

TENANT ENGAGEMENT EXPERTS

**BOOK NOW
FOR NEXT
YEAR**

11/12th July
Chesford Grange,
Warwickshire



national tenant conference

Review 2017



For the latest goings-on:



The Tpas experience:

Jenny Osbourne, Tpas chief executive gives her overview of the conference.

Being in the room with the largest gathering of social housing tenants in the country last month, it was impossible not to sense a shift in feeling about the tenant engagement agenda. It was almost palpable.

The Brexit vote, snap election and then of course the response to the tragic event at Grenfell Tower has meant that social housing homes and tenants are back within the social conscious again, community engagement is being talked about as a priority, not a luxury.

The National Tenant Engagement Conference 2017 reflected this change of mood in a powerful way. There was a renewed surge of interest in our Tenant View campaign, a platform we're offering to raise the profile of the tenant voice.



We saw from the popularity of our workshops that our attendees' interest had widened from wanting to know all about the latest data and digital insights to now wanting to use this technology to get their stories out.

In our closing session we heard from a young tenant who summarised his conference experience. He stood and told the room he felt 'transformed and confident' from our conference to finally trust his own experience and expertise as an informed and involved tenant.

He now believes he has a voice that will be heard and respected. His words inspired the room, leaving us all convinced about how we can all be working even harder to improve services and maximise the value of engagement when we go back to our organisations.

Our satisfaction scores from delegates at our conference are, as usual, exceptionally high, but for me there can be no better feedback from delegates.

You came, you listened and you felt changed by the experience. Let's get engagement back as a business priority where it belongs.

Bring on National Tenant Engagement Conference 2018!

If you have any questions regarding this document or if we can help in any other way, call us on **0161 868 3500** or email **info@tpas.org.uk**

Keynote speaker highlights

Day one keynote speaker: Nigel Wilson, WCHG Chief Executive

On the first day of the conference we welcomed our inspirational keynote speaker, Nigel Wilson, from Wythenshawe Community Housing Group (WCHG). With a background as a cooperative housing tenant before becoming a chief executive, Nigel talked about the need for more social housing and gave an overview of his own personal critical reasons for listening and involving tenants to improve services.

Watch this post-speech video interview with Nigel to hear more about his views on resident engagement.

Watch



Interview with Nigel Wilson

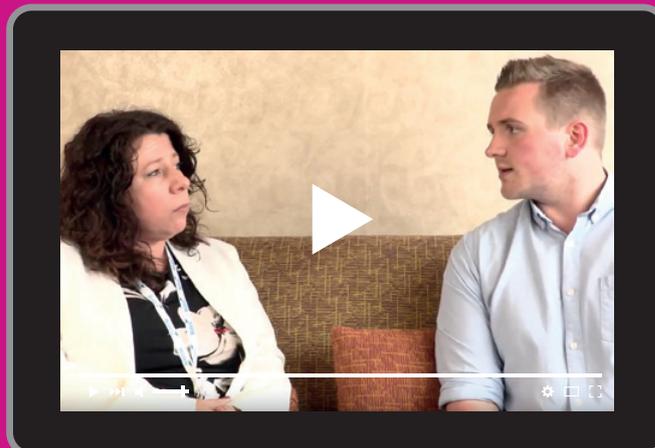
www.youtube.com/watch?v=b-nVV3izPUU

Day two keynote speaker: Alex Blow, Youth Marketing Executive, Fourteen 19

Our second keynote speaker certainly ruffled a few feathers as he challenged the room to think about why a young person would want to be involved. Alex talked through his 'golden rules' for groups and organisations to consider before trying to motivate young people to be involved in a project or shaping a service.

Watch our interview with Alex after he came off the stage and talks to Jenny about the role of young people in shaping housing services.

Watch



Alex Blow, Youth Marketing Executive, Fourteen 19

www.youtube.com/watch?v=O_JRB1AKF8A

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Debate sessions:

Over the two days we hosted four debates to discuss today's hot topics. Click on the play button below to watch back our interviews with our debate panellists.

Debate 1: What impact does housing policy have on communities?

Watch



Alison Inman, TPAS Director interviews Housing Diversity Network Chief Executive, Sallie Bridgen

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Orow4dl7BU8

Watch



Interview with John Bibby, Chief Executive of ARCH

www.youtube.com/watch?v=ov9jGvjtu_s

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Debate sessions:

Debate 2: Will Social Housing Tenants Ever Get a Fair Press?

Why is there such a poor public view of social housing tenants and communities? These are the sorts of questions that were raised at this debate. Take part by clicking on the play button below and see the debate in full flow, then visit www.benefitstosociety.co.uk to add your thoughts to address the stigma social housing tenants experience.



Watch



www.periscope.tv/w/1OyKABjWgpLGb

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Debate sessions:



Debate 3: What makes a great community?

What do communities need to be effective and successful. We asked these questions and more at this high energy debate. Press the button on the image below to watch our debate chair, John Giesen discuss the outcomes of the debate in this interview.

Watch



Interview with John Giesen, Tpas chair

www.youtube.com/watch?v=80pVXC525G8

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Debate sessions:



Debate 4: Will engagement be all about digital in the future?

Digital engagement is changing at a pace but will face to face events and meetings still be relevant in the future? Catch up on our interview with Suzi Robinson, debate panel member by pressing the watch button below.

Watch



Suzi Robinson, Adactus Housing Group

www.youtube.com/watch?v=Qc2rS3_07i4

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Delegate experiences:



Phil Parramore – Tenant from Community Gateway Association

I was privileged to be able to attend my first National Tenant Engagement Conference having become an involved tenant for Community Gateway in March 2017.

The conference gave me opportunities to learn more about my fellow action group members and Community Gateway staff attending and also to network and learn from a host of involved tenants and housing associations nationally.

Although I was able to stay for only one day out of the two the agenda was packed full of great keynote speakers and engaging workshops and I feel that I learned much.

Regrettably there was a backdrop of sadness and contemplation about the recent tragedy at Grenfell Tower, but also stressing the importance of tenant led engagement that will maximise opportunities for success in the sector.

In just one day, I learned about the Tenant Engagement survey and its findings, the issues surrounding digital engagement of tenants and residents in a virtual world, but also maintaining real life conversations that provide the human touch. The conference stressed the importance of having real conversations with real people, which demand empathy, compassion and respect.

A constantly changing world

Change and the need for change was a common theme in the conference. We are not just building houses. We are building places for communities to be involved in and our attendance at the conference is because we care, we desire change and we want to make a difference for better futures. Our existence as Housing Associations is to provide Homes, Services and Places to support this agenda.

We need to be open to conversations that ask the question “What should we be doing?” Learning how to connect with residents, being prepared to listen to them, Learn from them and discuss with them. We need to engage with tenants and residents on topics such as celebrating our communities, collaboration, accountability and being participatory.

Key social, political and economic issues discussed at the conference included:

So with a range of issues to be considered, addressed and effectively managed, it's going to be a busy period ahead. I am excited about and looking forward to playing my part as an involved tenant, helping to work with a wide range of engaged tenants and Community Gateway staff and stakeholders to help shape the future direction.



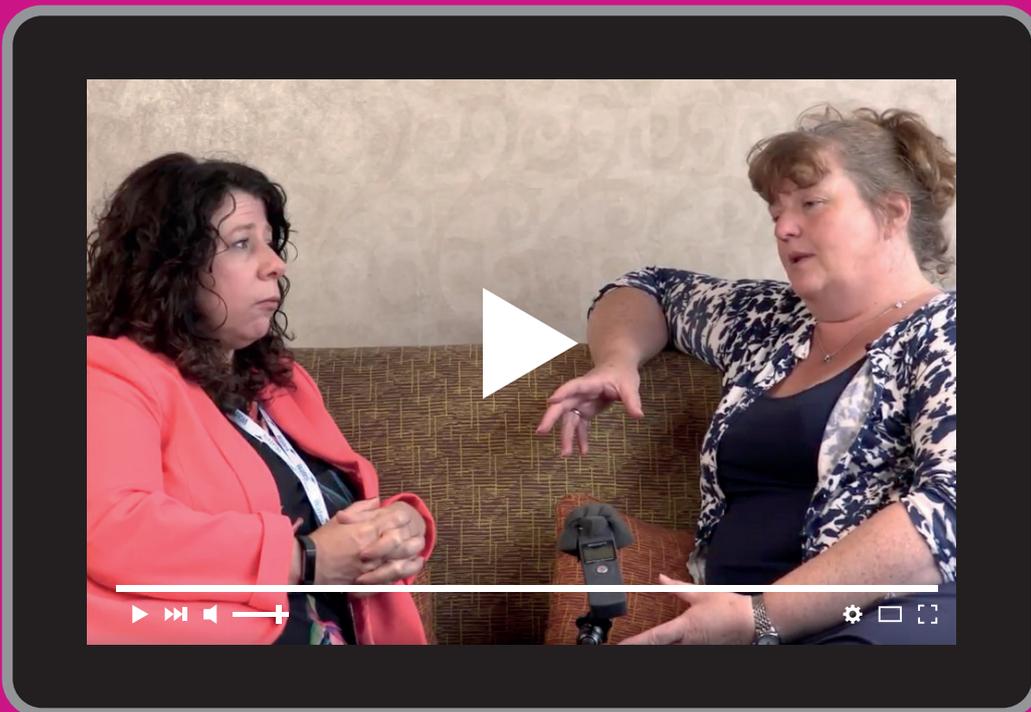
Delegate experiences:



Adele Rae, involved tenant with Leeds and Yorkshire Housing Association

We caught up with Adele after watching the day one keynote speech delivered by Nigel Wilson. Hit the play button below to watch Adele's interview for her thoughts on the conference and the future of resident engagement.

Watch



Involved tenant, Adele Rae, talks about the tenant engagement agenda and her experience of the conference

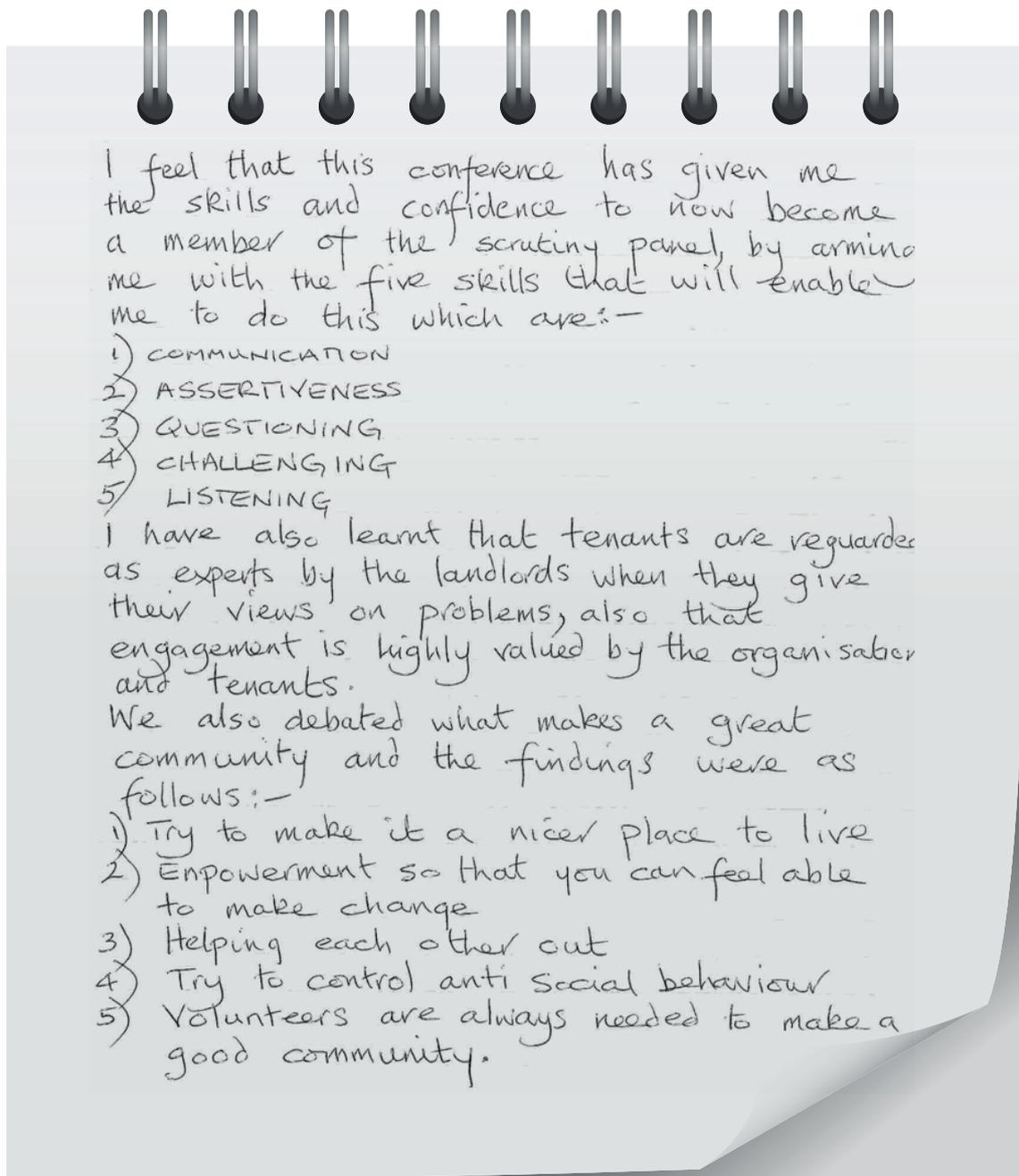
www.youtube.com/watch?v=5gvSYWxXB4M

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Delegate experiences:

“Volunteers are always needed in the community”

Tina Dick, an involved tenant from Oxford City Council kindly jotted down some notes on what the conference experience was like for her.



Delegate experiences:

'Tenant on Tour' the Oxford City Council engagement conference experience

We asked Simon Warde, Tenant Involvement Manager at Oxford City Council to share his experience of attending the Tpas National Tenant Engagement Conference 2017.



Wednesday 12th July

At 07:45am the Oxford City Council Tenant Involvement team and nine excited tenants set off from the city centre on route to the Chesford Grange Hotel where we take tenants out on a mini bus to learn how their services are run in great detail. In advance of the conference, Amy Weller from the team had already made bus wheels and a bus stop sign as props.

On the day, Kieron Keeble (pictured left) welcomed the guests by handing out bus tickets aka bingo cards while wearing a bus conductors hat. Once on our imaginary bus, we showed our guests silent video footage of some of the Oxford City Council projects, while we explained how the team and our tenants influenced the authorities corporate objectives. Our guests then hopped off the imaginary bus and we run through an example of one of in house training courses. This consisted of bowl decorating by the teams qualified trainer Justine Longford. With paint and brushes in hand, we casually posed a series of housing related questions to our guests, to source their views and opinions. The workshop draw to an end with a speedy round of bingo delivered Steve Speight our tenant Quiz Master. Before packing up, we managed to swap contact details with our peers from Luton Council and Red Kite Housing, so are looking forward to meeting up with them again soon.

After leaving the Avon Room, we bumped into our tenants who were enthused to tell us about the workshops they had attended that afternoon and present us with the ream of notes they had taken. It was already clear that this was going to be the most rewarding Tpas conference we had attended.

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Thursday 13th July

None of our party had any complaints with the breakfast feast on offer that morning. Fuelled up, we were back in the Kenilworth Suite to be hypnotised by Alex Blow's (Fourteen19) outstanding presentation on Youth engagement. Left in awe, one of our tenants volunteers John Monteiro was keen start a youth engagement indicative linked to our eleven sheltered housing blocks.

A quick rest before returning in our formal wear. We sat at our table ready for another fine meal and the National Award Ceremony. As the multiple awards and nominees were read out by magical Mike our host, it was a reminder that you were sat in a room full of winners. People together with a common drive to improve social housing, communities and estates across the country.

Our Tenant Scrutiny Panel chair Geno Humphrey has said that the conference is a place where you are unable to distinguish who is a tenant and who is a Housing Association/Local Authority officer. He is correct; there are no boundaries and only admiration and respect for each other.



Thank you Tpas for a truly wonderful conference. The real reward is to see what our tenant volunteers get from it, as well as the chance for us all to meet likeminded people and share our experiences and ideas. Together we are truly stronger.

Delegate experiences:

“The conference as a newbie”

We asked Vanessa Collier, Community Development Manager from Curo to tell us about her first Tpas conference experience.

Having been involved in resident engagement for over 7 years and sending many tenants and colleagues to Tpas conferences over the years, it was time for me to dip my toe in the water and attend myself plus there were several workshop sessions on the agenda this year that I wanted to be part of and learn about other people’s knowledge and experiences. The digital engagement and what makes a great community sessions were very exciting and I have lots to take away and discuss with my own housing association and residents, equally the regeneration discussion was very relevant to my role and I was invited in the workshop to speak about my own experience of the current regeneration programme that I am engaged with in Foxhill near Bath. The venue was excellent and they looked after us well during our stay, the Tpas staff were very welcoming and helpful at all the workshops and sessions, and looked amazing at the 80’s inspired disco; so thank you all for making my first ever conference so interesting, insightful and enjoyable!



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Our workshop leaders experience:



Our community project under a national spotlight:

We invited Amanda Mason and Julie Turner from the Resident Involvement Team, Northumberland County Council to talk about their project 'Newsham Matters' in the Communities Doing it for Themselves workshop. This is what Julie had to say about the experience.



“We couldn't have foreseen the response we received during our presentation; delegates faces lit up with the realisation that their struggles, successes and perceived failures are commonplace, and a shared feeling of togetherness was tangible in the room.

We openly discussed perceived failures within projects which can in fact be learning curves and turning points which can change the direction of a project in an instant.

Delegates asked a number of extremely relevant questions about our project regarding governance, personalities, barriers, support and finance.

Delivering the workshop not only cemented our belief in our project and work in general, but also the level of passion and determination from people in communities who want to improve their lives and the area they live in as much as they possibly can.”



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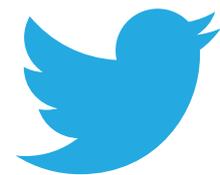
Our workshop leaders experience:



“The National Tenant Engagement Conference is one tenant gig that attracts a very mixed crowd”

Our operations manager, Louise Thompson summarised her conference experience in her trademark optimistic and unique way...

“If you search the conference hashtag #tpasconf17 on twitter, this is the top tweet from our boss, Jenny. It says it all.



These 140 characters sum up perfectly the main thing I will take away from this year’s conference and judging from the number of re-tweets probably other peoples too. You only had to look round the packed room on the first day to see that this is one tenant gig that attracts a very mixed crowd. (Think Bruce Springsteen concert or Love Island).

Over the two days I came across younger people sharing scrutiny stories with older folk, northerners and southerners talking all things digital, a huge range of different ethnic groups and backgrounds all discussing the stigma surrounding social housing. Even our fabulous keynote speaker Alex from the youth engagement specialists Fourteen19, commented on the impressive number of young people at the Conference, and he should know!

The Conference really did show that Tenant Engagement is changing and gathering a more diverse fan base, probably because involvement is now offered on so many different platforms and channels – there really is something to suit everyone!

But of course there’s still some folk out there who roll their eyes at the mere mention of tenant involvement and start banging on about it being the self-same demographic, and the same old boring meetings. All I can say to you lot is you obviously ain’t been to a Tpas Conference (Oh and you could probably do with commissioning us to do some work with you).

In terms of my other conference highlights, I really enjoyed the excellent key note speech from Wythenshawe Community Housing Group CEO, Nigel Wilson. My favourite line being “We may want to do other things but that doesn’t mean we can stop providing social housing.” Also it was great to hear so many success stories in my scrutiny workshop where tenants were able to evidence how their recommendations had made a difference to services. Finally I have simply got to mention the Salt ‘n’ Pepper ladies from Oxford City Council who, for me, totally smashed the 80’s disco.

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Our workshop leaders experience:



Planning popular workshops including 'Insight and Information' at the National Engagement Conference 17

Tpas training manager, Val Alker, shares her experience of planning popular workshops and running the 'Insight and Engagement' workshop at Tpas National Tenant Engagement conference 2017.

Having become more and more interested in the need to link an organisations approach to customer insight with their tenant engagement I decided to run the '**Linking Customer Insight with Effective Tenant Engagement**' workshop at the Tpas National Conference this year.

The workshop proved popular – around a quarter of attendees came along on one of the two sessions. My recipe for a successful workshop was-

- Find out who is there
- Give them some relevant information they don't have or in a form they don't have access to
- Build in interaction to aid learning, allow sharing and build

I made sure the tables all had a mix of people from different organisations. Many also had a mix of staff and volunteers. To start out each person filled in a short 'table questionnaire' and passed it on. They then had to discuss what was meant by customer insight. This was useful and the split here certainly wasn't between volunteers and staff but between organisations. A few could give me a dictionary definition and found my start point too basic, most had an idea but needed clarification and found this section useful, others said 'I've never heard the term customer insight before' and had discovered something completely new! So for some it's just the way they work and for others it is either not happening or is happening so far from formal tenant engagement that they haven't even heard of it. What's the betting that the gap will close in the next year? If you haven't heard the term customer insight now – go find where it is!

What proved popular in the session?

It worked well using the table survey exercise to explore how data can expose trends. We also explored the fact that bigger data sets can be cut by characteristics like geography, type of home, type of tenant, disability etc. and used to prioritise and tailor services, monitor satisfaction and look at the effect of spend.

Explaining what journey maps are and when they are used, including the need for quality 'qualitative' data and the different methods to obtain it.

Thinking about the benefits to tenant engagement of having access to insight in terms of being able to evidence recommendations and monitor effects.

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What people said about the sessions

'the content was new to me but it was very interesting and informative'

'learning how to use insight is going to be invaluable'

'it clarified what customer insight is and how it works with tenant involvement'

'insight is not just about profiling, I am beginning to understand what it really means'

This workshop was a taster of the Tpas 'Techniques to gain insight and information course.

There were also tasters of:

Going Digital - exploring digital engagement across gathering information from tenants, use by scrutiny group and in communities.

Skills for Scrutiny - highlighting the approaches that make scrutiny effective and produce outcomes for organisations.

Getting the Knowledge - to bring new volunteers or those who have changed roles up to speed on what makes effective tenant and community engagement and the valuable role they can play.

Linking Customer Insight with Effective Engagement - a subject that I feel passionate about at the moment as I am convinced that effective engagement today relies on organisations linking their valuable insight with their tenant engagement.

All these courses are listed on our website. Visit www.tpas.org.uk or email training@tpas.org.uk



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Conference Infographic



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