



North Warwickshire
Borough Council



TENANT INVOLVEMENT 2016/17

Outcomes report

Introduction

Welcome to North Warwickshire Borough Council's Tenant Involvement Report. The report has been produced with input from members of the Borough Wide Tenants' Forum and shows the impact of tenant involvement throughout 2016/17. North Warwickshire Borough Council tenants and leaseholders can make a real difference by getting involved and are offered various involvement options.

Tenant Involvement

North Warwickshire Borough Council is committed to listening to the views of their tenants in how services are delivered. Tenant involvement gives an opportunity to share views on issues that are important to you and your community and can also have an influence on the way services are delivered and improved to meet your housing needs.

Impact Assessment

An impact assessment measures and evaluates the effect that tenant involvement has had and the difference it makes to services provided by the Council.

The report is produced for:

Tenants – as it provides information on changes that have occurred due to tenant involvement.

North Warwickshire Borough Council – as it helps us to evaluate areas that have benefited from tenant involvement and the impact that involvement has had on housing services.

Partners – as it illustrates the benefits of partnership working and continuous improvement.

It identifies what has changed as a result of tenant involvement and the impact tenant involvement has had.

Borough Wide Tenants' Forum BWTF

Purpose

The Borough Wide Tenants' Forum, established in 1999, is an independent body of tenants who represent all tenants in North Warwickshire. Members of the Forum help to shape policy and decisions that affect all council tenants. Meetings offer an opportunity to provide feedback information and deliver reports. Members may also be involved in Community Panels in their local areas.

They will:

- Review and monitor the Tenant Partnership Agreement and action plan
- Participate in the information of new policies and service standards
- Monitor and oversee tenant scrutiny activities
- Participate in service reviews
- Participate in tenant inspection programmes
- Monitor the Tenant Participation Budget

Outcomes

- Contributing to the review of the Borough Wide Tenants Forum constitution and Community Panel constitution
- Monitoring the Grounds Maintenance standard and enhanced services
- Attending the ARCH and TPAS annual conference
- Contributing to the Tenants Link Newsletter
- Assisting to develop the gardening competition criteria and helping to choose the winning entries
- Tenant Scrutiny work giving consideration to a third scrutiny project
- Developing the Tenant Partnership Agreement and Tenants' Forum Forward Work Plan
- Reviewing void property standards and rent collection procedures



Pat Cotterill Chair of the
Borough Wide Tenants' Forum



John Holt Vice Chair of the
Borough Wide Tenant Forum

Communal Room Activities

Purpose

We encourage the use of communal rooms across the Borough. There are twenty two rooms offering activities that are organised and run solely by tenants. A wide range of activities are on offer, these include coffee mornings, social evenings, indoor bowls, prize bingo, craft club, history group and French lessons. Special occasions are also celebrated with friends in the communal rooms.

Outcomes

- Community activities offer an opportunity to meet with neighbours for company and a friendly chat in a pleasant and comfortable environment
- Improved community cohesion/community spirit
- Build good neighbour relations



Meadow Croft - bingo session



Hudson Avenue - Queens 90th Birthday Celebrations



Derek Avenue – Christmas 2016



Rowland Court – indoor bowls

Tenant Improvement Groups TIG

Four service areas are covered by Tenant Improvement Groups. They review the performance of the Housing Service to identify areas for improvement through the eyes of the customer.

Purpose

The Maintenance TIG monitors all aspects of the repairs and improvements service. This includes performance generally, procurement of works and planned programmes.

The Performance TIG looks at performance figures and achievement targets. The Forward Work Plan looks to include the review of the Asset Management Plan, tracking the 30 year Business Plan, Bench Marking and Best Practice, Policies and Strategies including Housing Strategy and Homelessness Strategy.

The Neighbourhood TIG acts to ensure that the neighbourhoods, where our properties are located, are kept to a good standard by providing an active presence, acting quickly to resolve issues and promoting community engagement.

Tenancy and Allocations TIG considers the lettings and rent service as well as how we manage tenancies.

Outcomes

- The Tenant Improvement Groups were involved in several one off pieces of work during the first six months of the year including involvement in the gardening competition criteria and helping to choose the winning entries.
- Assisting with the review of the void standard and rent collection procedures.
- Following an away day with TPAS it has been decided to incorporate work covered by the Tenant Improvement Groups with the Borough Wide Tenants Forum. This will reflect in the Borough Wide Tenants Forum Forward Plan for 2017/18.

Tenants Scrutiny Panel

Purpose

A Tenant Scrutiny Group will decide on a service to use as a project for scrutiny. Their findings and recommendations for improvement are put into a report produced for Senior Management. Recommendations that are implemented as a result of the report will improve performance and accountability of the selected service area and also improve customer satisfaction.

Outcomes

The Scrutiny Panel worked on two projects the window cleaning service and the cleaning service in communal rooms, communal stairs and landings. Both projects were completed and this year consideration was given for a third scrutiny topic. It was decided that the next project would be to look at reporting a repair within the Housing Repairs Division. Scrutiny work on this topic is still ongoing.

Neighbourhood Visits

Purpose

We recognise the importance of maintaining the areas where you live to a good standard and aim to keep neighbourhoods clean, tidy and nice places to live. To enable us to keep neighbourhoods in good order we organise a schedule of Neighbourhood Visits to look at local areas. Neighbourhood Visits offer an excellent opportunity to meet with a Neighbourhood Warden and other officers for an inspection of local areas to help identify environmental improvements, discuss neighbourhood issues and highlight any areas of concern.

Twenty seven areas were included in the schedule of visits which run from April to November 2016. Throughout this period, eighty six visits were completed where we aimed to identify issues such as litter, graffiti, vandalism, dog fouling, fly tipping, broken street furniture, uneven or damaged footpaths, parking issues and untidy gardens. Untidy gardens still produce the highest amount of complaints with a large number identified on visits.

Outcomes

- Issues identified during a Neighbourhood Visit can be actioned accordingly
- Proactive and early intervention will avoid issues from worsening to ensure local areas are cleaner, safer and tidier places where people choose to live
- Joint inspections develop improved relations between the Council and tenants

Community Panels

Purpose

There are nine Community Panels across the Borough. These are active in Atherstone at Alder and Heather Court, and in Hartshill, Kingsbury, Mancetter, Old Arley, Polesworth and Water Orton. We are currently working with two new panels in Dordon and Alexandra Court in Atherstone.

Community Panels offer an opportunity for local residents to meet to discuss local neighbourhood issues, identify areas of concern, agree priorities and service improvements and organise community activities. Each Community Panel has an allocated pot of money that is calculated based on the number of council properties within the area. Environmental improvement bids are submitted by the Community Panel and are funded from the allocated money. Suggestions and ideas for improvements are shared during Community Panel meetings. This year, tenants have been working hard to achieve further improvements to local areas.

Outcomes

- Improved neighbourhoods resulting from Community Panels
- Areas of concern identified during Community Panel meetings can be actioned, making a big difference to local areas
- Environmental improvements enhance the appearance of the neighbourhood bringing a sense of pride to local people and encourage community cohesion



Old Arley Community Panel – parking lines to restrict parking



Kingsbury – installation of bollards at Jubilee Court to prevent vehicles from parking and damaging the grassed area



Alder & Heather Court community garden project

Other Community Panel Environmental bids include:

- Materials for ongoing work to the community garden project at Alder & Heather Court
- Replenishing flower troughs and tubs at Arley
- Alpines to one of the raised beds at Abbey Green Polesworth
- Service charge for CCTV at Kingsbury
- Notice board at Water Orton
- Replacement planters and plants at Mancetter
- Planter and trellis at Hartshill

Local Tenants Meetings

Purpose

Tenants' Meetings are held in areas where Community Panels do not exist. They are informal meetings giving tenants an opportunity to meet with staff, Police and Councillors. Any concerns or local issues can be reported during the meeting and actioned accordingly giving a proactive response. Environmental improvements can also be discussed to obtain tenants' comments, feedback and suggestions. Where possible, meetings are linked to Neighbourhood Visits. This is to enable identified issues to be inspected during a visit on the following day.

Various issues have been highlighted during Tenants Meetings including overgrown and overhanging trees, dog fouling on footpaths, damaged street furniture, uneven footpaths, misuse of bin stores, parking issues and queries relating to kitchen replacements and external painting programme.

Outcomes

- Improved communication to tenants
- Provide information and offer customer feedback
- Promote Tenant Involvement
- Improve community cohesion and community spirit

Tenants Link Newsletter

Purpose

Newsletters are produced twice a year to keep tenants informed on Housing Services. Information in a newsletter focuses on the work of the Borough Wide Tenants' Forum and includes community projects and good news stories.

Outcomes

- Newsletters provide advice to tenants on important issues, service performance and changes in service delivery, it also informs on key issues
- Tenant involvement is publicised in the newsletter and offers an opportunity to encourage more tenants to become involved
- Involve tenants in the design and content of the newsletter

Telephone Surveys

Purpose

Telephone surveys obtain feed-back from tenants on their experience with the lettings service and complaints procedure.

Outcomes

- Information gathered from the telephone surveys is recorded to monitor the lettings service
- Complaints also continue to be monitored to obtain feedback.

Tenant Surveys & Questionnaires

Purpose

Surveys and questionnaires are to obtain feedback, gain views and comments from tenants on housing services. This enables tenants to have their say on the services provided.

Outcomes

- There were 1400 questionnaires mailed out to tenants in September 2016. 529 questionnaires were completed and returned.
- Results from surveys and questionnaires are communicated back to tenants through the Annual Report and feedback is used to understand the perception of tenants with the delivery of housing services
- New 'tenant settling in visit surveys' are conducted four weeks after the tenant has moved into a property. These are carried out to gain feedback enabling us to improve future service delivery that is provided by the Housing Division.

Training and Information Sessions

Purpose

Training and information sessions are offered to members of the Borough Wide Tenants' Forum and Community Panels to share information and to gain a better understanding on chosen topics.

Outcomes

- Tenants Away day - TPAS delivered training to help forum members to reflect on a new approach to attract new members
- Reviewing the constitutions with an aim of simplifying the documents and to clearly clarify the roles of the Borough Wide Tenants Forum and Community Panels
- Improved understanding of issues relating to tenant participation

Tenant Consultations

Purpose

Consultations are arranged to provide information and obtain feedback on specific subjects. They provide an opportunity to listen to tenants and obtain their views.

Outcomes

- A consultation at Alder & Heather Court took place in August 2016 to provide information on proposed improvement works to the blocks of flats that will be implemented over an 18 month period.
 - Tenants living in Chancery Court were invited to a consultation regarding roofing work to the blocks of flats.
 - A consultation took place in February 2017 to discuss proposals to change the lettings policy for the sheltered scheme properties at Stewart Court.
 - Improve relationships by involving tenants
-