

Member Spotlight

April 2025

Leeds 
Federated





Member Spotlight - Leeds Federated HA

We asked Louise Darby, Customer Engagement Manager at Leeds Federated HA, to share some of the work they are currently doing.

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

Give us a little known fact about your organisation

We're 50 years old this year! Our first office was a terraced house nestled between homes we were improving. Just like the surrounding homes, our office had an outside toilet and needed upgrading. We invested in the area, improving the homes and our office. Over the last 50 years we've moved to different offices around the Leeds City Region but have continued with our aim to help people make a home, and when we downsized our recent office space following the pandemic, we converted the building into new homes.

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

In previous years, operational day-to-day communications came up as a key issue in surveys. To gain an independent perspective on our letters and communications, we commissioned an external review in 2022. After an initial assessment from an independent communications organisation, we worked with scrutiny panel members and staff to develop a guide for improving our tone of voice in our written communications. Now, we have representatives across the organisation who work with colleagues to improve the way we write our letters, ensuring they are purposeful, positive, and personal.

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

As you might expect in customer engagement I am working on a range of things, from planning for community-based events in the summer and encouraging colleagues to join in, to reviewing our customer engagement and influence policy to make sure the organisation is meeting the consumer standards.

Five new customers have recently joined the Customer Voices Panel, so we are also discussing the Panel's priorities for scrutiny for the coming year and what is important to focus on from a customer perspective. They've recently considered the new Corporate Plan with Matthew Walker Chief Executive and Michelle Collins Customer Service Director and are providing a strong challenge and considered arguments to really test thinking, as our values, strategy and goals are reviewed.

Like lots of residents they are very keen to know what their service charge is paying for and who is working in their communities and neighbourhoods. And championing the importance of the Neighbourhood Officer being a key point of contact.

Some of the Panel members will be coming along to the next Tpas member network meeting on 8 April 2025.

Why did you decide to join Tpas?

If you have any questions regarding this document or if we can help in any other way, call us on **0161 868 3500** or email info@tpas.org.uk



We decided to join Tpas in 2021 as I had taken part in the Tpas engagement maximiser pilot project in a previous role; we were still operating in pandemic conditions and realised we had to rebuild relationships and trust. We recognised the resources and expertise in Tpas would be really important. Following the Tpas engagement maximiser process again, testing different messaging and developing an email campaign really helped.

What is your top engagement tip?

Keep calm and don't give up! Listen carefully to the experiences both customers and your colleagues are sharing as generally when they are brought together and everyone collaborates in a respectful way, there is consensus and understanding of what needs to change and why.

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

The people, both customers and colleagues and that they care and want to make things better.

During a workshop to review our written communications and develop an approach to what we now call 'tone of voice' a customer shared a quote that silenced everyone, including the trainer.

We'd reviewed a range of our standard letters with staff and customers together, which was quite uncomfortable and cringy when even we as staff couldn't explain our own letters. We accepted that some of them made no sense and we didn't seem to have a clear answer of how a letter should be written or a rule of thumb. When one of the customers, Derek said when he spoke or wrote he always had in the back of his mind whether it was:

True, Necessary, Kind

That has really stuck with me. So, I am really proud that you can play a role in bringing people together and changing something for the better.

