

Member Spotlight

March 2023

Metropolitan Thames Valley Housing



Metropolitan
Thames Valley



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We asked Nisha Aslam, Resident Engagement Lead at MTVH to share what they are up to.

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

Give us a little known fact about your organisation.

MTVH was founded following the arrival of Empire Windrush at Tilbury Docks in 1948. Its occupants were invited to Britain to fill post-war labour shortages, many of these Caribbean migrants had to live in squalid conditions without basic amenities. Like others on low incomes, they also faced insecure tenancies and homelessness.

It was against this backdrop that our legacy organisations, The Metropolitan Coloured People's Housing Association and Thames Valley Housing, were founded – with a mission to provide safer and more affordable homes in our inner cities.



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

Throughout 2022, an in-depth project was launched within MTVH to improve our support of residents facing damp, mould, and condensation within their homes. We work closely with external agencies such as Environmental Health, as well as ensuring we adhere to government guidance.

Whilst MTVH are committed to finding lasting solutions and understanding our responsibility of maintenance issues – we still wanted to learn how we could improve the resident journey.



We began to consult with our residents on the information MTVH had available, including our damp, mould and condensation leaflets that were circulated to residents. We listened to resident feedback, and altered our leaflet based on their recommendations.

Recommendations included requests for an explanation as to what non-repairs support was available to residents through their Local Housing Manager and Resident Support Teams, so we altered our leaflet to include these details.

Residents also fed back about the language used within the leaflet, so we reviewed the content. We wanted to strike a balance between being informative and keeping things concise, so we broke down the information into text boxes and bullet point to keep things clear and included visuals.

The follow up work with residents provided above satisfactory feedback relating to our changes, and we believe that we were able to convey how seriously MTVH take this topic.

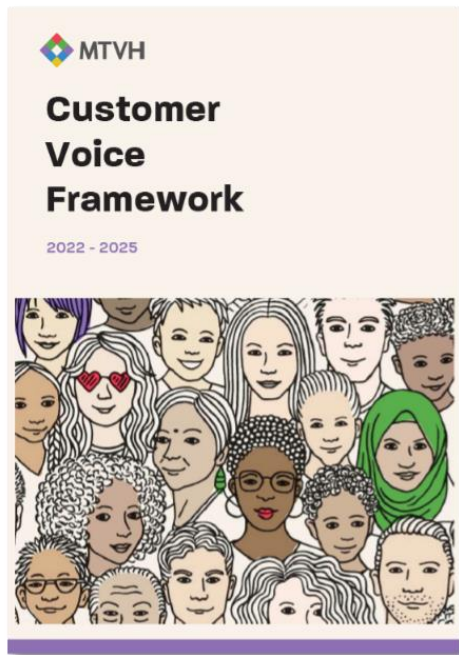
What are you currently working on when it comes to engagement?

We have lots of things in the pipeline for our Customer Voice Team! Some of which include...

- Customer Voice Colleague Guidance – a guidance document that details the different ways of which MTVH engage with residents and the importance of hearing residents voices
- Our Regularly Involved Customer Groups – we have a national Customer Council, Regional Panels in each of our main operating areas and a Service Charge Collaboration Group for Homeowners. All these groups meet frequently to view operational data and have their say on the services we deliver.



- Our Customer Voice Framework - Focussing on embedding a culture of listening to our residents and acting on their feedback, amplifying the voice of residents within MTVH and ensuring that their influence leads to positive improvements in service delivery. The framework breaks down how the organisation will achieve this, starting from 2022. [Linked here.](#)



- Continuous Learning Scrutiny Groups – our cycle of scrutiny panels that take place as targeted sprints on topics voted upon by our Customer Council, following which a recommendation report is compiled to be viewed by our Executive Team.
- YourVoice Customer Engagement Platform – in September 22, we launched an online engagement platform for residents to find out what's happening in their local area, provide feedback and get involved in shaping resident experience across the whole of MTVH: <https://yourvoice.mtvh.co.uk/>

Why did you decide to join Tpas?

We find it incredibly important to be able to share best practice and to be able to support one another in the sector. We all share the same values and common goal of wanting the best possible outcomes for our residents.

Both our colleagues and residents alike thoroughly enjoy the TPAS training courses that are available, and it can provide a clear navigation through complex and emotive topics such as building safety, regulation and more.

What is your top engagement tip?

Plan, plan, plan – Being clear on what you're asking about, making sure you have enough time to do it and make sure you leave enough time to pick up on any other themes that come through. Residents are giving their insight and time, so we need to make sure we are prepared and able to take time with them. Transparency and honesty with your residents also go hand in hand with good engagement, as this paves the way for building rapport and trust.



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

Without wanting to sound too cheesy, we feel proud of our involved residents! We have residents who are former legacy residents, and they have been patient with us whilst we merged, introduced new systems and processes that were vastly different to the pre-existing ones. Yet despite the change and growth MTVH have had, our residents continue to dedicate their time and effort to help us improve our services.

“ I am delighted with the concept behind the Regional Panels and also the way they are organised and held. I feel that we have fruitful discussion, members respect each other's views and time and i am proud to play a part - however small - in improving MTVH. ”

South Regional Panel Member