

OPEN DOOR

Tenant Participation Special

This Open Door includes

Improving engagement with TPAS

Scrutiny Panel update

Involvement opportunities



TENANT ENGAGEMENT EXPERTS
We bring landlords and tenants together. Because together we can find solutions to improve services, save money and bring lasting change to communities.



Enter

Tenant View

“I’m enjoying being involved with various tenant groups”

Linda became one of our tenants in 2018. “Since taking up my tenancy I’ve had three visits from my Neighbourhood Officer, Sue Cooley. Sue’s taken the time to listen to my concerns and address those issues where she can. Sue has also helped me settle into my new community on Flaxley Road by pointing me in the direction of the local tenants group and other engagement opportunities which are available to me. The groups have made me feel very welcome and allowed me to get to know my fellow residents and participate in local events such as a trip out to Whitby last summer with the TARA group, was very good fun”.

As well as local tenant groups, Linda has also joined the scrutiny panel. “The panel is made up of tenants and leaseholders that scrutinise the housing service that the Council provides to tenants such as myself. My previous experience of working for Leeds City Council has been good for the Scrutiny Panel as I have been able to give different perspective and give new ideas about how to improve the housing service”.

Our Journey to improving engagement with TPAS

Selby District Council has been a long-standing member of TPAS, a not-for-profit organisation that supports tenants to take more of a role in the delivery of their local housing service. This partnership has seen some significant improvements to the way in which the Council involves and listens to their tenants.

The Council now has a dedicated member of staff for engagement as well as it being everyone’s responsibility. Engagement within Selby District Council is now becoming more tenants focused and has ways in place to actively listen and act upon tenants’ and residents’ voices.

Gillian McLaren, TPAS National Engagement Manger, had the pleasure in supporting and mentoring the scrutiny panel, whose role it is to make improvements to services through their robust recommendations. They are all volunteers and have worked tirelessly over the past couple of years and have completed reviews into the following:

- Void property and standards
- Customer satisfaction into repairs and maintenance
- Tenant Engagement methods

All of which have led to 42 recommendations being accepted by Selby District Council that have resulted in housing service improvements for all.

For engagement to appeal to all parts of the community, the Council is now looking

at a blended approach to engagement that includes both face to face meetings as well as engagement through digital platforms, as some people do not have the time to attend meetings.

It’s important for as many of the tenants and residents out there to get involved in this journey to excellent engagement - your voices are important and your ideas are vital to ensure that services are delivered and improved.

Gillian commented, “I was so pleased to be asked to write this article for this first ever newsletter dedicated to tenant involvement as it shows how far the organisation and the committed volunteers have come over the last couple of years.

In 2018 Selby District Council was also an active part of a current piece of national research TPAS did around looking at good practice in local authorities in partnership with the Local Government Association, and have attended many of the regional TPAS forums to share their journey and good practice.

It is truly fabulous to see an organisation going from strength to strength.”



Thank you for the opportunity to write this article.

Gillian McLaren
TPAS National Engagement Manager.

Neighbourhood Officer views



Barbara Scargill

Tenant Participation has been excellent in the Byram area and the tenants have really embraced getting involved with the Council and the ability to have a voice when it comes to their housing situation. All our tenants involved have taken their role seriously and help each other when needed.



Amanda Suthers

I’ve found encouraging tenants to share their views and opinions about our Housing services

empowers them and shows that we do value their ideas. Tenant Participation is a good way to channel these views which is really important to me as a Neighbourhood Officer that my tenants are listened to and valued.

I’ve encouraged tenants from various backgrounds to join tenant participation groups as it’s their way of being heard. They also have the opportunity to help shape the way we offer our services and use our budgets. This forms and builds a trust between ourselves and our tenants and helps us understand their needs and concerns which develops a stronger community.

Janine Ledger and Sue Cooley

The regular tenants’ participation meetings that we hold at the local community centre are an ideal time to meet and get to know our residents on a one to one basis - allowing us to deal with any issues they may have. We’ve built relationships with the local community enabling us to help even more with a better understanding of any issues that may be affecting them personally or within their community. We’ve found that this builds trust and lays the foundations for solid relationships and respect with our tenants. We encourage as many people to attend our informal meetings, tea and biscuits are always on hand along with a warm welcome.





Scrutiny Panel

Following completion of their previous review into Tenant Engagement, the Tenant Scrutiny Panel has now moved onto reviewing our new tenants' satisfaction levels to gauge how our new tenants are finding the experience - from accepting a property offer through North Yorkshire Homechoice to three or six months into their tenancy.

The tenant Scrutiny Panel will be:

- Investigating our current satisfaction methods and whether they are fit for purpose.
- Doing some background work, relating to current new tenant satisfaction levels to identify where satisfaction levels are low.
- Helping to identify the different stages of a new tenancy, where we could survey our new tenants.

- Reviewing different surveys to ensure they are tenant friendly and could be used for a range of different demographics.
- To look into current working practices from other local authorities and housing associations to get an idea of what other organisations are doing and investigate what would and wouldn't work for us.

By completing this review, the aim is to meet quarterly with gathered satisfaction levels to discuss with the Council's housing team how the service can be developed.

Any feedback relating to property areas such as lettable standard could be discussed by the Repairs and Maintenance Group with support from property services.

Flaxley Road Tenant and Residents Association (TARA)

The Flaxley Road TARA has recently part-funded a defibrillator which will be located at the Coultish Community Centre on Charles Street. It can be used in emergency situations such as a sudden cardiac arrest. Some people living in the area will be offered training on how to use the defibrillator as part of the grant.

The local residents have been fund raising in order to obtain the money required. Local residents have also been granted funding from the Central Community Engagement Forum (CEF) and Selby Town Council.

If you are a local Flaxley Road estate resident and want to attend the next TARA meeting, these happen every 2nd Tuesday of the month at the Coultish Community Centre starting at 6:30.

Consultation: Draft Tenant Participation Strategy 2019-22

We are consulting on our new draft Tenant Participation Strategy 2019-2022.

This new strategy details our ambitions to engage with you our tenants and leaseholders over the coming years. The strategy focuses on a variety of flexible approaches to engagement. We want as many people as possible to get involved, and believe this new strategy will help us achieve this.

With this in mind, we want to hear from you on whether our draft strategy delivers on this aim. Visit: www.selby.gov.uk/tenant-participation-strategy to get involved in the consultations.

If you have any other questions or comments, please contact **Hannah McCoubrey (Housing Strategy Officer)** on **01757 705101** or at info@selby.gov.uk.

Why get involved?

Being involved with our housing team will give you the chance to:

- Be actively involved in shaping the housing service
- Make your local community a more enjoyable place to live
- Have your voice heard
- Be part of a group which reviews and provides recommendations
- Meet similar minded tenants



Involvement Opportunities

Scrutiny Panel (monthly)

Work within a team to analyse and provide recommendations in relation to a specific area of the housing service.

Repairs and Maintenance Group (quarterly)

A group which represents all tenants, to drive improvement in our property services.

Estate Walkabouts (quarterly)

A resident-led walk through your local area with officers from various services, to highlight issues and develop an action plan of improvement.

Editorial Panel (quarterly)

Develop, review and suggest content for the Open Door newsletter.

Local Tenant Groups (quarterly)

Attend meetings in your local area to discuss local issues and build more friendly communities.

Online Surveys (as and when)

Provide invaluable feedback as part of a consultation into new services we're developing or proposed changes to those we already have.

Armchair Consultations (as and when)

If meetings aren't for you, armchair consultation could be! Help us improve from the comfort of your home, via email or telephone.

Focus Groups (as and when)

Help us develop policies and procedures, implement legislation or respond to government proposals by being a member of a focus group

Contact Details

We want to hear from you. If you want to be involved in Tenant Participation let us know...

Online:

Our website has lots of information regarding tenant participation and other housing services such as repairs and rent.

Visit: www.selby.gov.uk/tenant-participation

Phone:

You can phone us on **01757 705101** and ask for Matthew Brown who is our Tenant Participation Officer.

Phone line opening times:

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday 8.30am -5pm
Wednesday 10am -5pm
Friday 8.30am - 4.30pm

Visit:

Customer Contact Centre,
Market Cross Shopping
Centre, Selby, YO8 4JS

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday
and Friday - 9.30am - 4pm
Wednesday - 10am - 4pm