

Tpas Independent Advisor Service Charter

This is a guide for tenants, residents and communities who are working with Tpas Independent Advisors during major changes affecting the future of their homes, management, ownership or area regeneration. The aims of this guide is to set out the standards that Tpas Independent Advisers offer, the principles that underpin our service and what residents can expect of the Tpas service.

This Charter was developed with tenants and residents who attended the Tpas National Conference in 2012. This group provided strong feedback on the essential requirements that residents need of an excellent Independent Adviser service during management change proposals affecting their housing, housing rights and tenancies.

Tpas Principles & Values

Tpas is committed wholeheartedly to being;

Independent
Impartial
Honest
Open
Transparent

and promises to deliver;

Tenant & Community Empowerment
Reliability

with;

Integrity and Diplomacy

Tpas Standards for Independent Advice

Our 12 Core Standards;

1. We will always provide a free telephone service - details of which will be published alongside the relevant project information
2. Community and Tenant Representatives will always be provided with direct contact information so that they can easily make connections with our advisers outside of planned meetings and project activities
3. Our Advisers will always take decisions with representatives, thoroughly advising on the pro's and con's of different approaches and decisions
4. Our Advisers will provide good quality materials to help representatives build up a 'Bank of Knowledge' and references
5. Our Advisers will provide representative groups with monthly updates (at least) on the outcomes of consultations, discuss any changes that are required and highlight any areas of lesser engagement and appropriate targets for these
6. Our Advisers will always be open and transparent about contact they have with the council, landlord or other professional bodies involved in the project and will provide documented evidence of this
7. Our Advisers will always be respectful, polite and courteous in their contract with all involved parties



8. Our Advisers will always be sensitive to individual needs in the provision of information and in the delivery of meetings and activities
9. Our Advisers will always ensure that the Governments Guidance is adhered to and ensure that the process is safeguarded
10. Our Project Managers will provide clear and transparent information monthly (at least) on the use of funding and resources in relation to the project so that representatives can ensure good value for money on behalf of the wider community
11. Our Advisers will always ensure that differences are valued and will promote inclusive involvement from all areas of the community. They will do this by highlighting potential areas of discrimination, harassment, bullying or exclusion
12. Our Advisers will always be reliable in terms of communication and attendance

“One Size Does Not Fit All”

Independent Advisors need to realise “one size does not fit all”

The residents we consulted with were insistent that the Independent Adviser role needs to be agreed and renegotiated at regular intervals within each community or project and that there isn't a model that will suit all. It was also said that the unique local circumstances and individual needs of the community, the Council, local landlords and regeneration partners should determine the scope of the work that the Independent Adviser will carry out and reduce this over time to mirror the reduced need for support.

The Role of the Independent Advisor

The role of the Independent Adviser covers a wide spectrum, including but not inclusive of;

- Empowering and supporting the development of strong representative frameworks that are accountable, accessible and transparent
- Validating and checking that all processes and guidelines are being adhered to, with routine feedback given to key tenants and residents
- Strategic direction on community engagement when working with the Council and other involved parties and providing good quality advice on how to ensure an inclusive process
- Factual analysis of information ensuring that it is published for communities and is factually correct, fair and unbiased in its' content and highlighting and supporting representatives where it is or could be misinterpreted
- Supporting the development of productive community and professional relationships by building and helping to manage these relationships with partners to bring deliverable and sustainable community-led processes
- Providing good quality capacity building through consistent approaches that are flexible and productive in their use by associated parties to ensure resident empowerment and involvement
- Ensuring that decision-making frameworks are effective in making good use of any feedback given by the community in a model that suits the parties involved
- Responsive to collective and individual needs by providing options, alternatives and special arrangements



- Organising and providing good practice information, visits and activities that empower the community into investigating alternative options

Standards of Tpas Advisors

Personal and Professional Standards of Tpas Advisors

1. Our Advisors will never make promises they cannot deliver
2. Our Advisors will never attend or be part of any exclusive meetings or discussions that cannot be openly tabled or minuted with the inclusion of all involved parties
3. Our Advisors will never offer their own personal opinions and will always ensure that the advice they provide is unbiased, open and transparent
4. Our Advisors will never enter into gossip, criticism or other personal conversations about any involved party
5. Our Advisors will not behave in a temperamental manner with any involved parties or professional bodies
6. Our Advisors will not accept gifts or other benefits as a result of their association or relationship with involved parties or professional bodies
7. Our Advisors will always maintain high quality professional standards in the delivery of their work whilst representing Tpas
8. Where difficulties may arise, our Advisors will seek to resolve problems quickly and amicably and ensure the Tpas Project Manager is kept informed at all time
9. Where difficulties emerge that cannot be quickly and satisfactorily resolved our Advisors will always ensure that the Tpas Project Manager is informed, who may intervene and present the Tpas Complaints Policy if necessary

