



## Involvement News | February 2018 | [www.homegroup.org.uk](http://www.homegroup.org.uk)

Welcome to February's Involvement News, full of the ways our fantastic customers have been shaping, changing and influencing Home Group over the last month. Outcomes are highlighted in **pink**. We now include outcomes from customer promise assessments so that you can see the difference our customer scrutiny is making in our neighbourhoods and services.

### Customer and Volunteer Awards 2018

We received over 100 nominations for this year's Customer and Volunteer Awards. A panel of customers shortlisted the nominations which will go in front of our judging panel later in the month.

### Shortlisted for Awards!

- Our fantastic Independent complaints panel have been shortlisted for 'Top Team' in the South TPAS (Tenant Engagement Experts) awards. Customers from the panel will attend the prestigious awards ceremony in London on 9<sup>th</sup> February, here's hoping for a win!
- Our Human Library has been shortlisted for an Inside Housing Award for excellence in Equality and Diversity. The next stage is a pitch to the panel of judges in March.

### Digital Involvement

anyone@home is on the Home Group website, it's easy to find and join in. Customers don't need to register, just go onto the website and join the conversation. In January our digitally involved customers;

- Gave feedback on the language used for the 'Home Group Account'.
- Gave us their views on how we can improve the Involvement pages on

our website.

## Customers are shaping our digital products and website content

### Independent Complaints Panel

Three of our brilliant Independent Complaints Panel members from the South met at our office in Harrow to investigate and help resolve a customer complaint that had exhausted our internal complaints process. Panel members met with Home Group colleagues and our contractor to understand what happened and put forward recommendations to Home Group.

### Recommendations from the panel helped resolve the complaint

If you have an eye for detail, enjoy problem solving and would like to work with Home Group to help improve our services please contact the Involvement Team to find out more about how to get involved with the Independent Complaints Panel.

### Editorial Panel

Seven customers from our rented and supported services got together in Peterborough with our Communications Team to plan the spring edition of Homelife, our award winning customer magazine. Customers agreed topics, articles, design and new features. If you would like to write an article to share in Homelife, or get involved with our Editorial Panels, please contact the Communications or Involvement teams

### Customers shaped the design and content of Homelife magazine

### Scrutiny

Customer assessors visit our services and neighbourhoods and talk to the customers who live there or receive support from the service. They measure how well we're doing at delivering the promise, awarding a bronze, silver or gold and making recommendations for improvements. You can find details about the promise and 12 month scrutiny reports summarising service and neighbourhood assessments on our website.

### So what happened?

**Birmingham Mental Health service** scored a silver standard in June 2017. The service has made the following changes based on customer assessor recommendations:

#### Outcomes

- **Decent Home** We have started working with customers to pick out colour schemes and choose other items to personalise their rooms including lamps and pillows etc.
- **Value for Money** Customer session on the budget which can then be filtered into link work sessions.
- **Safe Place to Live** Contacted the local fire service and local

community police team to see what they can offer around safeguarding training and keeping themselves safe in the service and local community.

- **Reliable Services** Working with customers to support them to report and follow up on repairs themselves ready for when they have to do this in independent accommodation.

**Guildford Close and Iona Close in Stevenage** scored a silver standard in July 2017. The neighbourhood has made the following changes based on customer feedback and assessor recommendations:

### Outcomes

- **Decent Home** Management and monitoring of the work in progress by the regional maintenance manager. Monthly estate inspections; quarterly joint inspection with the Grounds Maintenance Supervisor.
- **Value for Money** Individual issues resolved; letters to all customers inviting them to estate inspections and information relating to grounds maintenance schedules.
- **Safe place to live** Housing Manager is managing anti-social behaviour; we are monitoring parking during estate inspections and any concerns are raised with local police and the DVLA; resident-only parking signs will be ordered and installed.
- **Choice of products and services** We will include information about products and services, regional changes and ground maintenance schedules in the letters that we send to customers.
- **Reliable services** South East Viewpoint Team reviewed a selection of customer complaints and made recommendations which were shared with the Customer Solutions Team and Customer Complaints Scrutiny Group. Individual repairs complete.
- **Clear information and opportunities to influence** Assessors gave customers information about our Homelife Editorial Panel and explained how customers can get involved in writing articles; 3 customers invited to involvement meetings and assessments.

**Customer assessments are pushing up the standards of our neighbourhoods and services**

### News from the regions

You can find viewpoint reports for all our regions on our website

#### Scotland

- One of our customers from Rosyth joined colleagues and Safer Communities' officers for an estate inspection on 5<sup>th</sup> January. Inspectors noted improvements in leaf clearance, fewer contaminated or abandoned refuse bins and a reduction in fly tipping.

*It's good that there is now a procedure in place for abandoned bins...I am very happy with the regular inspections, improvements are already evident.*

- Customers participated in 'After the Act briefing' in Edinburgh about key changes to the Scotland Act 2014. Discussions included legal framework for allocations, temporary tenancies and streamlining evictions. *I found the session extremely informative and interesting.*

**Estate inspections are improving our neighbourhoods and attending external events is building customers' capacity.**

**What do you think of our newsletter?** Please contact [Jill.Twigger@homegroup.org.uk](mailto:Jill.Twigger@homegroup.org.uk)