



## Involvement News | May 2016 | [www.homegroup.org.uk](http://www.homegroup.org.uk)

### Vacancies for apprenticeships - new news item!

From May this year we are going to use Involvement News to advertise apprenticeship vacancies at Home Group. Whether you are at the beginning of your career or looking for a change in direction, we are keen to hear from you. Our apprenticeships:

- Are open to all customers and clients over 16
- Pay above the national average for apprentices
- Provide on the job training
- Provide a recognised qualification
- Offer opportunities for progression for the right candidate

If you are interested in hearing more about apprenticeships or would like to be added to our candidate pool, please get in touch with [kate.horsfield@homegroup.org.uk](mailto:kate.horsfield@homegroup.org.uk)

- Our IT department (in Newcastle) is currently seeking talented individuals to become part of their fast paced and forward thinking team. If you have the drive and ambition to take your career to the next level then get in touch, you could be working towards an advanced level qualification whilst earning a wage and progressing your career within the IT sector. We are seeking individuals with a minimum of level 2 (GCSE A-C) in English and Maths who have experience within IT. Good communication and customer service skills are also an advantage.
- We will soon be offering some exciting opportunities within our customer service centre (Newcastle) for customers and clients who are interested in earning a wage while gaining experience and a recognised level 2 qualification in Customer Service. If you are hardworking with good communication skills and a positive outlook then we would like to hear from you.

Contact [kate.horsfield@homegroup.org.uk](mailto:kate.horsfield@homegroup.org.uk) for more information.

### [anyone@home](#)

We have 749 customers and clients on anyone@home; our online community including 8 new members since last month. They gave their views and opinions on moving anyone@home to the Home Group website. Customers and clients also learnt some facts about Home Group's website and what it is used for in this month's 'did you know'.

## Virtual KISS (Keep It Short and Simple; communications group)

This month our virtual KISS group gave feedback on 2 documents:

- Income management letters for the Income Management team
- Leaflet to encourage customer and client feedback through complaints, compliments and comments for the Policy team

## Investment Fund

Our Investment Fund has been supporting projects and services that benefit our clients and customers and their neighbourhoods, services and communities for over 4 years. Home Group provided a fund of £92,286 for this 2015/16 financial year. Between April 2015 and March 2016

- We received 47 completed application forms
- The matrix (designed by customers and clients) accepted 33 applications
- The matrix turned down 13 applications
- 1 application was withdrawn

Due to efficiency savings Home Group will not be providing any funding for the Investment Fund 2016/17. The Involvement team are compiling a list of useful funding web-sites to help sign-post colleagues to external funding sources. Please contact Colette Small for details

## Hitting the Target (Recruitment and induction training)

- 2 clients co-delivered local 'Welcome Home' induction training for 8 new colleagues from Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, Bath and Weston super Mare. Clients shared their stories and experience of involvement through an interactive life swap session, delivered training to help colleagues to understand the benefits and importance of involvement and brought our quick involvement tools to life, providing colleagues with practical resources to involve their clients in recruiting colleagues, understanding the client promise and improving our accommodation standards, and improving information for clients. *Meeting the clients and hearing their stories was helpful and inspirational* (colleague)
- 1 client designed interview questions and assessed candidates while meeting and greeting, helping to recruit a new client Apprentice in Durham.

## Human Library

- We trained 4 clients in Penzance in equality and diversity as part of their plan for involvement at their local service. As a result, all 4 clients joined the Human Library and will help shape and deliver involvement in equality and diversity across Cornwall.
- 4 Human Library members delivered a workshop and life swap session to external tenants and colleagues, commissioned by West Kent Housing Association. Human Library members shared their stories and experiences of gender identity and being transgender, being out at work and the importance of visible LGBT role models, growing up in care and living with learning disabilities. We shared our good practice on customer and client involvement and staff engagement in equality and diversity through our Human Library and Role Models initiatives and helped colleagues and tenants at West Kent Housing Association to shape their future equality and diversity work.

## Independent Complaints Panel

4 customers from the Independent Complaints Panel reviewed and made recommendations to resolve 2 customer complaints. Panel members also reviewed the process for administering and supporting Panel meetings and made recommendations for improving future Independent Complaint Panel meetings.

## Homelife Editorial Panel

- Six customers from across the North met in Newcastle for the first Homelife Editorial Panel. Customers reviewed the winter and spring edition of Homelife making recommendations for

improvements. They shaped the design, style and content for the summer edition. Customers will be involved with interviewing and writing articles for the summer edition.

- Two customers visited the Sleep Centre at Northumbria University to interview Professor Ellis for an article for the summer edition of Homelife. Watch out for our customers' article and their top tips on how to get a good night's sleep in the next Homelife magazine.

## Call to Support - Automated Telephony System

Six customers were involved in reviewing 3 'call to support' automated messages for enquiries relating to rent accounts. Customers suggestions included using and repeating 'Home Group' rather than 'us' and making the text message more personal

## Scrutiny

**Client assessors** visit our services across care and support, talk to the clients who receive support from the service. They measure how well we're doing at delivering the client promise, awarding a bronze, silver or gold and making recommendations for improvements. You can find details about the client promise on our website

- Client assessors awarded a homeless service in Kettering the **gold** standard overall. They spoke to almost a quarter of clients and scored gold in a decent home, value for money, a choice of products and services, clear information and opportunities to influence and people who care. *They have shown me how to set my boundaries and they've made me believe in myself...it's safe here and there is plenty of space*
- Client assessors awarded a homeless service in Hereford the **silver** standard overall. They spoke to 7 clients and scored gold in people who care and made recommendations for improvements in value for money *They teach you accountability here and how to see things from another perspective*

## News from the regions

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

### North West Viewpoint Team

The Viewpoint team met at Maryport Business Centre on 14<sup>th</sup> April. Customers asked several questions about changes to maintenance service delivery and felt reassured by the update. Customers asked that Mears be invited to the next meeting to review their performance and to find out about their community involvement offer. Customers have started monitoring grounds maintenance services and will challenge and find solutions for service failures. Customers reviewed performance and 1 customer volunteered to track performance and provide the team with trends / comparisons at the next meeting.

## Satisfaction with Involvement

We received 54 completed evaluations this month

- 98% of customers and clients were satisfied with involvement activities that they took part in this month with 67% saying it was excellent.
- 80% said it has increased their confidence to get involved.
- 74% said they have gained or developed skills as a result of their involvement.
- 92% are satisfied with involvement opportunities overall at Home with 46% saying they are excellent.

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