

National Tenant

Involvement week 2025

Tuesday 11th November 2025



THE ENGAGEMENT EXPERTS

tpas

**Working Together:
Strengthening Tenants & Residents Associations
Speaker – Louise Holt**

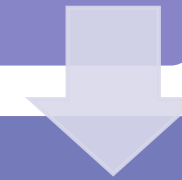
What we are covering today



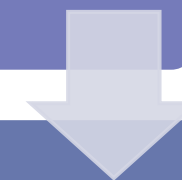
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What are TARAs and what helps them to thrive



What gets in the way



Practical ideas to strengthen TARA'S



Let's Fix it Break out Session?"

What Are Tenants and Residents' Associations (TARA's)?

Community or Voluntary Group Status

Most TARAs are **independent, voluntary community groups**.

That means:

- They're **run by residents**, not by the landlord or council.
- They're **not-for-profit** any money raised must be used for community benefit.
- They operate under their own **constitution** (a written set of rules agreed by members).
- They usually hold an **Annual General Meeting (AGM)** and elect officers (Chair, Secretary, Treasurer).

This gives them legitimacy and structure but they are **not a legal body** in the same way a company or charity is.





Recognised Tenants and Residents' Associations (TARA's)



To have formal standing, a TRA can apply to be “recognised” by their landlord (for example, a council or housing association).

Once recognised:

- The landlord agrees to consult and communicate with the TARA on housing and estate matters.
- The TARA may receive funding, support, or use of community facilities.
- The group's constitution must meet certain standards, usually approved by the landlord.
- They become part of the landlord's formal resident involvement structure (e.g., representation on panels or forums).

So, recognition gives them official status in housing decision-making.

Why Tenants and Residents' Associations Matter



- TARAs play a vital role because they:
- **Strengthen local democracy:** residents shape decisions that affect them.
- **Build trust and accountability:** between landlords and residents.
- **Empower communities** to solve problems together.
- **Deliver Tangible improvements** in the area
- **Create social connection** helping neighbours support each other, creating friendships and supporting health and wellbeing



What helps TARA's to thrive?

Core ingredients:

1. Clear purpose with a delivery plan
2. Inclusive and welcoming to all
3. Strong connections and communication with wider membership
4. Good Partnership with landlords or housing providers but can be that critical friend too
5. Good governance in place (clear roles, constitution complaints policy)
6. Focus on what matters to the membership
7. Taking time to share and celebrate success



What gets in the way of a building a strong TARA

- **Common challenges:**
- Burnout or lack of volunteers
- Cliques or dominance of a few voices
- Conflict within the group
- Poor communication or unclear roles
- Low turnout or community engagement
- Distrust between residents and landlords
- Too bureaucratic and time heavy



Practical solutions



Challenge	Possible Fix
Burnout	Share roles, rotate chair, celebrate wins
Cliques	Recruit openly, buddy new members
Conflict	Use ground rules, neutral facilitation
Low engagement	Go where people are – WhatsApp, events, noticeboards
Poor communication	Keep it simple, consistent, transparent, Use AI tools
Nothing gets done	Agree a simple annual plan, start small, think about all above



Session Break 10.55-11.05

Let's Fix It Scenario 15 minute Break Out Rooms

- **Scenario:**
- **Your TARA has low turnout and the same people do everything.**
- **Tensions are growing between the group and the landlord.**
- **Discuss:**
- • **What's really going on?**
- • **What could the group do differently?**
- • **What support is needed from staff?**
- • **One quick win for the next month.**