

Tenants' Forum Newsletter Forewords

April — June 2024 Issue no — 15



Welcome to the 15th Edition for the Tenants' Forum newsletter.

During this quarter active volunteers were very busy as usual myself and Vice Chair met with the Chief Executive, due to the timing we were not able to let the Forum members know in advance, the Tenants' Forum Committee (TFC) met with the Assistant Director Neighbourhoods and Housing to raise issues and concerns. The TFC arranged monthly Tenants' Forum (TF) meetings and TFC meetings.

The Tenant Participatory Advisory Service (Tpas) visited Hull to assess the Tenant Involvement activities. On behalf of the TFC and Housing Service I would like to congratulate all the active housing volunteers for achieving Tpas Accreditation third time in a row with flying colours.

WELL, DONE ALL!

A Tenant Participation Officer (TPO) and I attended Housing 2024 Conference, I had been invited to deliver presentation on "How can tenants add value to the governance of an organisation?".

In May Wakefield District Homes visited Hull to shadow Neighbourhood Champions to observe the Estate Walk activity. TPOs received very positive feedback from visitors. (Details in the newsletter)

As the Chair of the TF, I was invited to sit on the Service Improvement Board, where the Chief Executive, Assistant Director Neighbourhoods & Housing and Senior Housing Managers plan how to meet the Consumer Standards and respond to the tenants' voice. (Unable to feedback on this meeting due to confidentiality).

Active volunteers carried out litter picking, neighbourhood inspections, benchmarking, attending project & focus group meetings and Tenant and Resident Associations (TARAs) were very busy as well with their activities.

If your neighbours or friends would like to join us in bringing positive changes in your area and the city overall, contact Tenant Participation Team via 612010 or email tenant.resident@hullcc.gov.uk. The Tenant Participation Officers will get in touch and will arrange an induction.

On behalf of the Tenants' Forum Committee, I would like to thank all the active volunteers for their time, skills, and enthusiasm to bring positive change to the Housing Service and City overall.

Maureen Bristow

Chair - Hull Tenants' Forum



Operations Manager Neighbourhoods and Housing 18th April 2024

The Operations Manager Neighbourhoods and Housing delivered a presentation on routine tenancy visits, pre notice inspections and end of year performance.

The Officer provided information on how to contact Area Housing Teams

01482 300300

People Places and Partnerships

North Telephone 01482 613700 Email north.foredykeHousing@hullcc.gov.uk

East Telephone 01482 612606 Email East.ParkHousing@hullcc.gov.uk

West Telephone 01482 612247 Email RWWHousing@hullcc.gov.uk

High Rise and Tenancy Sustainment

High Rise Telephone 01482 616108 Email HousingHighRiseTeam@hullcc.gov.uk

Tenancy Sustainment

Email Tenancy.sustainment@hullcc.gov.uk

Income Collection

East Telephone 01482 615160

Email East.ParkHousing@hullcc.gov.uk

West Telephone 01482 612393 Email RWWHousing@hullcc.gov.uk



Area Housing Team

Routine Tenancy Visits

Officer explained:

- Routine Tenancy Visits



- 3743 Completed City Wide
- 3260 General Properties
- 483 High Rise Properties

Area Housing Team – Pre-Notice Inspections

- 170 notices received in last three months
- 30.6% have had a Pre-Notice Inspection

Income Collection

End of Year Performance 99.46% in year collection rate

Arrears are 3.71%, as a percentage of our annual debt Currently 10,336 properties are in arrears

7543 owe up to 4 weeks rent 2322 owe 5 weeks rent or more

Rent Performance

During 2023-24 the Tenancy Sustainment Officers collected £595,562.38 in rent from Universal Credit Claimants.



Tenancy Support Scheme / Household Support Fund

During the 2023-24 financial year the Tenancy Sustainment Service (TSS) had spent the full allocation (£60,000) of the Household support fund to support tenants who were in financial difficulties. This supported 1468 households in total, 777 with children and 691 without children.

Tenancy Sustainment Casework

During the 2023 – 24 financial year the TSS received 594 referrals to support tenants with multiple and complex needs including new tenants support,



welfare benefits, charity assistance and hoarding.

Financial Gains

During the 2023 - 24 financial year, the TSS was able to support tenants in securing £5,999.08 86 (This equates to £311,952.16 over the course of a year) in ongoing weekly welfare benefit entitlements.

Yorkshire Water Community Engagement Partnership Work

Recent partnership work with the Yorkshire Water Community Engagement Team saw joint visits completed with the TSS to identify properties to encourage tenants to reduce their water bills. This included the installation of water meters & in some cases inputting Water Support schemes which caps annual bills for low-income households.

Of the 26 properties identified, 18 was visited with 6 declared no interest beforehand, 1 property was empty, and another had a language barrier.

- 9 tenants did not engage (Either no response or said they were not interested in discussing their water bills).
- 8 successful financial outcomes of either a water meter or water support and 1 household agreed to be sent some further information.
- The total water bill savings for those 8 households they assisted is £2,550.00. The highest individual saving being £500.00. These savings involved 8 water meter installations and 4 Water Support Schemes input immediately.

Forward Planning

With managed migration for Tax Credit claimant already underway and the DWP actively sending information leaflets out for the next set of migration, it was anticipated that an increase in the number of tenants claiming Universal Credit (UC). This is just the start of managed migration and the service would still have around 7000 on Housing Benefits with the majority of these (all but Pensioners) expected to be migrated onto UC in the next 4 years.

Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 – Consumer Standards Update 22nd May 2024

Head of Service – Business Development and Change (via Teams) and Business Change Manager delivered a presentation on Consumer Standard and covered following topics.



Background

- Social Housing (Regulation) Act 2023 passed
- Consumer Standards in place across four themes
- Regulator of Social Housing (RSH) has duty to proactively inspect registered providers of social housing
- RSH has powers to issue improvement plans, unlimited fines, undertake management intervention, and transfer stock
- RSH inspections will be graded C1-C4 (C1 & C2 would be a pass and C3 & C4 below required standard).
- No grade for 'outstanding' the best is C1 which is "overall the landlord is delivering the outcomes of the consumer standards"



Co-Regulatory / Self-Referral

- RSH is keen on "co regulatory approach" transparency & co-working to improve performance.
- RSH keen for registered providers to self-refer if appropriate.
- Recent providers to self-refer include London Borough of Lewisham on range of issues including stock condition, non-decent homes, damp and mould, fire remediation, and repairs & maintenance.
- Outcome of judgement regulator to work with LB Lewisham to remedy issues and consider if further action needs to be taken.
- Likely other providers will self-refer across the sector.

<u>The Consumer Standards – Four Themes</u>

Consumer Standards define the outcomes that Social Housing landlords must deliver:

 Safety & Quality – Stock Quality, decency, health & safety, repairs, maintenance & planned improvements.



- 2. <u>Transparency, Influence, and Accountability</u> Fairness & respect, diverse needs, engagement with tenants, information about landlord services, performance information, self-referral.
- 3. **Neighbourhoods & Community** Safety of shared spaces, local cooperation, anti-social behaviour & hate incidents, domestic abuse.
- Tenancy Allocations & lettings, tenancy sustainment & evictions, tenure, mutual exchange.



Service Improvement Board (SIB)

A board has been convened to oversee work required where there is potential to improve against the Consumer Standards. Purpose of the SIB is:

To agree, monitor, and drive forward a programme of continuous service improvement, guided by revised social housing legislation – and to take key decisions on programme delivery, risks, and issues

Membership of the Service Improvement Board:

- Chair Chief Executive Hull City Council
- Deputy Chair Director of Legal Services & Partnerships
- Deputy Chair Assistant Director Neighbourhoods & Housing
- Tenants' Representative Chair of Tenants' Forum
- + other elected members, officers from N&H, wider council & partners including KWL

Housing Service Improvement Programme - Structure

SAFETY & QUALITY TRANSPARENCY, INFLUENCE & ACCOUNTABILITY

NEIGHBOURHOODS & COMMUNITY

Enabling Work Groups / Resource Co-ordination

KWL Contract Review | Organisational Development & Culture | Data | Resourcing



Opportunities for Tenant Influence

Service Improvement Board (SIB)

Tenants' Representative on SIB – Chair of Tenants' Forum

Tenants' Forum

Members of the Tenants' Forum will be invited to contribute / form part of project teams as they are created, especially those where Forum members can bring specific expertise and valuable insight, for example around

- tenant scrutiny
- customer communications
- service delivery and standards
- providing a tailored service for vulnerable people etc.

Following are the subgroups and Chairs:

- ⇒ Safety & Quality Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods & Housing
- ⇒ Transparency, Influence & Accountability Head of Legal Services
- ⇒ Neighbourhoods & Community Assistant Director, City Safe
- ⇒ Tenancy Head of Service (Business Change and Development)
 Neighbourhoods & Housing



Healthwatch Hull 22nd May 2024

Delivery Manager for Healthwatch Hull shared that Healthwatch is an independent consumer champion for local health and social care. They listen to the public's lived experiences of health and social care services, ensuring their voices are heard by providers and commissioners of the services. Nationally Healthwatch is made up of 151 local Healthwatch in each local authority area of the country.

Healthwatch has the following 8 statutory functions:

 Supporting the involvement of local people in the commissioning, provision and scrutiny of local care services.



- Enabling local people to monitor the standard of provision of local care services.
- Obtaining the views of local people regarding their needs and experiences
- Making reports and recommendations about how local care services could be improved.
- Providing advice and information about access to local care services so choices can be made.
- Formulating views on the standard of provision and whether and how the local care services could be improved.
- Making recommendations to Healthwatch England to advise the Care Quality Commission to conduct special reviews or investigations.
- Providing Healthwatch England with intelligence and insight to escalate nationally.



Healthwatch in Practice

Wide ranging tools to listen to people and gather the widest pool of feedback:

- Programme of engagement across city.
- Utilisation of partner events.
- Systematic 'hard to reach' engagement.
- Maintained presence at GP Practices, hospitals and care hubs.
- Utilizing Local Authority & NHS services as routes to engagement, eg district nursing.
- High footfall outreach.
- Tailored presentations to community groups.



- Engagement tailored to specific research.
- Engagement with schools, colleges, youth networks and development of a youth advisory body.
- Digital engagement.

How Healthwatch determined its priorities

- What is the public telling us breadth and depth.
- National Requests from Healthwatch England.
- Regional requests from the Integrated Care System.
- At the request of another body to access independent review.
- To support partnership workplans where value can be added.
- By determining if other bodies are already looking into the issue.
- Independently commissioned pieces of work.





Key piece of work in recent year

- Coronavirus Act Easement
- Care Home and Domiciliary Care Review
- Patient Experiences during Covid
- Virtual Care Home Engagement
- Deaf & Hearing Impaired



- Learning Disability Day Services
- A&E Enter & View
- Dentistry
- NHS App Engagement
- Menopause
- Cost of Living Impact
- Neurodiversity
- Housing Related Support
- Maternity

Tenant and Resident Associations (TARAs)

The TARAs held face to face meetings and have been actively feeding issues from their members to the relevant service areas, carrying out local area walks and litter picking and block walks to improve the kerb appeal of their areas.

Committee members have been in regular contact with the Tenant Participation Team (TPT), who support them in finding a resolve to the issues/concern they may raise.

If you think your area would benefit from having a tenant and residents' group and there is enough interest in your community, give the TPT a ring to discuss this further.

Bayswater Court TARA

In April, the TARA held its final hot food day for the block, delivering 24 hot meals to residents, also the group finalised the accounts and closed the Affordable Warmth funding stream.

In May, the TARA also received a delegation from Wakefield District Homes as part of their visit to Hull. The group gave the delegation a tour of their communal room and gardens to which they were really impressed. The TARA also hosted a summer BBQ in the communal garden which was well attended.



In June the TARA hosted a seminar from Healthwatch on service provision and hosted a weeding day in the communal garden.





Charterhouse Community TARA

In April and May the TARA assisted with a "pocket park" consultation facilitated by the Neighbourhood Co-ordination Team for the New George Street Area. 15 responses were received, and the plans have been submitted.

The group are working with the local secondary school who have taken on to improve the allotment so that pupils can gain skills and donate produce to people in the local area. Local Area Walks are also be carried out and litterpicks.



Dorchester Road and Midmere Avenue Association

The group have met once during this quarter and have discussed the following:

- Highways issues, parking
- Anti-social behaviour



- Streetscene including flytipping, grass cutting and other neighbourhood issues
- Ward budgets and Councillor updates

Great Thornton Street TARA

In June the GTS Committee arranged a Community Lunch Day in one of the communal gardens and prepared 120 boxes of hot meals for the residents. They also served tea, coffee and juice to the residents. It was a beautiful sunny day, residents enjoyed the day and food. The TARA finalised the accounts and closed the Affordable Warmth funding.



The Local Ward Councillors donated a picnic bench for one of the GTS

gardens. The communal GTS TARA committee continue to meet regularly to discuss the issues relevant to the blocks and to plan activities. With the financial support from Local Ward Councillors. GTS Committee is planning arrange a day out to Skegness beach in August 2024.



The Chair and members of GTS committee regularly attend Multi Storey Living Project Group, Customer Access Focus Group, Neighbourhood Management



Group, and the Tenants' Forum to raise the issues and keep residents up to date on the information received from these meetings via GTS Facebook and newsletter. GTS Chair also provided regular updates on the progress of GTS TARA at the Tenants' Forum. TARA also carried out Local Area Walks and litter-picking.

GTS committee can be contacted via Facebook or email

<u>Great Thornton Street Estate TARA or https://www.facebook.com/groups/gtstara</u>

agreatthorntonstreet@gmail.com

Muswell Court TARA

In April the TARA met on various occasions to discuss issues affecting the block and how work was underway to resolve them. The community room was repainted.

May saw the group hosting a new member seminar, with intention to encourage residents to get involved in the TARA's activities such as gardening. Tyres and donated raised beds were delivered.



In June the TARA took the initiative and re-painted the garden sheds and raised beds, for people to use. It was not long before the beds were full of plants and tendered to with lots of care and attention. Also, a new communal path was completed for easier access.

Oakington Garth TARA

The group are committed to serving the Oakington community in every possible way, and have continued to carry out local area walks, raising relevant issues from these walks. New security railing is proposed to certain alleyways to



alleviate anti-social behaviour.

Padstow House TARA

The group have met regularly during this quarter at the local church near the block. They have raised relevant issues associated with the block and in April carried out their own survey to ascertain what residents' issues were with windows.

Communications and Publications Project Group

The Communications and Publications Project Group (Pubs and Comms Group) continue to work hard with colleagues to produce the Hull Housing News newsletter. The summer edition has just been sent to print and will be landing on doorsteps in July.

In addition to the Hull Housing News newsletter, the group have also worked with the High-Rise Housing Team on an upcoming "Welcome Pack". The idea behind the pack is to provide a new tenant, living in a high-rise block, with a range information that is useful for their first few days, weeks and months living in the block. Work is underway with this welcome pack, so if you live in a high rise flat, keep an eye out for the welcome pack!

If you would like to join the Pubs and Comms Group and work to produce some amazing articles, please get in touch with the Tenant Participation Team.



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Customer Access Focus Group

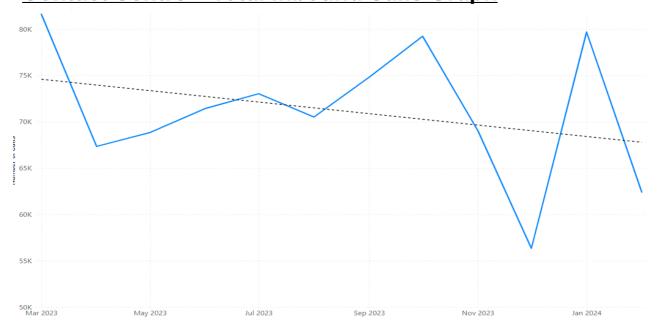
The Customer Access Focus Group met in April with colleagues from Customer Services to hear updates on the latest call centre and Customer Service Centre (CSC) performance.

Key points taken from the presentations:

- The total number of inbound calls continue to decrease, with the second lowest volume of calls within the last 5 years being achieved in February.
- The average wait time continues to drop, with a slight increase in January.
 An "unofficial" target of 7 minutes has been set for call wait times following customer feedback.
- Average call handling has remained steady over the last 12 months, with new starters coming online soon.
- Moving onto Community Hubs and CSC, The Wilson Centre remains the highest, with Bransholme and Kenworthy House following behind. Footfall is consistent in community hubs, however many hubs experienced a decline in visits during the festive period. Elmbridge Parade hub receives a considerable number of Housing related queries, and advisors are asked to log key details of each visit.

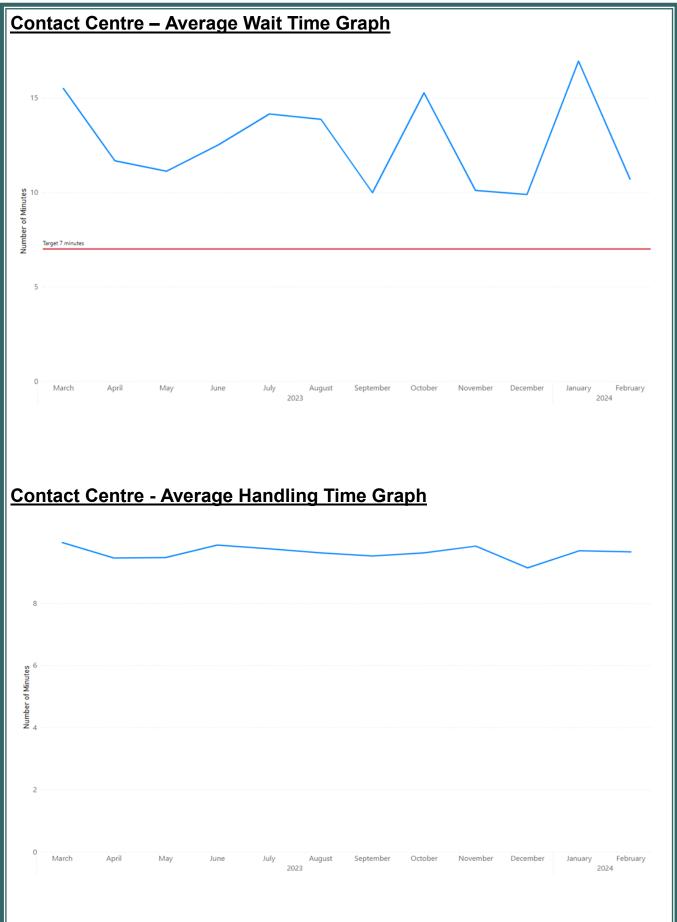
If you'd like to attend the group to review and scrutinise the performance of the 300300 Call Centre and CSC, please get in touch with the TPT!

Contact Centre – Total Inbound Calls Graph

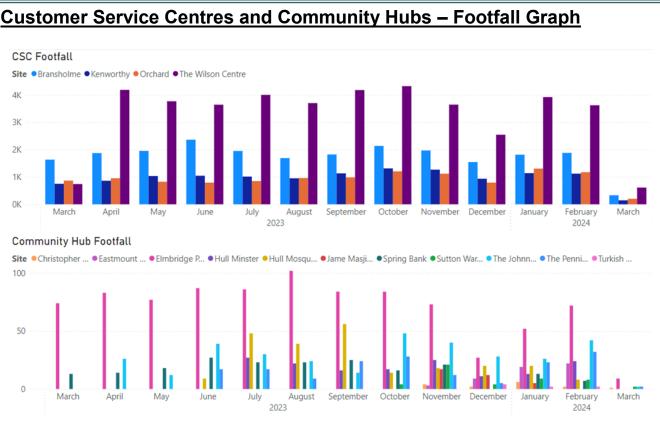




Customer Access Focus Group







In May, a TPO attended Welcome to English Centre to deliver a session on the myHousing app as requested by the GTS TARA Committee. The purpose of this session was to demonstrate how to sign up for the app, how to bid for properties, how to report repairs, and also how to pay rent to the Council online by using this app. There were 20 attendees in total, with many staying behind

myHousing app session @Welcome to English Centre

afterwards for 1:1 support in using the app.

Multi Storey Living Project Group

The Multi Story living group continue to meet monthly to discuss issues and updates related to high and low-rise flats in the city.

In April they welcomed the Resident Engagement Strategy Manager to the meeting to discuss updates on Resident Engagement and its implications for the high-rise blocks. Members of the group also discussed performance information related to benchmarking.

In June they welcomed the Housing Tenancy Manager, for the High Rise Team,



to give an update on the great work the caretakers and Tenancy Officers have been doing. They have regularly been speaking to tenants in their blocks and at their pop ins to find out what their priorities are to improve the communal areas.

We have block champions who meet with TPOs to carry out Benchmarking inspections throughout the city. This has resulted in some positive outcomes and has brought attention to areas of concern. Results are recorded on a performance app called Photobook that is fed through to building cleaning.



Estate Management Project Group

The group meets quarterly. From April to June 2024 there had been 2 meetings of the group where Officers from Housing and Tree Management attended to take questions and update the group on issues affecting the service area

The group are also working with Officers from Housing, Citysafe and Streetscene to refresh the appropriate Service Level Agreements.

Neighbourhood Management Issues

The level of improvement of services was the topic of conversation and emphasis being made on working with all Officers in Estate Management to improve areas and service provision. Housing Officers also provided the group with an update of what data had been collated this quarter. Also, with the Area Housing Teams collating information via Photobook, this had given a better picture of the issues in the City, and how they could determine what action to take. At the present time the percentage of issues graded by using the national



Housemark Scheme grading system was 26%, this quarter it was 2.7%, this is a very good result.

For the remaining year, the group will continue to build on the successes it has achieved and work with TPT to promote the Local Area Champion program to ensure more people engage to improve their areas.

Local Area Walks and Litterpicking

Our Local Area Walks programme in this new financial year is still going from strength to strength with the intrepid volunteers out and about weekly and monthly, checking areas for a wide range of issues. The Local Area Champion programme has now 126 participants, who are happily recording issues at their own pace and reporting them to Officers. Here is the April to June 24 summary of what has happened:

Local Area walks this quarter

Number of assisted Local Area Walks carried out = 23 Number of solo walks carried out = 21

Service requests raised this quarter

Number of assisted service requests raised = 30 Number of solo service requests raised = 17 Issues with untidy gardens send to the Area Housing Team = 9 Tidy garden letters sent out = 13

Litterpicking

Again, the momentum for this activity is growing with more people than ever wanting to carry out this activity. So far this year we have seen a massive increase in individuals and communities litterpicking in their areas. This has created some great community spirit and help build some strong friendships along the way. The data collected is also being fed into the Council's climate change agenda.

Bags of litter collected during litterpicks in the city for this quarter = 242 Number of bags of litter to recycling for this quarter = 74



Repairs and Maintenance Project Group

A meeting was held at the end of May to take part in a planning wider discussion session, with officers from KWL, Housing Investment and Building Safety in attendance. Some great discussions were held within the group, and further dates will be communicated to members once they have been booked in. If you are interested in Repairs and Maintenance and would like to be notified when the next meeting is being held, please contact the TPT and ask to be put on the list.



Wakefield District Visit

Officers from Wakefield District Homes visited Hull TP as part of cohesive working between organisations. They visited Bayswater Court and met the Committee, they also carried out local area walks in the area with volunteers, they then visited Denaby Court.





An informative day was had by all and a planned return visit is proposed in Autumn.



Housing 24 Conference – Manchester

As the Chair of the Tenants' Forum, myself and a TPO attended the Housing 24 Conference held in Manchester. I delivered a speech as part of a wider "Speakers Corner" asking "how can tenants add value to the governance of an organisation?", hosted by the Chair of Tpas England, a fantastic event was had by all.





Housing Academy

Housing Academy preparation is in progress, we will be shortly advertising the training to our residents. The Academy is due to commence at the end of August 2024; the course comprises of following 15 units:

- Tenant Involvement Now and in the Future
- 2. The Housing Service in Hull
- 3. Overview of Housing Strategy
- 4. Overview Housing Benefit and Universal Credit
- 5. Lettings Policy and Practice
- 6. Rent collection and dealing with failure to pay
- 7. Dealing with Anti-Social Behaviour
- 8. Overview of Housing Finance
- 9. Overview of Housing Law
- 10. Environmental and Neighbourhood Management
- 11. Overview of Housing Investment & Decent Homes
- 12. Overview of Housing Repairs & Maintenance
- 13. Equalities and customer service
- 14. City Plan the key roles of the partnership & strategy
- 15. Private Sector Housing Access

Future trainings

- 1- Equality and Diversity on Tuesday 23^{rd} July 2024 from 10 12 am
- 2- Fraud Awareness on Tuesday 20th August 2024 from 9 11 am
- 3- Charing and Committee Skills and Conduct at Meetings on Wednesday 21st August from 10 12am



"Chat and Choose" at Chiltern Primary School

It's a new financial year, so we are hitting it head on with "Chat and Choose" at Chiltern Primary School. Apart from the monthly get togethers where tenants and residents as able to discuss their issues with Housing Officers, there is also a promotional "Youtube" video which has been made with all interested parties to highlight the service the school carries out. This is now available to view on the web.

During the 2 sessions some 70 people have attended where they can have a hot drink and use the foodbank provided by the school. Other agencies from across the spectrum also attended to give information and advice that is required. Some questions asked and information given has been:

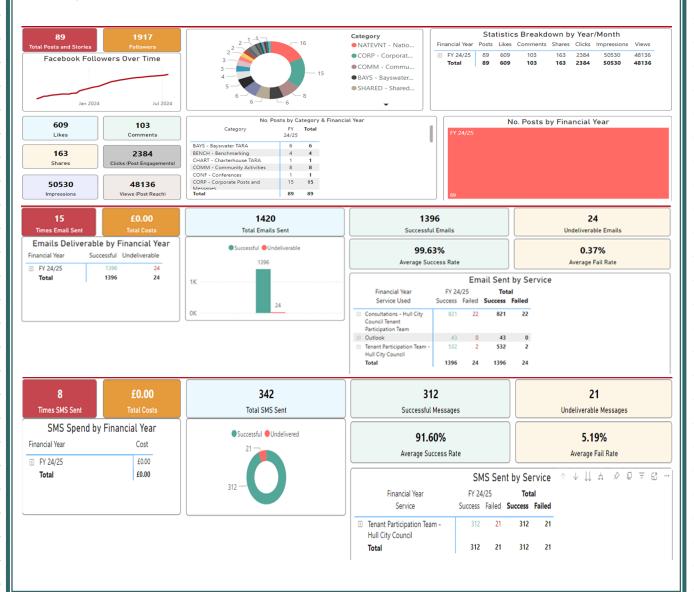
How to bid for properties?
How to report anti-social behaviour?
How to become a Local Area Champion?
Who is the Housing Officer for the resident's area?
Reporting repairs to a tenanted property
What Childcare is available?
What activities are available during school holidays?
How do people access local NHS services?





Quarterly Digital Involvement

The TPT continue to use digital methods of engagement to reach out and engage with both "Active" volunteers and the wider tenant and resident population. The team have posted 89 times on Facebook, and posts have received over 600 likes and 48000 views. Unfortunately, the team are unable to report on the Twitter figures in this edition due to some technical issues, however in the next edition there will be updated figures available. The team have recently signed up to Instagram, and this will allow them to reach out to the younger tenant population through the use of posts, stories and reels. Follow the team today by searching for @HCCTPT! They have also sent 312 messages, reminding volunteers of meetings and inviting them to the Tenants' Forum. If you'd like to receive text messages from the TPT about upcoming meetings, please let a member of the team know.





18th April 2024



- Very good meeting lots of interesting issues raised.
- Chris Todd's presentation was really informative, and he answered all the questions that he was asked, where relevant he will provide update.
 Well done everyone.
- Paper wasted on print outs that give no information headlines.
- Sound quality extremely poor even when mic is used. It's difficult to Hear, what is said especially guest speaker.

22nd May 2024

- Good meeting, relevant information and well received
- Healthwatch was brilliant, now I know what they are involved with and what they can do. Thanks for the officer who inviting her. Another well informed meeting.
- Very good meeting and lunch as well
- A good meeting better slides in colours that is understandable.

Comments on 14th Edition

In this edition I especially appreciated the table of information about the community hubs, as it showed where the Council and the Housing service were going out to places that residents were already going, and fitting into their existing lives rather than making customers come into a Council building specially. I also loved seeing how many solo patch walks tenants were doing – it's brilliant that people are getting out there and making a huge difference to their community. Once they've been trained how to do it, they're out there giving their time even when there's not a Council officer available to assist them!

Head of Service Development and Change



Useful Contact Numbers









0300 555 0286



Smell Gas?

0800 111 999













Your views, suggestions and feedback are very important to us and help us to improve the Tenants' Forum, Tenants' Forum Facebook and Tenants' Forum Newsletter. You can provide us your views, feedback and suggestions via:-







tenant.resident@hullcc.gov.uk



FREEPOST RSJC - KKBE – ABXZ, HS—Tenant Participation Team. Kingston upon Hull City Council, PO Box 15, Hull , HU1 2AB

facebook