



Involvement News | August 2015 | www.homegroup.org.uk

Due to the changeover to our new intranet the links we usually include in involvement news are not available. Please contact Stacey.hart@homegroup.org.uk if you would like a copy of reports from Client panel, client scrutiny, Youth Action, North West gas servicing and planned maintenance, North East and Scotland viewpoint teams

Human Library and equality & diversity

Following our success at last year's TPAS (Tenant Participation Advisory Service) annual conference we were invited to deliver a Human Library workshop at this year's prestigious 2 day event in Kenilworth, Warwickshire. We delivered a presentation on our Human Library and Role Models initiative and 4 customer Human Library members participated in an interactive life swap session for 25 tenants and colleagues from external housing providers.

"This session was so thought provoking. I can see now how equality and diversity isn't just the responsibility of Human Resources. It's about each and every one of us; our lives, our experiences our behaviour and the way we are with each other. I'm going to implement this at our organisation" Delegate

We shared practical tips and advice on setting up and coordinating Human Libraries and received invitations to deliver sessions for external tenant and resident groups.

"Interesting, inspiring, brave and educational. I will definitely take this back to my organisation as something we can develop." Delegate

Contact Stacey.hart@homegroup.org.uk if you would like a paper copy of our role models guide. Please contact Samantha.Byrne@homegroup.org.uk if you would like more information about our Role Models project or if you would like to join our Human Library.

Client Panel

12 clients from services across care & support met up at Birmingham regional office on 23rd July for our national Client Panel with senior leaders Sally Parsons and Audrey Mitchell and members of the Involvement Team. Ray, client panel member from Hampshire chaired the meeting.

“The issues raised and discussed at previous meetings have been heard and incorporated within Home Group at all levels from board to services”

- Sally gave details of the client satisfaction survey as requested by the panel at their meeting in May and a brief update on the impact on Home Group of the government’s budget.
- Client panel members shared their success stories and how involvement on the panel has helped lead to apprenticeship, independent living, volunteering, reunions with family, local and regional involvement, assessing our services, speaking at other services about involvement, Human Library activities and so much more!
- Becky, Involvement apprentice presented the findings of the last 6 months of client promise assessments. Client Panel gave their recommendations on how we can improve in the 2 lowest scoring standards.
- Home Group will be 80 years old this year. Client panel gave their ideas on how we can celebrate this landmark birthday

“Ray did a brilliant job at chairing....I always find it a fun and friendly event”

You can see all the minutes from the Customer Forum and Client Panel on our website [here](#)

Youth Action

Youth Action met in London on 21st July and discussed

- Client scrutiny report, making recommendations at a national level based on the findings of 46 client promise assessments.
- Priorities for Health & Safety
- Anti-social behaviour policy
- Annual review for customers and clients 2015
- How to encourage young clients to pay their rent

Customer and client awards

Nominations for the Customer and client awards are now open and we are encouraging colleagues, clients and customers to get nominating! Click [here](#) to nominate

What Happened Here?

Customers met in Dumfries and reviewed 5 complaints from Scotland. They gave recommendations on how we could have dealt with each complaint better and how we can avoid similar complaints in the future. A common theme was communication and the organisation’s response to queries. Customers told us that in several of the examples, we

could have prevented the complaint being made with clearer guidance and communication and especially with complaints escalating from stage 1 to stage 2.

'I enjoyed finding out more about how complaints are handled and how customers suggestions can help improve the service.'

KISS (Keep It Short and Simple; communications group)

Fifteen clients and customers met in Leeds in July with members of the communications team for a bespoke KISS group to agree the content, design, images and layout of the annual review for customers and clients 2015.

This month our virtual KISS group gave feedback on

- The Mag for the Communications team
- 3 letters to Scottish customers about electrical appliances

Investment Fund

Customer and client Investment fund panel members met in Newcastle and reviewed 8 approved applications to check and test the matrix. They approved an application for £10,000. Panel members invited representatives from the Northbourne Street Youth Initiative in Elswick, Newcastle to their meeting and validated how they spent the money and discussed how the project was doing before agreeing funding for a further year.

For information about the Investment Fund and how you can apply, please email Colette.small@homegroup.org.uk

e-views

Our online e-views group gave their views on the allpay mobile app for Service Development

anyone@home

Customers and clients on anyone@home; our online community gave their views and opinions on

- The criteria for VIPs and unsung heroes at the customer and client awards
- Their ideas for music for the customer and client awards
- If they consider the customer and client awards a good way to recognise achievements

If you have a question for anyone@home please contact Stacey.hart@homegroup.org.uk
Please promote anyone@home to our customers and clients and tell them about the benefits. You can find a link to the site [here](#)

News from the regions

Yorkshire and Humber

Customer and client assessors awarded the **silver** standard to Dundas Gardens neighbourhood in Whitby, North Yorkshire. They spoke to 8 households who gave positive feedback for neighbourhood safety and value for money of our rents and service charges. They made recommendations for improvements with repairs and planned maintenance

processes. Customers would like more information from Home about the local area and local services.

North West

- **Planned Maintenance Service Improvement Group** made up of 4 customers and 3 colleagues continue to shape and influence the Customer Communication Diary. The 4 customer assessors visited 10 customers who are receiving improvement works during the next 3 months and went through the new communication diary with them and explained why the diary has been introduced. .
- **Gas Servicing** – 3 customers and 4 colleagues worked together to reduce the numbers of no accesses for gas servicing appointments. For a 3 month pilot period customers will receive a post card appointment card, designed by customers instead of the usual letter. The appointment card highlights that customers can have a morning, afternoon evening or weekend appointment

Home Scotland

- **Home Scotland Viewpoint team** and two customers from the North West Viewpoint team met up in Edinburgh and discussed our performance monitoring reporting against the Scottish Social Housing Charter. Customers from the North West presented the findings of the first customer promise assessment in Scotland in the Castle Milk neighbourhood. June 2015. The assessors interviewed 15 customers from the neighbourhood. They rated the Castlemilk neighbourhood an overall score of bronze; scoring silver for a decent home and a safe place to live.
- **Pine Court Residents Meeting in Dundee** discussed the council's recently introduced re-cycling programme, installation of CCTV, anti-social behaviour and the proposed new heating in flats and communal areas.
- **Mill O' Mains Surgery** attracted 26 customers. They discussed car parking and safety issues, new fencing, signing for the newly created street in Mill O' Mains and general cleanliness of the neighbourhood

North East

Viewpoint Team met on 14th July and discussed updates on void scrutiny recommendations, a short training session on Equality and Diversity and the most recent scrutiny report and findings on Responsive Repairs and Complaints

Client Assessor Teams

Client assessors from the north and south reviewed the client promise questions and paperwork used with the assessments. Their suggested changes and improvements have already been put in to practice in two assessments to help the feedback be more focused and relevant to each standard of the client promise.

BASS (Bail accommodation and support service) assessor team

- Service users awarded the East Midlands area a **gold** standard which involved 8 BASS houses. They identified excellence in people who care and decent home with improvements in clear information and opportunities to influence.
- Service users awarded the North West region (involving 7 BASS houses) a **silver** overall, scoring gold with people who care and a choice of products and services.

They made recommendations for improvements in a decent home and value for money

North Client Assessor Team

- Client assessors awarded an ex-offenders service in Leicester the **silver** standard overall, they scored gold in a decent home, a choice of products and services and people who care. Clients from the service have shaped the way that they will find out about involvement opportunities in the future.
- Client assessors awarded an older peoples service in Egremont the **gold** standard overall with particular excellence in value for money, a safe place to live, a choice of products and services and people who care. They made recommendations for improvements in a decent home, reliable services and clear information and opportunities to influence. Client Assessors said

'They (customers) were very impressed with Florence House and especially with Paul who delivers art classes to residents in his own time.'

- 2 clients from an outreach service in Huddersfield helped shape a tender for a new homelessness service and influenced the services commitment to reducing the risk of client abandonment.

South Client Assessor Team

- Client assessors awarded a young person's service in Slough the **gold** standard. They identified excellence in a decent home, a choice of products and services, clear information and opportunities to influence and people who care. Clients and assessors worked together to make recommendations for improvements in value for money, a safe place to live and reliable services.

Satisfaction with Involvement

We received 70 completed evaluation forms in July

- 100% of customers and clients were satisfied with involvement activities that they took part in this month with 80% saying it was excellent
- 100% said it has increased their confidence to get involved
- 96% said they have gained or developed skills as a result of their involvement
- 99% are satisfied with involvement opportunities overall at Home with 76% saying they are excellent

What do you think of our newsletter? Please contact Stacey.hart@homegroup.org.uk