

Member Spotlight

February 2025



**Wigan[♥]
Council**





Member Spotlight - Wigan Council

We asked Liz Ramsden, Operational Manager at Wigan Council to share some of the work they are currently doing.

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

Give us a little known fact about your organisation

April 2024 marked 50 years since Wigan Metropolitan Borough Council was formed, uniting 14 districts into one shared identity under the Progress with Unity banner – 2025 will see us moving into the new era and uniting through the Progress with Unity motto once again.

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

Engagement makes a difference every day to our tenants or our services either on a small individual level or as part of a wider service change. Taking time to really listen is sometimes the difference our tenants want.

An example would be - Following on from a number of complaints from our tenants, our Housing Advisory Panel (HAP) carried out a scrutiny exercise on our caretaking service. As a result of the extensive work carried out by the scrutiny panel, their comprehensive report was the catalyst for major changes being implemented to our caretaking service and the wider housing teams.

These changes resulted in the caretaking service becoming once again a visible presence on our estates, a first point of contact and our tenants knowing who their local caretaker is, this had a domino effect and triggered a further look at wider frontline services to make sure that they were not only visible but also accessible to our tenants.

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

We have just launched our Tenant Voice & Engagement Strategy (Jan 2025) following 12 months of engaging with our tenants to find out how they would like to get involved, how we can support involvement and how we can remove any barriers to getting involved. A key part of the strategy is ensuring there is buy in across all housing services to embed tenant voice and experience into their service delivery, review and improvement.

Over the next few months, we will be launching some new opportunities with our Better-Connected Community Fund – youth offer, to try and encourage our younger members in communities to get involved and make a difference. We will also be rolling out tool shed pilots that equip tenants with access to gardening tools and holding more tenant voice focus groups around repairs, complaints and lots more.

In addition, we are also planning some fun activities to boost engagement, as part of this we will be

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holding 4 Better Connected Community fun days to really get out into our communities, find out their views on our services and have some fun along the way.

Why did you decide to join Tpas?

We have been members for as long as I have worked in engagement, so I can't tell you why we joined but I can tell you why we stay! To be able to get great advice, hear about best practices from Tpas and other organisations and to take advantage of the training, webinars and events. It also gives us the opportunity to meet in person with other engagement staff and tenants from across the country, share ideas – pick each other's brains!

We're always keen to learn and Tpas give us the tools and techniques to continue to grow. Recently, we have really valued the feedback from Tpas in the development of our Engagement Strategy and in building the knowledge, skills and confidence of our tenant representatives that sit on our Housing Advisory Panel.

What is your top engagement tip?

To be as accessible as possible and have a variety of opportunities where tenants can be involved on whatever level suits them – using different methods, times, locations and removing barriers. Ensure that everyone that expresses an interest is given the opportunity to get involved – we want everyone to have a voice! Make sure it's meaningful and always feedback on what difference they make.

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

To pick one thing is really hard....but I'm really proud of the Tenant Voice and Engagement Team and all our engaged tenants who work together to make a difference. The team are always thinking of new and innovative ways to engage with our tenants and aren't afraid to think outside the box. If something doesn't work, we learn from it and we try something different. In the two years that the team has been in place, I'm amazed at how far we have come – we have launched a dedicated Tenant Voice Facebook page, tenant newsletter, held several focus groups that have led to service delivery change and recruited over 300 actively engaged tenants to name a few.



