and refreshments, venue hire and administrative support was funded/supported by SOHA.



Monitoring Report:

“As per our agreement and the invoices sent, the money was used to run a Wider World session on Welfare Reform and the Regulatory Changes in July 2012. This enabled us to professionally pass on information which the five attendees at the Trafford Hall course had heard about in March 2012.

23 tenants received this training and this gave them the confidence to ask for further training in November 2012, when Tim Morton returned to deliver further training (funded by SOHA). We may not have been able to do this if it were not for the original grant which provided training which proved its worth and enabled us to persuade SOHA management to commit to the cost of the extra training.

Our intended outcomes are being achieved and continue to be achieved as we see understanding about Welfare Reform spreading amongst residents and also staff of the Housing Association. So now well over 100 people have been involved in training concerning Welfare Reform.

In December 2012 we did a phone-round of the attendees on the original July training. They all spoke of the importance of the raised awareness and some spoke of empowerment and the increased ability to challenge their housing provider.

We now have a very large number of tenants involved in Resident Involvement and as we do not currently have a specific group monitoring Welfare Reform, this may be something we can consider in 2013.



Attendees of the July grant-supported training said that it was a "great eye-opener" and they feel empowered to challenge and to help others.

Overall, the residents that have been involved in Welfare Reform training are from a variety of groups, both Scrutiny, Inspection, Forum and other interested tenants and residents. They continue to follow their interests in involvement with their housing association to maintain and improve standards and increase the voice of tenants in the management of their homes.

Trafford Hall will continue to be a valuable resource for training for tenants of SOHA to increase their tool kit and understanding and empower them to work with SOHA to improve the standards of involvement.

We hope you will consider it money well spent!"

FEDERATION OF NORTH EAST DERBYSHIRE TENANTS AND RESIDENTS

The Federation covers the whole of NE Derbyshire. Federation officers are part of the Tenants Scrutiny Panel and in March 2012 were working on the 3rd scrutiny exercise. They had training from December 2010 to March 2011 and started their first scrutiny exercise in April 2011.

They also negotiate with the ALMO (Rykneld Homes Ltd – set up in April 2007) to resolve individual tenant issues and provide an advocacy service for tenants and residents.

They also work with the ALMO on rent, repairs, maintenance, scrutiny (they already have a scrutiny panel), ASB issues, Choice Based Lettings, investment and development, neighbourhood services, independent living services, decent homes, procurement and consultation.

They have bi-monthly liaison meetings with senior management of the ALMO and quarterly meetings with the Director of Strategic Housing from the Council (NE Derbyshire DC).

Tenants and residents can become members of a local group, or if there isn't one locally then the Federation help them set up a new group and support them for up to 6 months, by booking a local venue, sending out invitation letters to monthly meetings, take minutes, invite speakers to address specific issues, etc. Each affiliated group is a member of the Federation and reps from each local TARA attend a monthly Federation meeting to share problems and good practice.

The group applied for a grant of £500 towards an event to bring tenants and residents from all over NE Derbyshire together to help explain the Localism Act and the Welfare Reform Act.

Their landlord and ALMO and their partnering contractor, Apollo, all agreed to give presentations and run workshops but they needed to employ an external consultant to give clear explanations and an overview of issue that might arise. The ALMO ran a workshop on debt management and housing staff were also available to provide information on the Decent Homes programme and other housing matters and on the Independent Living Service they provide. Apollo were involved with information on Decent Homes, repairs and queries on other planned improvements.

50 tenants and residents attended.



BRISTOL COMMUNITY HOUSING TENANT INVOLVEMENT GROUP

This group attended *Wider World* in May 2012.

As a group they play a large part in the planning and involvement of any housing decisions.

They applied for a grant of £500 to hold a one-day event at the Wordsworth Centre, in Horfield, Bristol on 16 July 2012, to promote the upcoming changes in the Welfare Rights Reform – bedroom tax, universal credit, council tax.

This was to help prepare and inform tenants of the big changes ahead and to make sure that hard-to-reach groups were contacted as overall they are likely to be more affected. Other agencies were also invited to attend – for example the credit union, to encourage budgeting skills.



As the group does not currently have a bank account, the landlord (BCHF) paid for the costs up-front and then invoiced Trafford Hall for the agreed cost of £500.

On the day, the tenants delivered the training themselves, with support from BCHF staff and the outside agencies.

The group were pleased with the response (approximately 30 people attended) and it has been agreed that follow-up sessions should be held which will cover:

- Asking DWP to attend a session
- Credit Union to give more information on how they work and how they can support personal budgeting
- Sessions to be held in the evening as well as during the day
- Info on having a lodger, contracts, right, how it works for individuals
- Budgeting training for families especially on managing debt, rent arrears, etc.



SALIX HOMES PEOPLE'S PANEL AND SALIX HOMES SENATE

Salford, Manchester

The Salix Homes People Panel supports Income Management, Financial Inclusion, Worklessness, Supporting Neighbourhoods, Choice Based Lettings, Waiting List, Customer Involvement and reviews policy and signs off consultation in all these areas.

At the time of the application, the Senate were scrutinising minor adaptations provided by Salix Homes to people with disabilities. From the scrutiny done, the Senate write a report with recommendations based on robust evidence. This is then presented by two senators at a Board meeting where the board then task the officers to produce a delivery plan with timescales. As well as the Senate, there is a team of customer Inspectors who do work on behalf of Salix but can also be commissioned by any of the panels.

There are approx 11 committee members involved with the Senate and approx 12 involved with the People Panel.

Both groups attended Tenant Panels-Robust Frameworks in June 2012.

Two linked applications were put in:

- From the Senate – an application for £750 to pay residential costs at Trafford Hall for a 2-day residential for 30 people on Co-Regulation and the Regulatory Framework.
- From the People Panel – an application for £750 to pay trainers deliver, travel and residential costs for delivering the training.
-

Salix Homes paid additional funding for both grants up to approx the same amount.

The training took place 8-9 October, at Trafford Hall.

From the Monitoring Report:

Originally the groups expected around 30 people to attend and had asked for larger grants to cover the full costs, but when the numbers dropped to 20, Salix Homes agreed to pick up any additional costs above approx £75 per head. The objectives for the training were:

- To empower tenants through greater knowledge
- To ensure tenants are influencing the services they receive
- Team building leading to more effective working

All objectives were met – both tenants and staff reported back that their personal jigsaw was now complete as they had seen how the framework comes together as a whole, rather than just understanding the one or two areas they deal with individually.

“We have since had reviews of Senate, Panels and Inspectors and have a day planned with all groups w/c 22 April 2013, where they will share their learning, how they have put it to use and how they want to work together moving forward to ensure each group complements and supports the others. Through this approach we have been able to strengthen the Governance arrangements, particularly for Customer Inspectors, where there was a gap identified and we have now aligned the Inspector Programme with the People Panel and there is a built-in reporting mechanism for each exercise back to the Panel.”

Our approach to scrutiny has also been strengthened following this training, being linked with another exercise – a visit to Westminster.

We have been told that, from an Officer point of view, the objectives have been met in that the Community Involvement Team now have a clearer understanding of the Regulatory Framework and the formal governance arrangements that have now been adopted. There are now arrangements within the CIT so that they can identify needs and signpost customers to the formal structure. Both tenant Senate, People Panel and the CIT team have worked together to develop a training programme for interested customers and we now have joint team meetings and work together to deliver joint projects.

Salix are in the process of introducing an assurance framework for the customer governance framework, which will track all actions and outcomes. This will be formally tracked through covalent with quarterly reports back to Panels and Inspectors. Business meetings have been introduced for the Senate where they will monitor activities and receive feedback from each panel and the inspectors.

Salix have also introduced a new system to monitor the impact of any customer involvement activity and part of this will monitor referrals between the teams and track successes"

AYCLIFF CENTRAL OPEN RESIDENTS NETWORK (ACORN)

Newton Aycliffe, Co Durham

The group attended the Little Acorns in June 2012.

"It is the aim of ACORN to improve the lives and prospects of our residents through uniting local people in a common effort to upgrade our environment, remove graffiti, pick up litter, act as a voice on behalf of our neighbourhood, restore pride in our surroundings, debate topical subjects, encourage through affiliate organisations education, encourage our elderly and infirm to become socially engaged and to grow people's confidence.

As can be seen [from the attached sheet] it is our intention to involve the whole community in community events such as Halloween, parties for children, Christmas parties for adults, carol singing, petting animals days, etc. We are trying to involve everyone in our community regardless of age, gender, religion or disability. As a means of attracting new and more people, we seek to advertise our activities when holding events in local parks, leisure centres, etc."

The group applied for £422 to purchase 2 x 'pop-up' advertising banners, plus two larger outdoor banners, to enable them to advertise their presence at events.

Grant report –

"As agreed, ACORN spent the received funding on 2 x pop up banners and 2 larger outdoor pvc banners which are used at all our events and meetings. As explained in the original application, ACORN hold events in the community such as outdoor and indoor parties, events such as picnics (at all of which we encourage children to bring their parents and grandparents along), family activity days such as rounders, football, tug of war, egg and spook races, etc.

ACORN have held several events since acquiring the banners and these advertising media have been used at a variety of venues both inside buildings, such as our local leisure centre, and also outside in local parks. It has been our strategy to send photographs to our local media of members standing alongside these banners, thus maximising our publicity. Since using the banners our membership has grown on a monthly basis and the use of these banners along with a little creative advertising has resulted in our ranks swelling.

ACORN was set up to be totally inclusive and the activities which we engage in are aimed at community involvement. We have newborns brought along to our events alongside older siblings, parents and grandparents. We are an example of an integrated community and we actively encourage residents of all ages to unite in our community. ACORN have recently begun a junior section called LITTLE ACORNS who are being mentored and encouraged to run their own group, plan their own activities and to some extent raise their own funds. Teaching group responsibility is part of our ethos.

ACORN considers the whole project has been a great success. Numbers matter when demonstrating to authorities the voice of the community. The banners sponsored by the grant have become the emblem of ACORN.

As the influence of ACORN grows, and we amalgamate with other groups of a similar nature, we hope to become a pressure group enhancing the lives of our members. Unity with other organisations can only improve and galvanise our efforts. We are in uncharted waters dealing with the effects of welfare reform regulation and seek to be in the vanguard helping people to cope."

LANCASHIRE FORUM AND LILAC (Leeds Independent Living Accommodation Company) FORUM

Members of both these groups attended Robust Frameworks in June 2012. They are all tenants of Progress Care Housing Association. Many of the tenants involved have learning disabilities or mental health issues.

The tenants have input in the design of the newsletter, they do inspections on empty properties and help design the website and tenant leaflets.

They asked for funding of £1040 to purchase two laptops, two versions of the Dragon Naturally Speaking software and 2 x desktop microphones, to help with minutes of meetings and researching. The two groups had already done some work on digital inclusion and many now have email addresses and Facebook accounts. One computer is based in Leeds and the other in Lancashire. They use a rota system so that all members get the opportunity to use the computers and have had training provided by the landlord.



It was felt that the reading software will really benefit the groups as a lot of them struggle reading long complicated documents. They are also able to get better access to the internet and produce documents on issues arising which they pass on to other tenants.

Progress Care Housing Association purchased the equipment initially and invoiced the Tenant Futures grant fund for the full amount.

From the Monitoring Report:

"The introduction of the laptops and speech recognition software has been a great success. It has given the Forum group members, all of whom have a learning disability or poor mental health, the opportunity to access online services. They have been able to participate in scrutiny exercises and helped with a review of Progress Housing Group's Anti-Social Behaviour Policy. They are currently helping scrutinise the communications in relation to the Repairs service.

Approx 30 tenants have had use of the equipment to date – all tenants live in supported housing and have either a learning disability or poor mental health.

The groups are delighted with the equipment and have really valued the opportunity to have access to such good equipment. Tenant Clare said that the equipment has made sending emails and writing

reports for Scrutiny so much easier with access to the speech recognition software. She can just talk into the microphone and her emails are done.

There have been a few difficulties in teaching some tenants how to use the equipment, but this is down to the nature of groups in supported housing.

Currently, the Lancashire Forum Group has been helping with the scrutiny review of repairs communications.

The LILAC forum are going to act as a steering group for an art-based project in Leeds.”

WASHINGTON CLOSE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Biddulph, Staffordshire

Members of the group attended *Working with Your Landlord* in July 2012.

Their landlord is Moorlands Housing, part of Your Housing Group.

They are members of tenant forums, focus groups and the Residents Association. They have discussed developing a more formal tenant panel but feel they are currently asked for their views on and given feedback on any suggested changes to policy or procedures. One of their members sits as tenant representative on Pre-Contract Application scoring panels and so they have a considerable amount of involvement, even if it is not formalised into a TP.

The 'old' landlord, Harvest Housing, has only recently merged with Moorlands as part of the Your Housing Group. To help their residents feel more comfortable with the changes, they applied for funding to enable them to take a group of older residents to Sefton Park in Liverpool, to visit some tenants who until recently were Arena tenants (now also part of YHG). They felt this visit would give both the Washington Close residents and the Sefton Park residents more confidence in the future of the merged group. They also hoped that the visit would provide a good networking opportunity and result in longer-term friendships which would enable continued interaction as the merged housing group goes forward.

The grant of £255 paid for the cost of a coach to take 25 residents to Liverpool.

Grant Report:

"During the visit to Liverpool our residents got to know the Arena residents, were shown round the Arena properties and realized that the merger of both their housing associations was not such a worrisome event. New friendships were formed and communication between each group of residents is continuing. Arrangements are being discussed with the intention of organising further visits between one another in the future. The main discovery by both sets of residents was how much both groups and the two housing associations had in common. We (ex-Harvest residents) realized that the expectations of our communities were very similar.

Our committee members in liaison with officer and residents of Arena Housing organized the trip. 25 local residents (including two who were companions for 2 of our disabled residents) went on the trip and were joined by about a dozen Arena residents from Sefton Park.

All of the residents who went on the trip stated that they felt reassured about the merger of the new Your Housing Group. In addition, most of us had never experienced being in tower blocks, so the visit to Sefton Park properties was a real experience.

One of our residents is going to be attending a training course at Trafford Hall looking at merged and merging housing associations and what to be aware of. He will give feedback to the rest of the group after the course.

All our normal activities (social and housing-related) continue to continue on a regular basis. The committee also continues to act, where necessary, as resident advocates and keep them informed of any events which may affect them in any way connected with their tenancies or the local community changes.

A bit "Thank You" for all the help and encouragement you have given to our association."

ASHFORD BOROUGH TENANT PANEL

Ashford, Kent

Members of the group attended Tenant Scrutiny – Starting Up in August 2012.

At the time they were members of the Ashford Borough Tenant Forum, but, as members of the Steering Group, were working towards setting up a Tenant Panel for the Borough. A review of the Forum had resulted in the desire to increase the opportunities for and extent of the influence regarding Housing policy. An Action Plan and new Recruitment Policy Plan were attached to the application.

The grant was applied for to be used towards the cost of the trainer (Rachel Vernelle) to provide Scrutiny Taster Sessions (and new ideas on Recruitment) to the potential Panel members so that they could understand what would be involved and how they could be effective members of the Panel. Members attending would be encouraged to form the scrutiny group of the newly formed panel.

A grant of £680 was awarded to pay the trainer costs for the training. Venue and accommodation and travel costs were met by the landlord (Ashford Borough Council).

In the event, they had two half-day scrutiny taster sessions but, disappointingly, only 13 tenants attended.

The Tenant Panel has been given a flavour of how scrutiny could work in Ashford. This will enable them to move on to more detailed training and to carry out a pilot scrutiny exercise with Rachel Vernelle carrying out the further training and acting as a critical friend during this process.

All 5000 Ashford Tenants and leaseholders had the opportunity to join the Ashford Tenants Panel. Nearly 100 tenants registered on the Involved Tenant Database were contacted personally, mainly by phone, to ask if they would be interested in being on the Panel. All housing staff were also given the opportunity to attend staff training on scrutiny. Our main problem has been getting those who say they are interested to attend meetings



and training sessions. When they do attend they are really engaged and productive. Things are progressing slowly, but they *are* progressing.

HOLLAND RISE AND WHITEBEAM CLOSE TMO

Lambeth, London

Members of the TMO Board attended Consulting the Community in August 2012.

The TMO Board manage a range of delegated functions about which they make all decisions, for Lambeth Council. They have a 3-year business plan to guide the development of the organisation and to help achieve objectives. Residents become shareholders by paying a £1 fee. Shareholders can then vote at meetings and become members of the Board of Trustees as places become available.

The group had identified the need to be more 'visible' locally, especially at events, shows, festivals, conferences and other events where they can show what they are and what they can do. They feel this will especially encourage other tenants to come up and speak to them and to become involved. They feel encouraging others to come up for a chat and discussion and to get their views on the services they offer and could provide will be crucial in improving resident involvement in Lambeth.

The group asked for a grant of £684 to enable the purchase of a variety of exhibition banners/stands to cover the above.

From the Monitoring Form:

"The grant money has been spent on design and production of pull-up displays and banners for our various community and resident engagements. In total we have designed and produced 5 x outdoor banners, 1 x pull-up display. We are in the process of commissioning another pull-up display.

The project has helped to encourage more residents participating in TMO events. The

residents have taken the lead in delivering some of the events and are now more enthusiastic about developing more banners as they are needed.

In some other areas, the pull-up displays have featured photographs from our events and have encouraged other tenants to come and find out how they can be involved.

Many residents have promised to attend future events, while we are in the process of commissioning a second display which features other residents. These banners have been useful, too, when members of the public have walked through our foyer area and then ask if they can come to our events.



We feel encouraged and empowered. The grant has helped towards delivering needed impacts in the area of resident engagement and participation. Residents are now not only aware of events that have taken place, but are also encouraged with the recognition given to them through their appearance in display banners. Furthermore, the outdoor banners especially for the boot sale have encouraged some resident to want to lead in delivering other projects.

We intend to keep on using the banners which have had a lot of impact and seem to encourage more residents to take part in our events. We are now also planning a series of in-house training for our board members and residents. The training will focus on community skills, health and safety awareness and IT skills.

We are grateful for the funding and the simple process of making the funds available. Residents that attended the training at Trafford Hall have commented on this and said that unlike other funding, which required complicated paperwork, this funding process is simple and straightforward."

BIDEFORD COMMUNITY CENTRE

Baguley, Manchester

The group attended Improving Repairs in September 2012.

They are part of the Tenant Scrutiny group and Scrutiny Review Group for their landlord, Parkway Green Housing Trust. Committee members are also involved in Neighbourhood Performance Panels, are Resident Inspectors, Mystery Shoppers and have a considerable input in decision making.

The group act as a link point for reporting repairs to the landlord, but also used their computer suite for benefiting the community generally – e.g., work searches, producing CVs, job applications, becoming computer literate, etc. They recognised that with the changes to Welfare Benefits the need for access to the internet was going to increase.

They had a couple of older laptops, supplied by their landlord, but during the time the application was being considered they had a break-in and lost all their IT equipment.

Since the break-in, security has been improved and the group now aim to get enough laptops to be able to develop an IT-training course for local people.

Funding was agreed for £400 to get them on the way, to purchase one laptop and associated software packages. This was purchased by the landlord and they invoiced us for reimbursement.

For a while, this was the only laptop available to local people and was “a godsend” to the group in keeping their repairs/job search etc work going. They kept a log of how people were using the computer during that period as well as using it themselves for linking to the landlord re repairs, panel work, etc.

The group have now been provided with 6 older laptops by the landlord and Barclays Bank, but the ‘grant’ laptop is the only one with up to date software. They are waiting for their landlord to purchase additional software for the other laptops to enable the IT sessions to be organised.

WEAVER VALE HOUSING TRUST TENANTS CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Northwich, Cheshire

The group attended *Avoiding Burnout for Tenant Volunteers* in September 2012.

This group work very closely with their landlords, Weaver Vale Housing Trust, and are involved in the Scrutiny Panel, Repairs Working Group, Property Investment, Voids and New Tenancies, Income Management, Care-Line, Review-IT Group, Tenancy Management, Tenant Inspectors. All policies and procedures of the WVHT come to the committee for approval prior to being implemented. 'Champions' are selected from the TCC for each separate working group. The TCC are developing a more formal structure with regard to panels etc.

The group feel that they are mostly ignorant about Co-Regulation and the full implications arising from it and they requested training. They had also attended other training sessions at Trafford Hall on such issues as *Tenant Panels* and the *Wider World* training and felt that they needed to gain confidence as to their own personal responsibilities in taking things forward on behalf of other tenants. Part of the *Avoiding Burnout* course relates to spreading the responsibilities and understanding your role and they felt that this training would help them to do that – at the time some members of the panel were wary of



taking on new roles as they were not too confident, and those that were taking on most of the roles were beginning to feel they could not go on taking more and more responsibility.

They applied for training from Engage Associates which came to £665 +vat.

The training, on Co-Regulation and Welfare Reform, took place on 13 December 2013 and all members of the Consultative Committee took part.

From the Monitoring Report:

"Since the training:

- We have formed several Tenant Involvement Groups*
- Tenants have become more pro-active and their interests have developed more widely. For example, the Voids and New Tenancies Involvement Group now go out to inspect void properties, also visit new tenants to ascertain their satisfaction through the whole experience of obtaining their new home.*

Not only tenants enjoyed this training but staff participated also, which enabled both tenants and staff to spread the word across the Trust and to tell many other tenants about the wider implications of Co-Regulation.

The attendees felt they had benefitted to a great degree, there WVHT then funded a replica training session (from Engage) at a future date, so that all in all a larger number than was originally expected benefited from the original project application.

The landlord is totally committed to working together with our tenants, leaseholders and residents. They always show a pro-active spirit towards customer satisfaction.

Part of our future planning at WVHT is for the TCC to take more ownership by going through an Annual Planning Process. This will then enable the group to become 'champions' of resident involvement at the Trust.

Co-Regulation is a serious issue for both landlords and tenants since the TSA and the Audit Commission were abolished. It is vital for landlords to listen to the needs of tenants and residents and vice-versa. It is important that we are ALL aware of the implications."

BARNSELEY FEDERATION OF TENANT AND RESIDENT ASSOCIATIONS

Barnsley, Yorkshire

The group attended Wider World training in October 2012.

They work widely with their landlords, Berneslai Homes, on a wide range of issue that affect tenants and the local community. At the time of application, their project included tenant scrutiny and setting up a Complaints Panel. They meet regularly with Berneslai Homes Senior Management Team and Board. They are also on working groups on repairs, equality, service provision and Annual Report production.

They applied for funding of £350 to enable them to erect a notice board outside the Federation headquarters where it could be easily seen by involved tenants and other members of the public who do not really know or understand what the Federation does. They had no way of putting up notices that would be more widely seen than by tenants.

Their outcomes were that people would be better informed of Federation events and involvement, that membership would increase. They especially intended to display information for the general public on Benefit Reform which they are closely monitoring and are trying to provide assistance on.

Monitoring was received in September 2013. The group has purchased a notice board at a cost of £394. Additional cost was met by the Federation.

Unfortunately the notice board was out of stock when they ordered it and re-ordering was delayed. They now have the notice board and the landlord has agreed to install it for them. However, they have identified a small separate area of land where it would be more effective, on a busy main road. They believe this piece of land is owned by the landlord, but Berneslai Homes are checking this out currently. As soon as the situation is clear, the board will be erected.

In the meantime, the group continue to work on scrutiny, tenants' complaint panel, and various tenant groups with Berneslai Homes and BMBC. They also work with the South Yorkshire Tenants Network and the North East Tenants Alliance. They are working on their new business plan and publicity material. They have recently started a computer class and are currently fundraising to purchase a ceiling-mounted projector for training purposes.

EAST DEVON TENANT SCRUTINY GROUP

East Budleigh, Devon

The group attended Tenant Panels – Opportunities for Involvement in November 2012.

They are an established Scrutiny Panel for their landlord, East Devon District Council. At the time of the application they had recently been working on a community centre scrutiny project and were also looking at Voids. They make recommendations to the Housing Review Board and all the recommendations made in the Community Centre report were acted upon.

The group applied for a day's training in Report Writing from Jenny Vernon, who had given them assistance in writing the report on the Community Centre scrutiny project. They felt they needed help to understand how to write a report, what to put in it (and what not to put in it) and how to say things in the reports unemotionally and in ways that would not cause offence.

They applied for a grant of £500 towards the cost of the one-day training event.

The group feel the training was very successful and have since produced the report on Voids which will go to the Housing Review Board in September. They are keen to monitor how their recommendations are acted upon and will discuss the effectiveness of the actual report with members of the Review Board to see if there are things they can still do to improve. They feel that the training enabled them to make their report truly independent and to reflect fully on their objectives and findings. They feel they can now produce reports which are in line with how their Housing officers produce their own reports, so that the officers can read and understand the tenants view easily. They felt that this has been a steep learning curve and the production of the report was a good deal more difficult than they expected it to be, especially to remain focused on the relevant subject, rather than bringing in peripheral issue. But, by bringing to the process all they had learnt, they feel that they will gain confidence and ability the more reports they produce.

All six members of the scrutiny panel attended the training, assisted by a staff member.

After the meeting of the Review Board and feedback on the report, they will be considering their next topic for scrutiny. As they are only a small group they have made a decision to look at only one subject at a time.



COVERDALE AND NEWBANK COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION

Ardwick, Manchester

Coverdale and Newbank Community Association is located in the Ardwick ward of Manchester. They are tenants of Eastland Homes. They are voluntary and community group that represents the interests of the residents in the neighbourhood. Their mission is to address local issues in partnership with the housing providers, council, the police and health services – to make things better for local people.

The group attended the Antisocial Behaviour course in February 2012 and subsequently applied for a grant of £420 to help them run an ASB fair and event in November 2012. They used the grant to pay for sessional staff to help with the consultation and to pay for a community artist to work with young people during the event to help them identify their ideas and needs.

They provided food and refreshments and paid for travel where necessary and all the young people were presented with certificates.

They feel they are meeting their intended outcomes from the project:

1. Reduce ASB – they are currently monitoring ASB figures with the police. There was a significant reduction in ASB over the summer period when they carried out a summer programme of events for young people (not funded from this grant but provided as a direct result of them obtaining this grant). Prior to this work, Ardwick had a total of 1407 ASB incidents in the period November 2010 to October 2011.
2. Young People Awareness – the group now feel they know and understand the local young people much better. They are developing a Youth Forum. They are hoping that the outcomes from the summer period work will result in them being able to apply for additional funding from (e.g.) Big Lottery and any funding that is available from local Social Landlords.
3. Joined-up Service Provision – they are now attending a Youth Providers Forum for Ardwick so that the young people on their estate will have greater opportunities for involvement and for accessing funding. They already work with local social landlords, the council, the police and health services.

“The project has been really successful as it has helped us focus on young people in the area and helped us get funding for a full summer programme. The timescales to deliver the project took longer than we expected and the final event (funded by this grant) took place in November.”



"From this project we have lots of data which we will use to develop our work with young people and to seek additional funding."



BEDFORD ROAD NEIGHBOURHOOD RESOURCE CENTRE

This group work with Riverside Housing and with Wirral Partnership Homes. Rock Ferry is about a mile south of Birkenhead on the south side of the Mersey.

The group offers support and assistance to local tenants from a shop-front base in Rock Ferry and deal with all areas including housing, family and children's issues, health, jobs, benefit advice and anything else affecting tenants in the area.

They work in partnership with the above Housing Associations, the local authority, the local police, etc.

The grant of £360 allowed them to hold an open day in a local centre and covered the cost of room hire, hire of tables and chairs, basic refreshments, advertising, etc.

The day was held in February 2012 and was a success in that approx 56 people (mostly social housing tenants, ranging from pensioners to young single parents) dropped in during the day and the group were able to assist a lot of tenants and had several follow-up appointments made.

Three housing agencies attended (handing out leaflets on changes to housing benefit and speaking one to one on personal housing issues, and holding group sessions detailing local changes taking place in the community), as well as community engagement officers, health workers and community support police officers. They also ran a small children's project on the day to enable tenants to go into the sessions while their children were looked after for a short time.

The day was successful in both raising the profile of the group and in helping them gain new volunteers. They are now looking at training for the new volunteers (and for their more experienced volunteers). Some volunteers are already undertaking advice and benefits training.

INDEPENDENT COMPLAINTS PANEL FOR COBALT TENANTS (ICPCT)

Liverpool

The group attended *Tenant Scrutiny – Getting Started* in November 2012.

The ICPCT act as the 'independent designated panel' for social housing tenants of Cobalt Housing. The panel provide a review stage for complaints that have exhausted the landlord's complaints process, forwarding complaints that cannot be resolved amicably onto the Housing Ombudsman. The group applied for funding from Trafford Hall to assist in the start up of the panel and to support a marketing campaign to increase panel participation.



The grant was used to produce a leaflet which was distributed to all tenants via Cobalt's quarterly rent statement introducing the ICPCT, outlining the complaints procedure and detailing how the panel could assist tenants who were not satisfied with the outcome of their complaint. Funds were also utilised to help the group with initial start-up costs. The group purchased a phone, stationary and a banner which they use to promote themselves at landlord events. They had a stall at Cobalt's Fun Day and spoke with many tenants who approached them throughout the day about how ICPCT serve the community. As a new group they recognised the importance of gaining further training and the remainder of the grant has been used alleviate travelling expenses for panel members attending relevant training courses to boost their confidence, skill and expertise. The group also received match funding from the landlord which has been used to purchase further training for group members.



While the group have gained several new members as the result of their marketing campaign they have found turnover to be significant commenting that recruitment is likely to be an ongoing requirement as well as training for new recruits. The panel is due to review it's progress shortly and are keen to develop further and they are considering becoming the 'designated person' for the whole of the Symphony Group and potentially for other social housing providers in the locality.

March 2013

KIRKLEES FEDERATION OF TENANT AND RESIDENT ASSOCIATIONS

Huddersfield

Members of the group attended *Diverse Representation* in February 2013.

The Kirklees Federation of Tenant and Resident Associations (KFTRA) is an umbrella organisation for 90 tenants and Residents groups in Kirklees. The group work at all levels, from tenant-led scrutiny to board level involvement. KFTRA applied for funding to hold a one day event to encourage more young people to get involved in tenant related activities including decision making at participation level. The grant funding was used to publicise the event, hire marquees and provide limited refreshments. The event was held in conjunction with TRA's and Young People's services in Beaumont Park.



Partner organisations provided incentive activities to attract people to the event such as Bushcraft, climbing, African Drumming workshops, arts and crafts stalls. Information stalls were manned by KFTRA, Fusion Housing and Kirklees Neighbourhood Housing. The event was very well attended with over one hundred children present. Whilst young people were enjoying the activities available, volunteers helped them to complete engagement questionnaires. In return young people were given an information bag with contact forms inside.

The group found the event to be highly beneficial stating that it helped the organisation to:

- Raise their profile
- Raise awareness of their work and the work of their partners
- Engage with young people to find out what they are interested in and how they want to be involved in their communities
- Gain new youth contacts
- Broadened their contacts in the community and with partner agencies

The group stated "*it has raised our profile as a tenant movement not only with partner agencies but with many young people that were involved. These young people, we hope, will feel incentivised to plan similar activities in their own area or at least work with community groups that already exist.*"

KFTRA have shared the findings from their consultation questionnaires with partner agencies and other tenant groups in the area. Young people who



completed engagement questionnaires are going to be informed of local meetings and activities that they can be involved in. The group are aware of two young people currently working with TRAs in their area and are keen to encourage their new youth contacts to get involved in similar ways. The group are eager to build upon the successes of the engagement day and are planning a follow up event next year to get more people involved from other parts of Kirklees. Their commitment to getting younger people involved remains and they will take the lessons that they have learnt from running this event forward.

"We did hope for more forms to be completed but the day was more popular than we initially thought and volunteers who were supposed to be consulting with the youngsters were so busy helping on stalls. Next time we will plan extra volunteer time for this as the exercise was worthwhile. Youngsters really do want to be involved."

March 2013

BEACONSFIELD AND PEEL AVENUE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

Birkenhead

Members of the group attended *Making Meetings Work* in August 2012.

The group are a local tenant association, working with other tenant organisations within the Umbrella, an overarching structure of all Wirral Partnership Homes (now Magenta Living) resident and community groups. The Umbrella is the main consultative body used to discuss any proposed operational changes within the landlord. It is also a networking group for residents ensuring good practice is shared and members are supported.

Beaconsfield and Peel Avenue Residents Association were keen to hold more events to increase membership and the opportunities for involvement by the community. They felt their engagement strategy would benefit from the security of insurance cover and so applied for Public Liability Insurance (PLI).

Anyone living in the Beaconsfield and Peel Avenue estates can join the group and attend meetings. They actively promote membership but want to expand this in a series of events once obtaining PLI. The group was awarded £316.44 for the purchase of PLI and it was hoped that the grant would facilitate a growing sense of community cohesion and increased safety for both volunteers and those attending group meetings and community events.



Since obtaining the PLI the group has reached out to all residents on the estate by posting leaflets and by word of mouth. The chair person writes "We live in one of the most deprived areas of the country. I have seen some residents who suffer from mental health issues and disabilities joining out activity nights who have welcomed the support and encouragement from other members"

"Our Wednesday night activities and Committee Meetings have become a success and are gaining more people every week. We are averaging 20+ each Wednesday."

"We have been able to encourage more people to attend resident activities. We have a survey which residents are encouraged to complete for us to identify activities residents will participant in. The outcome was to bring the whole community together and to create a community spirit. Greater attendance of residents, during activities proves this is a success."

“There has been excitement from the committee, and the community at the prospect of obtaining PLI, and the sense of security it offers us during activities. There is a real sense of community togetherness with more residents willing to get involved to make it a success.”

While the group are very positive about their activities and achievements they experienced several difficulties in carrying out their project relating to obtaining access to the centre they use, an interim election and also initially in obtaining the PLI. The group now however are pushing forward, exploring new projects to find out what the community wants and are busy fund raising to ensure they are able to purchase PLI again next year.

December 2013

PAGES WALK TENANTS ASSOCIATION

London

Members of the group attended *Local Resolution of Complaints* in February 2013.

The group are a local tenant association and also members of the London Federation of Tenants Associations for Guinness South. Having attended training at Trafford Hall the group wanted to take the information they had learned from the course back to their community. Pages Walk Tenants Association applied for funding to facilitate networking with the London Federation of Guinness Tenant's Associations. They hoped to increase participation from local tenants by creating Facebook and twitter profiles. The group were granted funding for a laptop, stationary and limited refreshments.

Since receiving funding the group have given a presentation around the resolution of local complaints for The Federation and subsequently visited four Tenants and Residents Associations, Snowfield, Lever Street, Cunnington and Victoria Park, to provide follow up sessions where they distributed leaflets that they had produced about complaints procedures. The group received very good feedback from their talks and a few estates have joined the Federation Group. When completing their monitoring forms the group were hopeful that more would join in time. The group have found the laptop that was funded to be of significantly beneficial, aiding quick and easy communication.

After a second phase of monitoring, the group have unfortunately disbanded due to ill health and old age. The group are continually grateful for the grant they received and have passed their equipment on to a similar group within the area.

December 2013

WOODCHURCH TRUST

Wirral, Cheshire

Members of the group attended *Committee Skills* in February 2013.

The group are a local tenant association, who strive to promote tenants and resident's rights and good housing conditions. Woodchurch Trust seeks to provide a forum for consultation and negotiation with Wirral Partnership Homes, now Magenta Living, and other parties working to bring improvements to their community. Central to the group's ethos is their mission to encourage the participation of every resident in the area, in particular to promote equal opportunities for all tenants.



Having attended *Committee Skills* training at Trafford Hall, the group used grant funding to seek new ways of facilitating participation with tenants who had significant barriers to participation. The group disclosed that the benefits of this project had "gone further" than the intended outcomes set out in their application. Housebound members attend meetings through Skype enabling them to take an active and meaningful role. Where the group had envisaged that this project would enable them to keep more tenants informed of Woodchurch Trust's work, they have found that the tenant community jumped on the opportunity to interact with the group virtually. The hardware supplied through the grant has facilitated better communication with the community and their partners. The group have seen dramatic increase in membership with up to 400 tenants opting to be regularly kept informed of the groups projects. In addition the group publish a magazine, *The Woodchurch Messenger*, which is disseminated to all tenants and residents on the estate quarterly. Tenants and partner agencies are now more aware of the aims of the Woodchurch Trust and are better informed about the concerns of tenants and residents.

The equipment supplied has supported the group's meetings which are vital for the continuation of the group, its management of existing projects and in the initiation of new developments.

The Ford Way Project, an on going venture, brings a number of benefits to local people and the local area. The group worked with volunteers to improve the image of their estate; bringing a derelict site back to use for the community and improving the appearance of roundabouts. The project aims to improved community cohesion and reduced anti-social behaviour and has so far been welcomed by the community and landlord.



The group are currently working with the landlord to set up and One Stop Shop on the estate and have received great interest from potential users and service providers. The One Stop Shop which seeks to help tenants and residents in job searching, completion of application forms and updating CVs. The group have requested a direct line from the shop to the landlord and are particularly excited about not only signposting but also assisting tenants to access relevant landlord services.

March 2014

MARCHES HOUSING ASSOCIATION – SCRUTINY PANEL

Kidderminster

Members of the group attended *Tenant Scrutiny – A Deeper Involvement* in March 2013.

The scrutiny group work together to monitor and make recommendations about landlord services at management and board level. Having completed their first review on Grounds Maintenance, panel members came to Trafford Hall seeking more in depth scrutiny training. They left with renewed confidence and were keen for other scrutiny members to receive similar training. Due to ill health



and family commitments many other members were unable to travel and therefore could not access Trafford Hall training. The group opted to use the grant fund to provide further scrutiny training in their own locality. The training was very well received and helped new recruits to gain an insight into the work of a tenant panel dedicated to scrutiny. The information relayed was highly relevant and the training helped the panel to work together more effectively.

“This type of training, given by a professional, enabled them [the group] to see the bigger picture – that scrutiny is in the interests for all.” Scrutiny Panel Representative

Since receiving the training the group have gone on to produce a second scrutiny review on Grounds Maintenance Charges and are waiting to find out if their recommendations will be taken on. The group have now commenced their third review on Planned Maintenance for Bathrooms and Kitchens. The group commented that not only had the training helped the group produced their further scrutiny reports but they had seen improved communication with the Housing Association. More people are now aware of the work of the scrutiny panel and a greater number of younger tenants are getting involved.

“The grant was a really good way to ensure that new-comers had a professional approach to what scrutiny is and means to both the tenants and the housing association.” Scrutiny Panel Representative

The group are keen to continue their scrutiny development. They are seeking further training and are hoping to visit other scrutiny panels to compare best practice and progress forward.

April 2014

NEW BAGULEY TENANT AND RESIDENT ASSOCIATION

Baguley, Wythenshawe, Manchester

The group attended Partnerships for Panels in June 2013.

They are a local tenant association, working with other tenant organisations and groups across Wythenshawe. Their landlord is Parkway Green Housing, part of Wythenshawe Community Housing Group.

They were working in partnership with ten other tenant organisations and other groups in the Wythenshawe area to develop Wythenshawe Together Community Day event. The event is run by tenants for tenants. The groups involved included a local youth panel, Royal Oak Community Group, Butcher Lane T&RA, Brooklands Community Spirit Youth Group, Shenton T.A, Newall Green T&RA, Royle Green T&RA, Northern Moor T&RA, New Baguley T&RA, Bideford T&RA, Benchill Community Centre, Woodhouse Park Lifestyle Centre, Wythenshawe Real Lives, Brooklands T&RA. Also involved were agencies such as Age UK, the police, fire service, housing trusts, benefits agencies and landlords.

There are approximately 20,000 homes covered by the Group, so approximately 40,000 tenants across the whole of Wythenshawe.

The group applied for funding for 30 chairs (£300) to put in the main marquee to allow older tenants somewhere to sit down during the event. The chairs will be used across Wythenshawe tenant groups for meetings and events.

Over 4000 people attended the event and it was a great success. There were a lot of activities and displays during the day including local dance groups, a brass band, birds of prey, zumba sessions, etc, etc. The group feel that the event was successful for them, separately, as they had a lot of interest at their stall and they will know after their AGM in early September whether that interest has been maintained and people are willing to get involved.

MYATTS FIELD NORTH RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION AND PFI MONITORING BOARD

London

Members of the group attended *Tenant Scrutiny – Getting Involved* in July 2013.

The group work closely monitoring the PFI (private finance initiative), scrutinising Regenter and Lambeth Council services for the tenants and residents of Myatts Field North. Having attended training at Trafford Hall the group applied for funding for a projector to support their delivery of training and when presenting scrutiny findings. Since receiving funding the group have used the projector at several events to both advertise the work of the group to other tenants and in more formal presentations to Lambeth Council and Regenter.



A group representative commented that *“the projector is an excellent tool in supporting the scrutiny work we are involved in, namely bringing Lambeth and Regenter to account for their delivery of the contract.”*

“We have completed a report on residents’ experience of the refurbishment. This report is over 30 pages. We have collected a database of photos providing evidence of disrepair or defects, which we can then present to the community for feedback on their own personal experience as well as to challenge Lambeth and Regenter in meetings.”

“The grant has been a great support. It is always great to have some financial support, which is very thin on the ground anyway for an association like us to carry out scrutiny exercise. In this case, it helped us to obtain one of the tools that are necessary for a more professional, a more attractive and accessible approach to our work.”

The group have found that more people are engaging with the scrutiny work that they carry out because they are now able to give more accessible presentations. *“Not everyone likes reading long reports or can be listening attentively to long presentations without some visual support.”*

The group are keen to continue the scrutiny service they offer and are looking for more ways to involve their community.

April 2014



Tenant Futures

If you would like further information on our courses or grant programme please contact the training team on 01244300246 or email training@traffordhall.com

