



Tpas Member Spotlight



Homes Plus

We asked Carol-Ann Lloyd from Homes Plus to share what they are up to.

If you'd like to contact Carol-Ann about any of the below, click [here](#)

Give us a little known fact about your organisation

Homes Plus came about as a merger of Severside Homes, South Staffordshire Housing and Stafford and Rural Homes.

Tell us about a time that engagement has made a difference to your services or communities?

The scrutiny panel has been part of the business for over ten years now and have done some brilliant work in that time. If you were to ask the panel what their biggest achievement was, they would tell you it was managing to get a gas contract changed to suit the customers' needs more.

However, for me personally, I would say that the biggest difference the scrutiny panel makes is when they are able to open the eyes of the business to something that hasn't necessarily been noticed so then positive change can be made.

Whether this be something simple like spotting a typo or suggesting that information be presented in a different, more customer friendly way. Through to the more complex things like information being missing from a document because internally it is taken for granted that everyone knows what they are talking about or evidencing that something is happening (that shouldn't be) that the business doesn't know about. It is these little details that I feel make a big difference to our services and communities.

What are you currently working on when it comes to engagement?

The scrutiny panel are currently juggling a few different things!

They are a key point of contact when looking at all the changes going on in terms of the tenant satisfaction measures and overall engagement as per the latest government guidelines. As well as being an integral part in changing our staff induction to help reflect the stigma they face being a social housing tenant as part of the tackling stigma movement.

However, there are two key things that they are working on at the moment. Firstly, they are undergoing multiple policy reviews to ensure that all of our policies are customer friendly and provide all of the answers to potential customer questions. This includes helping to build a simple 'at a glance facts sheets' which provide an easy to read and understand two page summary of our longer policies. So far this year, the scrutiny panel have reviewed the Lettings Policy, Complaints Policy, Unreasonable Complainants Behaviour Policy and Tree Policy. But there are another three policies being reviewed over the next few weeks and no doubt more to come before the end of the year!

Secondly, the scrutiny panel have become a key part in helping to build a chatbot [a form of automatic reply system built into our website (with a telephone equivalent) to hopefully provide customers with answers to their questions without having to phone customer services and having to wait in a queue] for the business.

They have provided their feedback about how they think it should work and what questions customers are likely to ask. The next steps for this include getting the panel to review the proposed system and the process of how it will actually work from a customer point of view.

Why did you decide to join Tpas?

Tpas is a fabulous organisation that stands for everything that Homes Plus wishes to achieve in terms of customer engagement.

By joining Tpas, not only does it provide us with a wealth of knowledge and experience, it allows us to spread the message of customer engagement across the business both internally and externally. It unlocks a whole world of training and opportunities for both our staff and our customers to engage with others and share best practice – it was a no brainer!

What is your top engagement tip?

Build those relationships! For me personally, I believe knowing your volunteers inside out and upside down is the key to good engagement! Understanding what they enjoy and those things that just aren't for them, whilst knowing how they work best and their personal preferences creates an open, honest relationship with each scrutiny panel member.

This means that they are comfortable enough to provide their true thoughts, feelings and feedback (good, bad and everything in-between) but also provides a level of empathy for times when life happens and possibly someone needs to step back for a bit. I appreciate this might not be for everyone, but for me this works.

What's the one thing you are really proud of when it comes to engagement?

Personally, I am really proud of the feedback that the scrutiny panel provide and all of their hard work. They have managed to influence and change so much within the business over the years and I can't wait to see what they will do next.

The panel has grown substantially over the last couple of years and by taking the time to learn who is interested in what and where the strengths lie, they work together brilliantly to make the business as customer friendly as it can be.