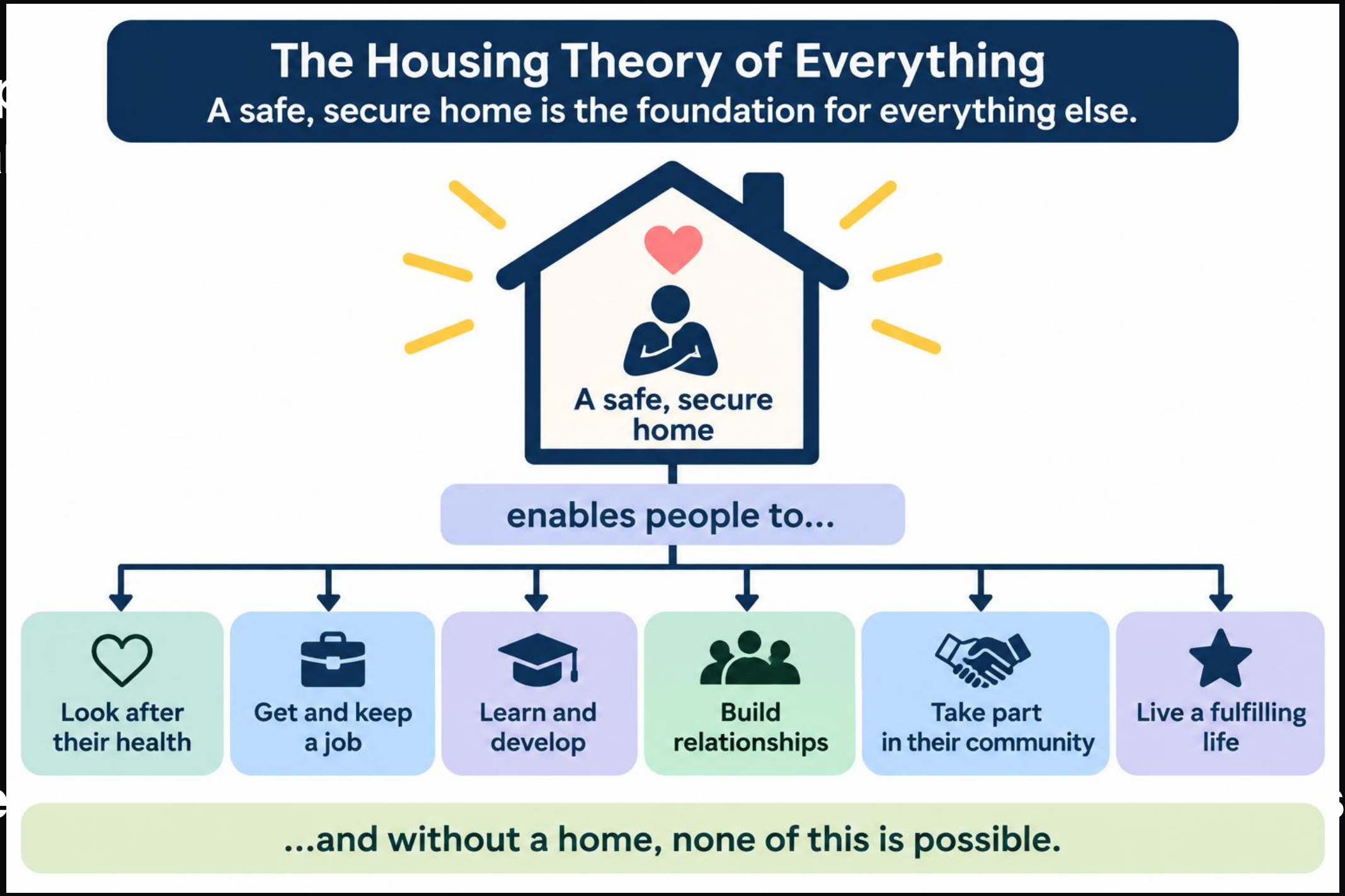
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The Housing Theory of Everything
A safe, secure home is the foundation for everything else.
A safe, secure home
enables people to...
Look after their health
Get and keep a job
Learn and develop
Build relationships
Take part in their community
Live a fulfilling life
...and without a home, none of this is possible.

Te s.

1 Can I get 'in the room'?

(Access)

What do you think?

...makes it hard for tenants (especially those who are neurodivergent) to attend meetings in person or online?

- Can the person get to the meeting/get online?
- Do they have the equipment/transport support they need?
- Have we explained – in the right way - why we want them involved and what we need from them?
- Is the information clear?

dimensions

Tenant Scrutiny Panel

Our 8th meeting





A panel of tenants who work together to look in detail at an aspect of Dimensions Housing Service and say what they think is good and not good about it, and what could be done to make it better, fairer, or clearer for tenants.

dimensions

Dimensions Tenant Scrutiny Panel

The Why, What, Who, How and When (Terms of Reference)

1. Introduction

The **Tenant Scrutiny Panel** is established to ensure that tenants have influence over how their housing provider (Dimensions) delivers landlord services, enabling Dimensions to provide the best services possible in relation to the four consumer standards of:

- Safety and Quality
- Transparency, influence and accountability
- Neighbourhood and community
- Tenancy

The Panel demands transparency, integrity, collaboration and accountability from the Housing Service by requesting information about how it operates that might otherwise not be shared with tenants, and enables tenants to scrutinise this and make recommendations for how Dimensions might support their tenants to live happier, safer and richer lives through delivering a high quality housing service.

The Panel is a key element of tenant involvement at Dimensions. It influences decision making by enabling tenants access to, and an opportunity to scrutinise, information about Dimensions' Housing Service, and reporting the conclusions and recommendations through the Quality and Practice Committee who monitor implementation through to completion.

This Terms of Reference ('Why, What, Who, How and When') ensures that tenants, Dimensions' Housing Service and panel facilitators can clearly understand the purpose, structure and responsibilities of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel.

How we got people ‘in the room’

- We did a simulation of a Scrutiny Panel with props at a housing event
- We made support phone calls to everyone before starting
- We visited a person’s house to show them how to use Outlook/Teams, and co-wrote instructions for them to keep by their computer
- We talked to support teams when that was appropriate (and the person said it was OK)
- Made easy-read posters about the scrutiny panel, and changed the Terms of Reference into the *Why, What, Who, How and When* (which felt more accessible)
- We did Teams ‘practice runs’
- We worked around everyone’s availability when we scheduled our fortnightly meetings

Let’s remind ourselves about the

Why

What

Who

How

When

of the Tenant Scrutiny Panel



2 Can I understand, and can I say what I want to say? (Participation)

What do you think?

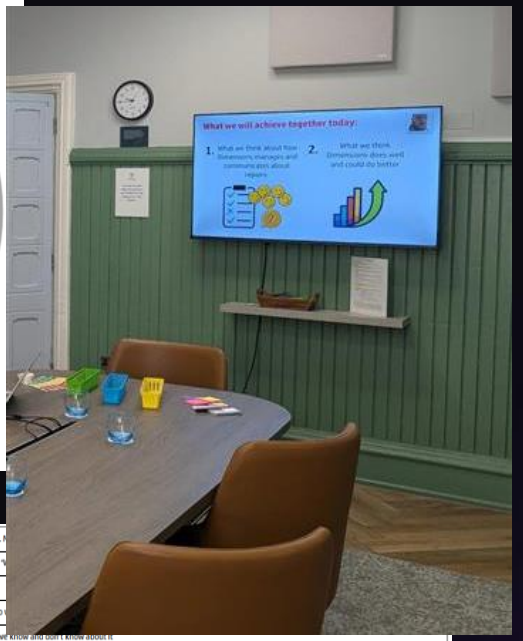
...makes it hard for tenants to participate, to say what they know, and to share good ideas?

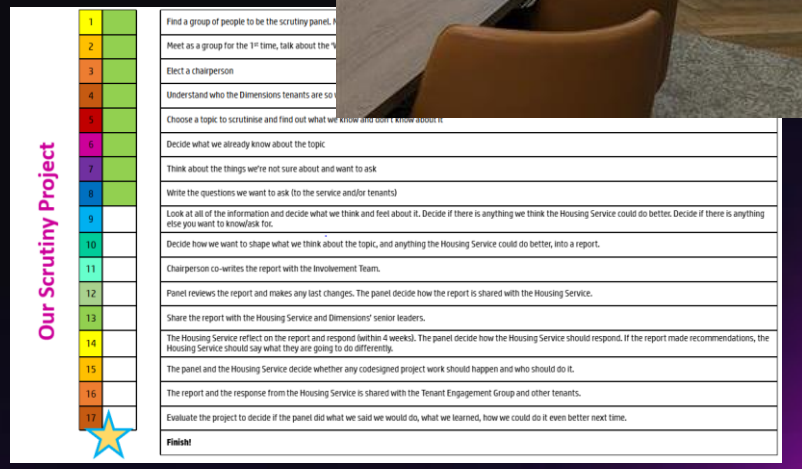
- Are conversation topics and questions clear?
- Do questions ask me about things I can talk about (are they relatable)?
- Am I told what we'll talk about beforehand so I can think about it?
- Do I have enough time to understand (and is there time to ask questions if I don't)?
- Have I got enough time to think about and communicate what I want to say?
- Am I understood?
- Does it feel safe and comfortable to speak the truth, even when it's a criticism?

How we enabled people to participate

- We shared the meeting topic in advance (at the previous meeting)
- We spent time making complex information simpler, writing questions which were clear and relatable
- We kept the meeting format the same every time so it felt familiar and comfortable
- We kept agendas simple so that there was enough time to explain in different ways and take questions. Agendas were pie charts, progress was shown on a diagram
- Chair and facilitator protected time after the meeting for anyone who wanted to say more
- The panel was facilitated by the Involvement Team, independent of the Housing Team, and chaired by a tenant
- We got the backing of the Executive Director to ask anything we wanted, see anything we asked for, and be honest about what we thought
- We wrote and signed off the report together
- We used different ways for people to 'vote' on different aspects of what the Housing Team were doing: Gold Star, Good, Not Good (stickers, ordering, quotes)







3 Does my contribution matter?
(Power and influence)

What do you think?

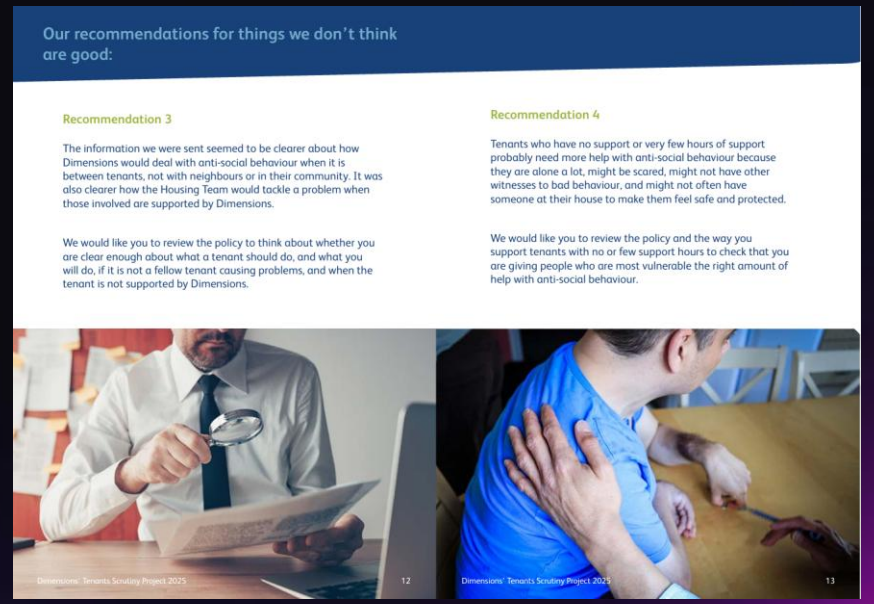
...why does tenant involvement not always lead to things getting better?

- Has what we said been heard?
- Is it valued?
- Are the people who can do something with it doing something with it?
- How do we know/check?
- How do we know if it made things better for tenants?

How we made it all matter

- We invited the Chair of our Quality Committee to come and talk about how he would help us make sure the Housing Team did what they needed to do.
- Our report was a professional document with recommendations.
- It was presented to the Senior Leaders of the Housing Team and two Directors, by us.
- We gave the Housing Team a deadline for returning to us with their response, and they had to tell us what they had done or intended to do (with timeframes)
- We published the report online for the rest of the organisation to see.
- We presented the report to our Quality Committee, and the Board member who chairs the Committee made it clear that he expected the Housing Team to take it seriously
- The Housing Team had to tell us (and report to the Committee) 6 months later what they had done (with evidence) and the Chair of the panel had to sign off their actions.





The success we had was not in what we did or how we did it, it's how things are better now for tenants.



We held meetings on this date, this date, this date...
We asked questions about XYZ...
X number of tenants attended...



We made the Housing Team realise they could do better
The senior leaders and execs took us seriously and raved about what we'd done
We made sure they did what they said they would do
The way we treat tenants is fairer, better and kinder now.

Tenants are treated better because we did what we did.

The way we went about it was good.
The impact it had was great.

Any questions?

