

Member Spotlight

March 2024

Hinckley and Bosworth Council



**Partners
Foundation**

A Registered Supported
Housing Provider





Member Spotlight - Partners Foundation

We asked Tracey Williams from Partners Foundation to share what they are up to. If you'd like to contact Tracey about any of the below, click [here](#)

Give us a little known fact about your organisation.

We was founded by a learning disabilities nurse and a social worker with no social housing experience. However, they were focussed on making a difference to people's lives, providing quality homes in nice neighbourhoods (a value we carry with us to this day) for individuals being discharged into the community following the closure of long stay mental health hospitals.

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

As a supported landlord for tenants with mental ill health, autism / autistic traits, neurological / musculoskeletal conditions or visual/auditory impairments, we are acutely aware that every tenant has differing needs or capacities, and one size does not fit all. All these conditions are on a spectrum with varying degrees of severity that may or may not be exacerbated by external factors.

We visit every tenant each year to make sure that they are happy in their home and that it is still suitable for them. This allows us to build a relationship and rapport with them. By getting to know our tenants personally we can tailor our services to suit them.

We can evolve and improve because of listening to what our tenants say.

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

We are on year 3 of a programme to find out more about our tenants so we can best meet their needs.

- **Year 1** was all about gathering demographic information, such as how they want to be addressed and how they identify. We also carried out an informal assessment on whether they would have the capacity to take part in any activity independently or with support. We asked



them what their hobbies and interests are so that we include articles and competitions in our publications that they are interested in.

- **Year 2** was all about communication methods. We now know how many are comfortable reading and writing, how many are non-verbal and also what kind of technology they use and what for. This information will be used to create a communication strategy.
- **Year 3** (current) we will be gathering information about their own individual circumstances. Is there something that we could do as a landlord that would make their life (and that of their support staff) easier? It maybe arranging appointments on a certain day/time to suit their daily routines, avoiding language, behaviour, or clothing that they may find triggering, providing a washing machine with a very short cycle, or a microwave with dials rather than buttons.

Future topics will depend on conversations held in previous years.

Why did you decide to join Tpas?

For networking opportunities to learn and share best practice and access to conferences and seminars.

What is your top engagement tip?

If something doesn't work or you don't get the answer you expect, don't give up; approach it from a different angle and listen and act on the answer you get.

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

We was an early adoptee of the Tenant Service Measures and have visited every tenant to seek their views so we now have 2 years of data. This data, alongside our additional questions around getting to know our tenants really help us, as fully as possible, to shape our services to meet our tenants needs.

Tenant engagement has moved on since Arnstein's theory was adapted to show that the aspiration of involved tenants was to become a board member which was only achievable by starting at the bottom and working your way up. A medical condition is not a barrier to having your say and



influencing services, no matter how small your contribution is. We pride ourselves in giving every tenant the opportunity to have their say in a way that they are comfortable with.

