

 **RESIDENT
INVOLVEMENT** CONFERENCE
2023

PRESENTATION SLIDES



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Social Housing Quality Programme

Ruhena Ahmed
Deputy Director
Social Housing Quality and Residents

Wednesday, 21 June 2023.
9:45am – 10:15am



The Social Housing (Regulation) Bill

Progression of the Bill

- The Bill was introduced in the House of Lords June 2022, and completed passage through the House of Commons on 1 March 2023
- The Bill is expected to enter ping-pong shortly and to receive Royal Assent before the end of this Parliamentary Session.

Summary of key changes

- ✓ Strengthening the Regulator's consumer inspection and enforcement powers
- ✓ Strengthening the Housing Ombudsman service
- ✓ New standards of decency and quality of service including
 - ✓ 'Awaab's Law'
 - ✓ Competence and conduct regulatory standards
 - ✓ Requirements for housing managers and senior housing executives to hold housing management qualifications
 - ✓ Requirements for regular electrical safety checks.



Setting clear standards Physical quality of homes

The Government is taking the following action to **set standards in social housing**.

- On **decency standards**;
 - We are currently reviewing the Decent Homes Standard (DHS).
 - We will continue work on developing a new government guidance on damp and mould.
 - Alongside the Department of Health and Social Care, we are reviewing government guidance on damp and mould, with the aim to published revised guidance in the summer.
 - We have recently completed our review of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System (HHSRS).
 - We have brought forward Awaab's Law, which will set time limits for landlords to investigate and remedy hazards such as damp and mould.
- On **energy efficiency standards**;
 - We will consult with the sector on improving energy efficiency in social housing, within 6 months of the Bill gaining Royal Assent.
- On **building and electrical safety standards**;
 - We have introduced requirements for landlords around the provision and maintenance of smoke and carbon alarms, and are introducing new requirements for social housing landlords to carry out regular electrical safety checks.
 - Under the Building Safety Act, building owners and landlords are now responsible for making buildings safe and the first port of call to fund any necessary repairs.
- On **funding delivery against these standards**;
 - We have provided funding to remove unsafe ACM cladding, and to decarbonise social housing stock. We are also providing £30m in decency funding for Greater Manchester and the West Midlands.



Setting clear standards

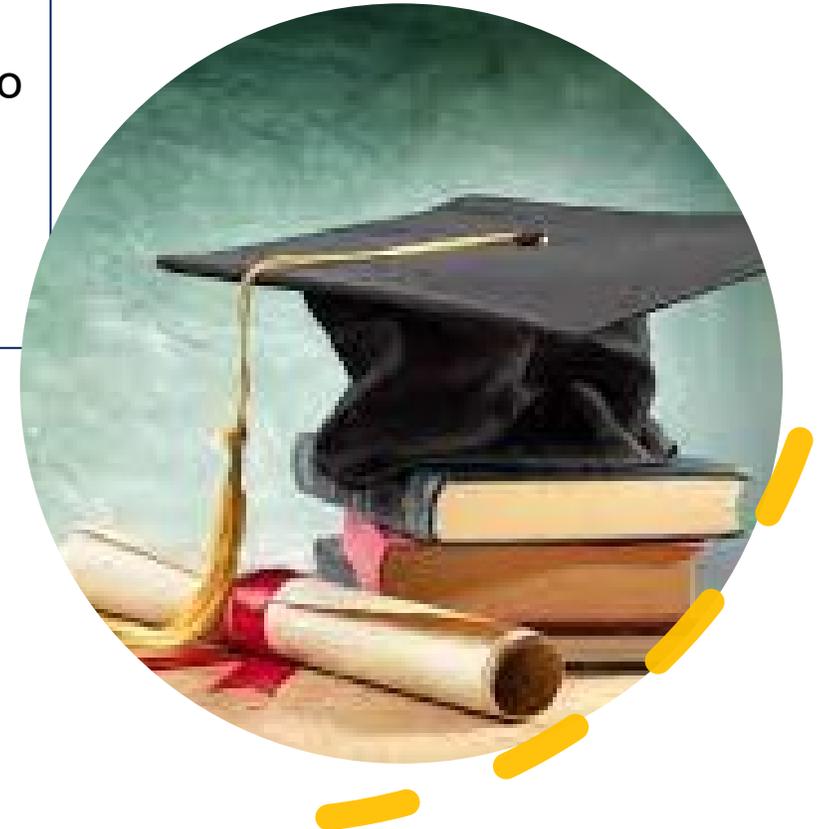
Quality of resident experience

Professionalisation

- We are introducing through the Bill new 'competence and conduct' regulatory standards, which will require landlords to ensure all social housing staff have the skills, knowledge, experience and behaviours needed to deliver professional, high-quality services to tenants.
- As part of this, we will require senior housing managers and senior housing executives to hold or be working towards an appropriate (Level 4 or 5) housing management qualification.

Awaab's Law

- Awaab's Law will also introduce new requirements on social landlords to investigate and repair hazards within fixed timeframes.





Strengthening regulation

The Secretary of State has written to all providers seeking an assessment of damp and mould issues. The Regulator will be engaging with those reporting high numbers of cases, taking action where needed.

Going forward, the Bill will give the Regulator powers to tackle landlords when they are systemically failing tenants:

- **Inspection:** They will have powers to conduct routine inspections of large landlords, ensuring they have the systems and processes in place to meet the new standards.
- **Enforcement:** When things do go wrong, they will have the power to take swift and effective action. In the most serious cases, they will have the powers to issue unlimited fines and schedule repairs within 48 hours.

Strengthening the Housing Ombudsman

- We have already removed the democratic filter, to speed up access, and we have expanded the Ombudsman's remit to enable investigation of wider issues, going beyond individual cases.
- We are giving the Ombudsman power to publish guidance on good practice, and to ask social landlords to complete a self-assessment against this guidance when a complaint is received.
- The Ombudsman has increased landlord membership fees to £5.75 (per housing unit) to respond to an unprecedented increase in demand.

Strengthening tenant's voice

We are introducing a number of measures **to strengthen tenants' voice**, including;

- The introduction of Tenant Satisfaction Measures;
- A multi-year communications campaign, to raise awareness of complaints processes, including the role of the Housing Ombudsman Service;
- Free Training and guidance for residents on their rights, via our new Resident Opportunities and Empowerment Programme - [Four Million Homes](#);
- Our Social Housing Quality Resident Panel is informing the government's approach to driving up social housing quality.

We are also supporting tenants by **calling out bad practice**, including;

- Naming and shaming worst performing landlords;
- Removing Affordable Homes Programme (AHP) funding from landlords who fail consumer standards.



Reported black mould and it hasn't been fixed?



If you have an issue with your social housing provider, it's now easier to...



Make things right



All providers need to work over the coming months to fully understand and prepare for the new requirements - so you will be ready to comply and deliver the changes needed to ensure consistent, high quality accommodation and services, and strengthen tenant voice.

Workstream	What to expect
Setting clear standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoke and carbon monoxide alarm requirements now in force (October 2022) • Publication of consultation response on changes to electrical safety requirements • Launch of consultations on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • minimum energy efficiency standards • time limits for repairs • competence and conduct standards • Decent Homes Standard review • future of the rent standard / call for evidence on a catch up mechanism; • supported housing regulatory oversight • Delivery of Social Housing Decarbonisation Funding.
Enforcement of standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publication of directions to RSH (DLUHC) • Publication of consumer regulation regime framework consultation (RSH) • Publication of decision statement and standards for new consumer regulation regime (RSH), new regime comes into force • Implementation of new HOS powers, and further increases to HOS capacity
Strengthening tenant voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Further waves of government communications campaign • Further waves of the Resident Panel • Tenant satisfaction data collected by landlords (commenced April 2023) • Resident Opportunities and Empowerment Programme Four Million Homes (commenced April 2023)



Department for Levelling Up,
Housing & Communities

Social Housing Quality Programme

QUESTIONS

Stop Social Housing Stigma Resident Led Campaign Update for the NHC Resident involvement Conference June 2023



Lynne Brosnan, Chair

Colin Lincoln, Committee Member

WHO WE ARE



**A Resident-led Committee
Working to create stigma free Social housing**



Our Vision

“To drive forward from a tenant perspective, the impact of social housing stigma, by raising awareness, challenging & taking positive action to eradicate stigma in social housing”.

We are positive & solution focussed in our ambition

TPAS Contractors and Partners

TPAS have been enormous supporters of our campaign

TPAS set up a meeting with their contractors and partners in April - over 60 organisations!

Our ask of them were to consider:

- To receive training from us on the impact of their comments and how they make us feel when they make assumptions about how we live and why we live in social housing
- To work with us to develop a contractor pledge to promote social housing positively, without stigmatising tenants, or our communities in their literature and in what they assume and say about social housing tenants
- We are still meeting with them all individually on this, but have already:
 - Had an offer of a contractor lead to develop the pledge
 - Had connections with subcontractors to inform them of our campaign and to raise awareness of the intended pledge

Why not become one of our Anti Stigma Pilots?

- We have been working with University of Durham, the University of Sheffield and the CIH, since last year.
- They intend to use all the research and reports which have been completed so far on stigma and apply them in practice to 6-9 willing landlords and their tenants- and follow that story
- We have 1-2 interested volunteers already, **but we need more!**
- We want to develop the toolkit to be relevant to everyone.
- We want to apply this work in 6-9 pilot organisations in an inclusive way – we want to capture councils, ALMOs and HAs - big and small, rural and city, with different geographical areas and covering the whole of England.
- When this work, which is being funded by the universities is complete, we will work with them to develop the CIH “Its not OK guide” into an “**its not ok toolkit**”, so everyone has access to good practice and practical steps to take to address stigma where they live and work
- We will market this through a pledge for landlords and contractors and tenant groups to sign up to, and later we will evaluate the difference this has made to reducing stigma in social housing

If you would like to volunteer to be a pilot , please drop us a line or drop your contact details into the chat now and we will pick that up and contact you directly to supply you with more details

Civil Servants and Baroness Scott

- Civil Servants have been really helpful and met with us a few times, since we met Eddie Hughes at the Leeds NHC Conference.
- We have had good advice and additional knowledge to shape our campaign from civil servants

In May, we met Baroness Scott to:

- Invite her to part fund the toolkit and landlord/contractor/tenant group pledge, which could impact on all tenants and communities
- Understand our part in the references x 3 to stigma, (including 2 actions) in the Better Social Housing Review, which we worked on with the CIH
- Include addressing social housing stigma as a requirement in new consumer regulations

Regulator of Social Housing

We met Kate and Fleur in June

We asked RSH to capture the Better Social Housing Review actions to address social housing stigma, in their first draft of new Consumer Regulations, including:

We believe that most housing staff are well meaning but do not always have awareness of how hurtful their comments are to us, from the assumptions they make

- We requested the RSH to ensure the definitions of professionalism pick up the need to address unconscious bias and ensure officer/contractor awareness of the part they play in social housing stigma

Consumer Regulations have not enabled stigma to be prioritised for action, by landlords and their partners - it was the biggest problem for tenants (even above repairs) in the post Grenfell Ministerial visits to meet with tenants.

The Social Housing Green Paper majored on stigma – we want to ensure it is not lost in the outcomes of the Social Housing White Paper

- We requested the RSH are more explicit about addressing stigma in new regulations – the current requirement on economic, environmental and social well-being are not sufficient.

What else?

- We are meeting with the “**four million homes**” tenant trainers. We intend to offer to lend a hand to promote action to address social housing stigma
- We are meeting with **TAROE** who have agreed to help us with our review of our terms of reference and constitution
- We are **available to come and speak to your tenants and staff**, to show them what we are doing and to promote our work
- We are **recruiting for new members** – including landlord members and tenant committee members
- Please drop us a line, or put your details in the chat box **now**, if you would like to get involved in our campaign in a way which suits you

We would love to hear from you



@sshscampaign



stopsocialhousingstigma21@gmail.com



PlaceShapers
Together we help communities thrive



TENANT ENGAGEMENT EXPERTS
tpas

HEARTWARMING HOMES

PUTTING RESIDENTS AT THE HEART OF NET ZERO

HEARTWARMING HOMES



The [Social Housing Tenants' Climate Jury](#) and [Residents' Voices in the Net Zero Journey](#) highlighted the need for better communication about energy efficiency improvements.

Heartwarming Homes will create a suite of resources which will support social landlords to communicate better with tenants about retrofit.

OVER TO YOU



- What do you think are the benefits of having energy efficiency work done on your home?
- What questions and/ or concerns would you have if you were due to have:
 - a) your home insulated, and new doors and windows fitted?
 - b) an air source heat pump fitted?

RESEARCH FINDINGS FROM NHC SURVEY

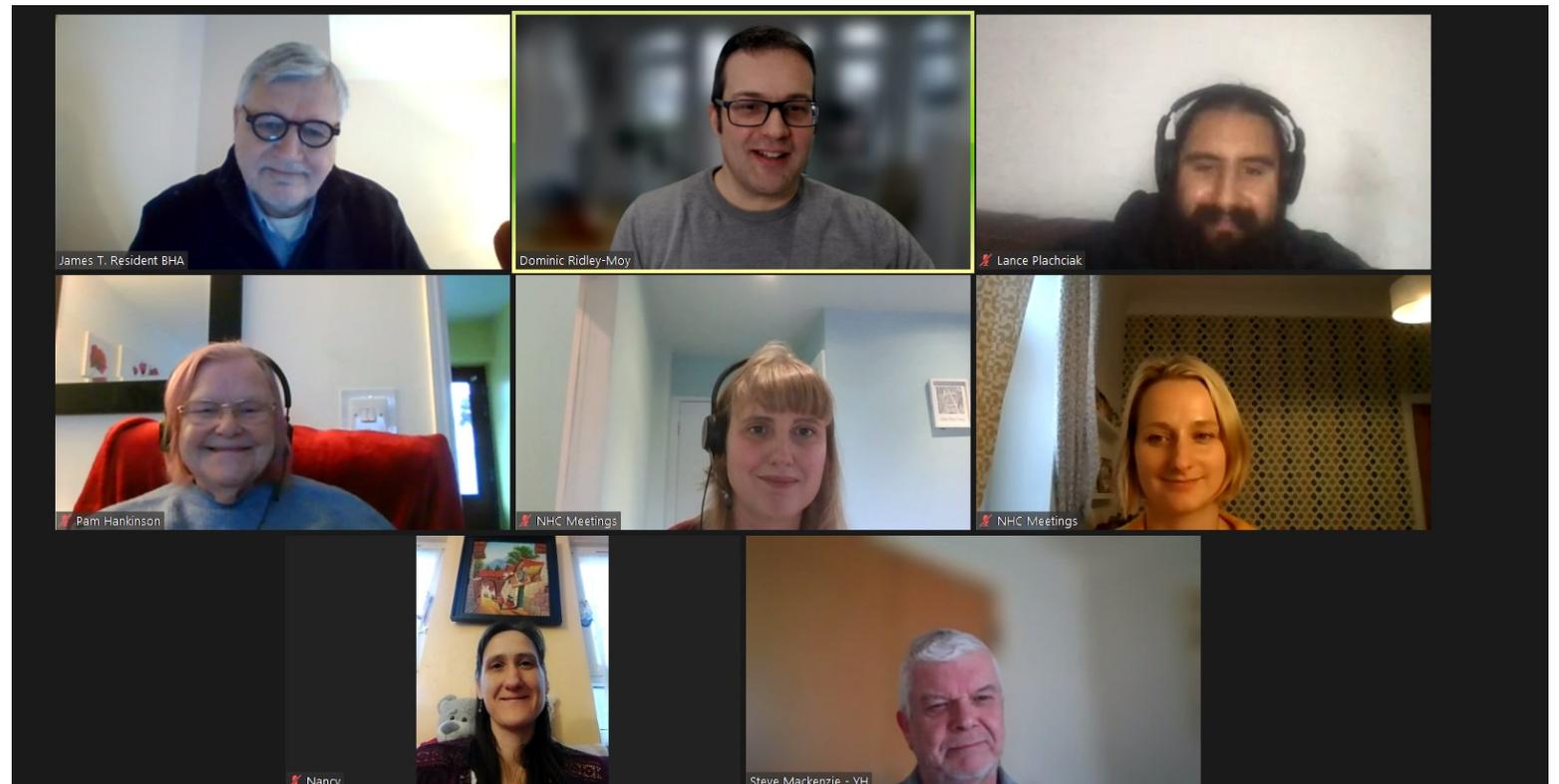


- On average landlords planning to do energy efficiency work on 800 homes over next two years.
- Biggest tenant concern is disruption during work.
- An average nine per cent of tenants refuse access for retrofit work with answers ranging from 0 to 30 per cent.
- A fabric first approach is common – the top 3 energy efficiency works for next two years insulation (cavity wall, internal, reflect external and loft), improving ventilation and draught-proofing. Although the numbers of heat pumps planned is smaller, there's a greater comms need.

RESEARCH FINDINGS FROM NHC SURVEY

We've set up tenant and communications advisory groups to make sure the campaign meets the needs of both tenants and landlords.

Pam Hankinson, South Yorkshire Housing Association Board member and member of the Heartwarming Home tenant advisory group will take you through some key findings from the tenants' group.



BEHAVIOUR CHANGE THEORY – OVERCOMING BARRIERS

Approaches to addressing climate change and retrofit must tackle barriers that limit individual action (such as agreeing to have energy efficiency work done on your home). These are:

- Physical or psychological capacity e.g. financial, time or knowledge constraints.
- Motivation e.g. unhelpful habits or conflicting motivations.
- Opportunity in individual environments and what people around you do.

Based on COM B behaviour change model.

Concern	Ways to overcome the concerns
The disruption it will cause.	Person-centred approach with practical support to overcome disruption – for example loft clearance service when installing loft insulation.
Lack of trust of landlord (often stemming from previous dissatisfaction with repairs).	<p>Use trusted messengers:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other tenants are most trusted – tenant ambassadors to deliver messages. • Repeated face-to-face contact with a trusted person from the housing association (community engagement officer, neighbourhood officer etc.) can also build trust. • Do what you'll say when you say you will.
Worry about how long work will take	Provide clear step-by-step processes, and demonstrations (preferably in person)
Lack of understanding about why improvements are needed / worry about new technology.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use clear language and avoid jargon, in written and face-to-face communications. • Help tenant's take ownership of the process by actively involving them and letting them make choices, for example about redecoration, type of door they have etc. • Support with using technology.

TACTICS – TOOLKIT AND OTHER RESOURCES

Communication toolkit

Develop a toolkit targeted at comms teams and sustainability teams promoting best practice in energy efficiency communication.

This will include:

- Behavioural insights
- Recommended methods for communicating with customers.
- Key messages
- Language style guide – avoid terms such as ‘retrofit’ and ‘net zero’
- Good practice examples from the sector.
- Templates – letters, timelines etc.
- Evaluation framework
- FAQs
- Links to other resources e.g. Help for Households, training resources, how to guides, SHDF knowledge hub.

The toolkit will address the need for targeted, tailored face-to-face communication with residents which accounts for their individual circumstances.

TACTICS – TOOLKIT AND OTHER RESOURCES

Other campaign resources for social landlords to share with tenants:

- Video case studies featuring stories of customers who've had work done. Featuring:
 - Different types of work
 - Different types of homes,
 - Different demographics of customers
 - Include challenges which were overcome to complete work.
- Matterport virtual tour of retrofitted home, with clickable labels for the technology. For when it isn't practical to offer a tour of a show home.
- Graphics for social media and newsletters.

WHAT'S NEXT?



- Pilot resources in July and August
- Launch the campaign in September

HOW THE CAMPAIGN MATCHES WITH SOCIAL HOUSING TENANTS' CLIMATE JURY FINDINGS

Recommendation	Source	How this is included
<p>Good communication is needed throughout the retrofit and must cover positive and negative aspects.</p>	<p>SHTCJ</p> 	<p>The toolkit will recommend good communication throughout the process. Case studies and other campaign materials will paint a realistic picture of retrofit – picking up on positives and covering how negatives can be overcome.</p>
<p>Communication needs to be tailored to the needs of different groups</p>	<p>SHTCJ</p> 	<p>The toolkit will look at communication needs of different demographics. Materials produced by the project will feature people from different demographics. All materials will follow accessibility guidelines.</p>
<p>Tenants must understand financial implications.</p>	<p>SHTCJ</p> 	<p>The toolkit will highlight the importance of explaining financial implications including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Likely effect on energy bills. - Any changes to rent / service charges. - How tenants will be compensated – e.g. redecoration costs, replacement of floor coverings etc.

HOW THE CAMPAIGN MATCHES WITH SOCIAL HOUSING TENANTS' CLIMATE JURY FINDINGS

Recommendation	Source	How this is being included
<p>Demonstrations, via video or in person, will help increase understanding</p>	<p>SHTCJ</p> 	<p>The toolkit will recommend demonstration homes as way of communicating about retrofit to others. We'll also produce video resources which will replicate a live demonstration home, for when it's not practical to offer one.</p>
<p>Develop messaging in partnership with residents – warmer, healthier homes, not fuel poverty.</p>	<p>Resident Voices</p>  	<p>Messaging developed with Tenants' Advisory Group. The materials will also be piloted to test messaging with a wider group of tenants.</p>
<p>Use case studies and resident ambassadors.</p>	<p>Resident Voices</p>  	<p>We'll produce a bank of case studies featuring residents and will recommend use of resident ambassadors in the toolkit to build trust.</p>

HOW THE CAMPAIGN MATCHES WITH SOCIAL HOUSING TENANTS' CLIMATE JURY FINDINGS

Recommendation	Source	How this is being included
<p>Educate colleagues about net zero and retrofit too – all colleagues are ambassadors.</p>	<p>Resident Voices</p>  	<p>The toolkit will support colleagues across the business and also sign post to other relevant training (e.g. Carbon Literacy training).</p>
<p>Dedicated customer engagement officers make a difference.</p>	<p>Resident Voices</p>  	<p>The toolkit will advocate the importance of face-to-face contact with dedicated officers.</p>



TACKLING
CLIMATE CHANGE
TOGETHER

WELCOME TO THE SOCIAL HOUSING TENANTS' CLIMATE JURY

SELF ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

Please use the tabs below to navigate through this document



Welcome

Introduction

Initial Contact

Survey investment delivery te

Job Roles Key



THE SOCIAL HOUSING TENANTS' CLIMATE JURY

How can tenants, social housing providers,
and others work together to tackle climate
change in our homes and neighbourhoods?

Read the recommendations [here](#)



Housing Leeds – *our resident involvement journey*



Housing Leeds



- Where we came from:
 - 67 tenants, residents and community groups, many resident improvement groups, local panels, user research, surveys, tenant scrutiny etc
 - A formal resident involvement structure and ways of working (*over 100 formal meetings a year*)
 - Accessible and inclusive?
 - Lots of input from committed residents, but what about wider tenant voice?



With our Tenant Scrutiny Board

- We reviewed:
 - 'Wider tenant feedback and insight - how the service engages and uses feedback from tenants as a whole, with a focus on digital engagement'
 - 'How best are tenants able to influence service design, policy and decision making'



Reflecting on the review...

What went well	Challenges?!
Input from TPAS and others – challenged extent of resident input within governance structure – and examples from others (but no one right way)	'Engagement' was a big topic and means different things to different people.
Message that digital was in addition to in person – helped reassure, encourage leap of faith to try new things.	Talking to residents about resident involvement and wider feedback – more difficult than more practical topics like repairs etc
Everyone on board about trying to create new ways of involvement that were more inclusive and accessible	Scrutiny Board reviewing <u>proposals</u> – proposals scrutinised ahead of implementation.
	Scrutiny Board supported by same service that was being reviewed – some external support for reassurance



Tenant Voice Panel

- Launched Feb 22 – currently 172 Members
- Flexible / accessible approach to membership
- Act as a wider consultative group to help improve day to day services
- Help monitor our performance and the quality of our service (self-assess against consumer standards)
- Link to Leeds Housing Board (our governing body)
- Mixture of online and in person meetings (or both)
- Some one-off consultation, some longer if needed
- Some consultation open to all – others just to TVP, and some just to specific members on TVP (those with experience of the service asking about)

Tenant Voice Panel - join now

Joining the Tenant Voice Panel (TVP) is an opportunity for you to help us improve the services we give.

You will get to meet new people, gain new skills, and talk about subjects that are important to you.

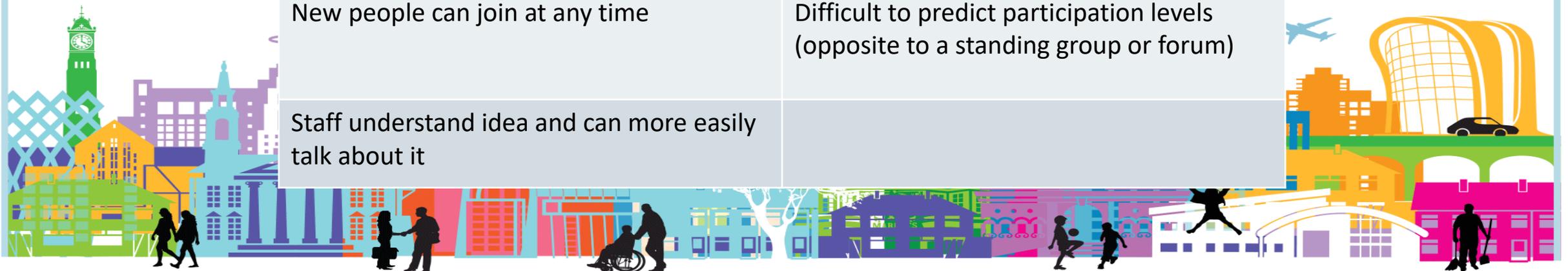
Join the Tenant Voice Panel 

If you would like to speak to someone about the TVP please email housinginvolvement@leeds.gov.uk or call 0113 378 3330.



The Tenant Voice Panel so far...

What went well	Challenges?!
Good response to launch - on social media, tenant emails, invites to existing groups, web update, flyers/posters, QR codes	Not all 172 are actively taking part – offering content and opportunities that appeal to wider audience (but chicken and egg?)
Diverse membership – high rise residents, older persons, younger residents, residents from diverse communities, every ward in Leeds.	Younger residents more represented – but could be even more so
Informal launches (online and in-person) – those we met 'got it' and liked how accessible/convenient it was	Not fully implemented the 'strategic influence' role
New people can join at any time	Difficult to predict participation levels (opposite to a standing group or forum)
Staff understand idea and can more easily talk about it	



Relationship with Tenant Scrutiny

- Scrutiny Board – allows TVP members to join for specific reviews if interested in topic.
- Just started review on damp and mould
- 20 TVP members happy to help (some coming to board meetings, others helping with other actions, e.g. reviewing website content and giving feedback)
- More tenants overall helping with evidence gathering and busy action plan over next few months.
- Good way to attract new permanent TSB members?



SCRUTINY BANK SAFETY REVIEW

Ann Potts & Lewis Rimmington

Today

- Introductions
- Overview of Karbon Homes
- Our approach to customer involvement and scrutiny
- The work of our Group Customer Committee
- Scrutiny Bank's review of building safety
- Findings and Recommendations
- Hints and Tips

Who we are.....

- Ann Potts – Vice Chair of Karbon's Residents Committee & Customer Committee member
- Karbon customer for nearly 10 years
- Represented Karbon at Westminster & Place Shapers Conferences – Regeneration / Levelling Up Agenda
- Lewis Rimington – 17 years with Karbon Homes across neighbourhood investment, community development, customer engagement roles

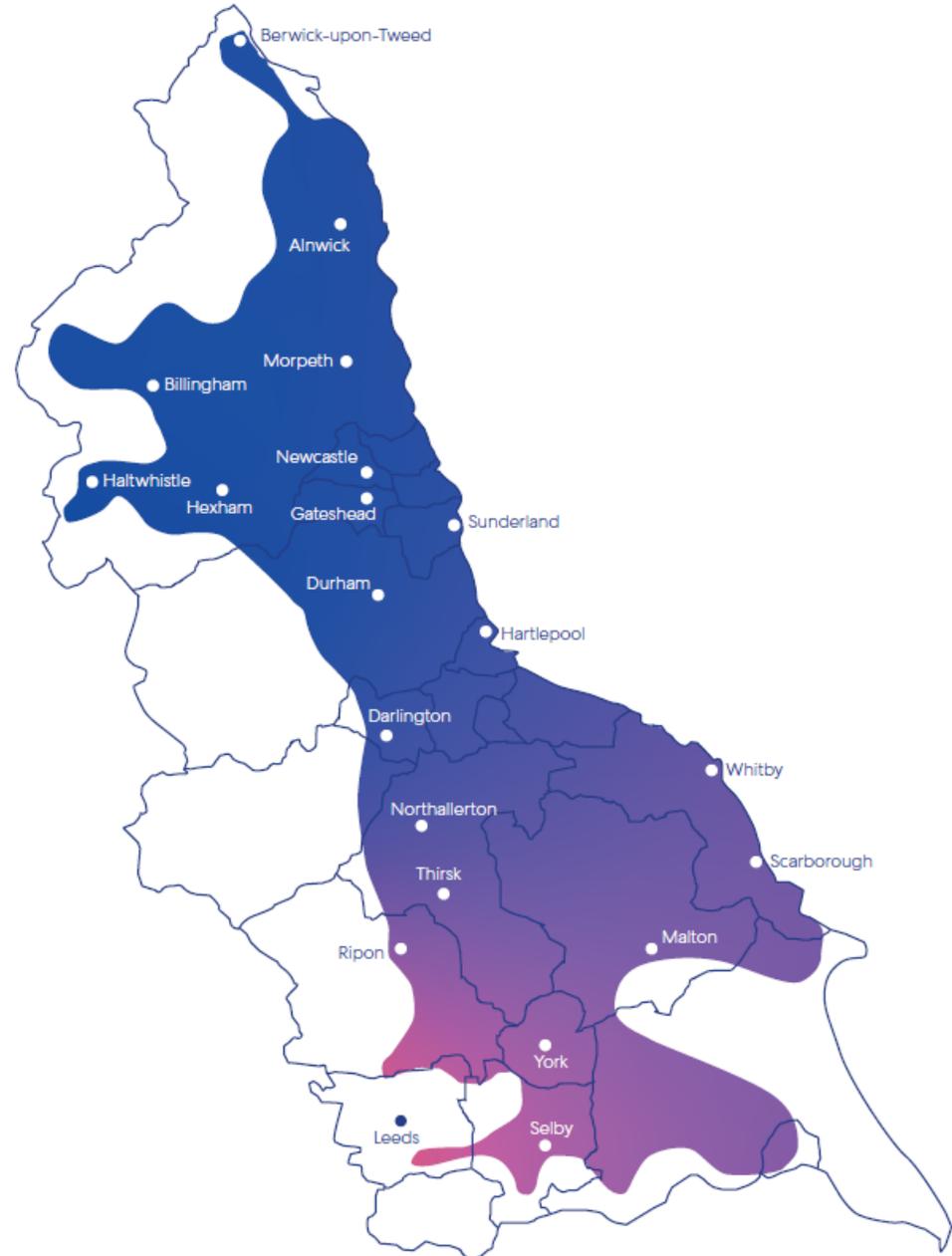
Karbon Homes

Nearly 32,000 homes – more customers!

Large geographical area – from Berwick to Hull

Diverse types of homes – from traditional to inner-city bedsits to rural stone cottages

Byker Community Trust & 54North Homes (formerly LYHA & YHA)



Mission

Provide a strong foundation for life



Homes

Provide as many good quality homes as we can

- Respond to the North's housing crisis
- Build more new homes
- Improve the quality and sustainability of our existing homes



Customer

Deliver an excellent customer service

- Develop meaningful relationships
- Be a brilliant landlord
- Provide great digital choice
- Deliver excellent service



Place

Shape strong, sustainable places for our communities

- Have the most impact
- Work in partnership
- Use the right processes

Enablers of success

- Identify and meet our future challenges
- Grow our business and our reputation
- Embed sound environmental, social and governance practices



Inspiring

Dynamic

Bold

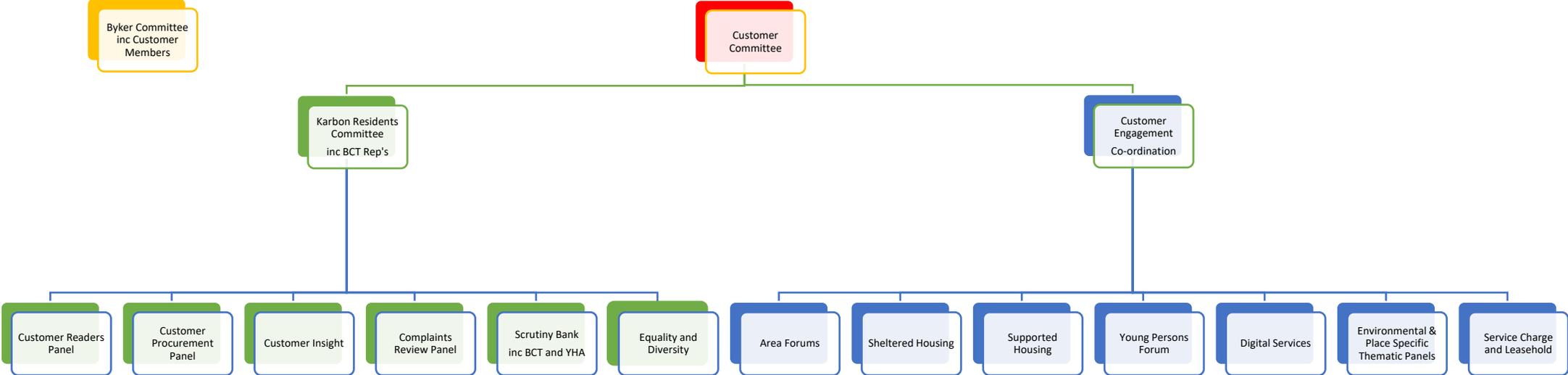
Reliable

Thoughtful

Customer Engagement

- Resident Involvement Framework underpinned by Residents Committee
- Social Housing White Paper (SHWP) – Focus placed upon landlords to ensure the customer voice is evident in the business decision making process
- Landlords more transparent and accountable to customers
- Facilitate sharing of performance information in line with SHWP
- Two-way information flow between Karbon and our customers at a more local and focussed level
- Introduction of Area Forums, Sheltered Housing Group, Environment Group, Scrutiny Bank, Young Persons Panel, Leaseholders Forum, Building Safety Panel, Grants Panel

RESIDENT INVOLVEMENT FRAMEWORK



Residents Committee

- Direct link to Group Customer Committee via Chair and Vice Chair representation
- Receive performance information e.g., customer satisfaction, complaints and compliments
- Analyse and understand where there may trends or issues to make informed decisions about which parts of the business our scrutiny bank review
- NHC led session (Decent Homes Standard)
- Damp and mould / complaints customer service standard
- Complaints Handling Code Self-Assessment



Area Forums

- Facilitate sharing of performance information in line with requirements of The Charter for Social Housing Residents
- Allows for two-way information flow between Karbon and our customers at a more local and focussed level based upon Karbon's diverse housing stock
- Fear of crime
- Cost of Living
- Investment Programmes



Sheltered Housing Forums

- Help Karbon understand and explore the issues which affect customers living in our older person's accommodation.
- 25-30 customers attend Forum in North and South of the region
- Strategic review of sheltered schemes – customer consultation
- Thoughts on communal lounges, flooring, bins, living spaces and outdoor spaces to help Karbon provide improved accommodation for its customers



Young Persons Panel

- New Panel established last December
- Engage youth leaders working with young people
- Discuss topics & subjects relevant to young people in communities where Karbon has a major presence
- Act as link between Karbon and the young people we provide services for
- Lack of mental health provision for young people, lack of training opportunities, how funding is allocated and future partnership opportunities



Group Customer Committee

- Minimum of 2 members are Karbon customers
- Chair and Vice Chair of Residents Committee
- Objectives:-
- Strategy and Policy
- Monitoring Performance
- Customer Scrutiny, Complaints & Compliments
- Customer Safety
- Place agenda



Group Customer Committee

- Committee of the Group Board responsible for overseeing customer experience and engagement
- Responsibility to ensure customers have their voice heard
- Needs and safety of customers are at the heart of the Board's decision making
- Group's performance is monitored to strive for excellence across its services



Group Customer Committee

- Karbon commitment to fully engage customers
- Social Housing White Paper emphasised that landlords must take responsibility to ensure customer voice is heard at every level
- Opportunity for Karbon to restructure its customer engagement offer



Group Customer Committee

- Committee meets quarterly
- Receive reports in advance of meeting to check, challenge and analyse Karbon's performance
- During meeting we ask questions for further clarification
- Opportunity to provide overview of customer engagement groups/forums to Committee



Customer Scrutiny – Building Safety

- Established Scrutiny Bank of customers in May 2022
- 1 day training course to introduce scrutiny
- Summer 2022 – 10 x 2-hour sessions together with homework. Approximately 35 hours per member
- Support from Yvonne Davies
- Scrutiny Bank worked on the premise of 19 Karbon Homes higher risk homes based on their building risk matrix - all multi-story flats, all sheltered, and a timber framed extra care home



Customer Scrutiny – Building Safety

- Scrutiny Bank invited to advise Karbon Homes on customer needs, communication and engagement in building safety assurance.
- Scrutiny Bank impressed by the willingness of Karbon staff to share their knowledge with them and provide access to any documentation required



Building Safety Review – The Approach

- Karbon's Assistant Director, Building & Customer Safety presented overview of service to Scrutiny Bank– provided support throughout review
- Scrutiny Bank reviewed current Karbon documentation and other sources

These included:

- ✓ The Karbon Homes website
- ✓ Reports and commentary from customers surveys related to safety
- ✓ Other housing association websites
- ✓ Local Government
- ✓ Fire Services
- ✓ Leaflets
- ✓ Videos

Building Safety Review – The Approach

- Scrutiny Bank interviewed staff involved in building safety, communications, research, leasehold and housing services
- Scrutiny Bank visited homes which are in the higher risk category for fire/safety, including:
 - ✓ St Oswald's Court, Gateshead
 - ✓ Weavers Court Extra Care scheme, Alnwick
 - ✓ The Manors Extra Care scheme, Prudhoe
- Scrutiny Bank also spoke to customers in homes included in the 19 higher-risk blocks (leasehold homes and sheltered homes), they were very forthcoming

Building Safety Review – Findings

- No customer safety communications campaign
- Access to information on the website is hard to find
- Safety advice is not be-spoke to property types – flats/houses have different needs
- No regular customer engagement group on safety, like other landlords

Recommendations

- Provide leaflet reminders for customers in sheltered/extra care accommodation on what to do if there was a fire and advice on fire prevention
- Karbon to have dedicated space on the website and make better use of customer magazines to share safety information
- Amend website to include legionella on search
- Set up a customer safety engagement group in higher risk homes
- Offer opportunities in higher risk general needs homes for customers to become customer ambassadors for their block



The building you live in is designed to contain a fire in the area where it starts to allow sufficient time for the Fire Service to attend, however:

If a fire breaks out in your flat:

- Leave the room where the fire is immediately, then close the door
- Alert other people in your home and get everybody out. Close the front door to your home behind you
- Do not stay behind to put the fire out
- The sprinkler system in your flat will activate automatically
- Your smoke alarm is connected to a monitoring centre, who will contact the Fire Service
- Leave the building by the nearest available exit and go to your fire assembly point and wait there
- If possible, warn your immediate neighbours. If there is a call point box present on your way out, please activate it by hitting it.
- **DO NOT USE THE LIFT**
- Do not re-enter the building until the Fire Service say it is safe to do so.



2

If the communal fire alarm sounds and there is no fire in my flat

- Tom Collins House is designed to contain a fire in the area where it starts and the sprinkler system will activate automatically where the fire is located
- If you are in your flat, you should remain there unless smoke or heat affects the flat, or if you are told to leave by the Fire Service
- Inside Tom Collins House, flat entrance doors and communal doors are fire doors fitted with intumescent smoke seals which means they will hold back the flames and smoke to allow time for the fire service to tackle a fire
- Ensure your flat entrance door is closed
- If you are in any doubt get out, leave the building by the nearest available exit and go to the fire assembly point and wait there
- **DO NOT USE THE LIFT**
- Do not re-enter the building until the Fire Service say it is safe to do so.

What if I am trapped by the fire?

- Try and stay calm
- The sprinkler system will automatically activate in your flat
- Get everyone in one room, with a phone and open a window to breathe fresh air
- Call the Fire Service by calling 999, or shout to alert people
- Use bedding or clothing to block the bottom of the door to the room you are in to stop smoke getting into that room and stay together until the Fire Service arrive.

To call the Fire Service:

- Dial **999**
- When the operator answers ask for FIRE, and provide details of your address and telephone number
- Do not end the call until the Fire Service has repeated the address correctly
- If you have no telephone, then call the alarm monitoring centre via your door entry handset, who will notify the Fire Service.

What do I do if I'm in the communal areas of Tom Collins House and the communal alarm sounds?

- Do not return to your flat
- Leave the building by the nearest available exit and go to your fire assembly point and wait there
- **DO NOT USE THE LIFT**
- Do not re-enter the building until the Fire Service say it is safe to do so.

As your landlord, we will ensure we:

- Carry out Fire Risk Assessments to the communal areas of your block including accessing 10% of flats
- Ensure emergency evacuation instructions and exits are identified by signage
- Test all communal and emergency lighting in accordance with British Standards
- Keep in good repair the structure and exterior of your flat including any communal areas
- Ensure fire escape routes are kept free from any obstructions and carry out regular fire safety inspections to communal areas of your block
- Use only competent people to maintain and carry out repairs for all safety work and ensure repairs are carried out promptly. Please report any issues or repairs promptly by calling **0800 533 5442**
- Ensure the fire alarm system is serviced and tested
- Carry out an electrical safety check of your home every five years.

What is a Fire Risk Assessment?

- Since 2006, it is a legal requirement for all properties with enclosed communal areas to have a valid Fire Risk Assessment. These assessments ensure that our buildings are compliant with the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, and if necessary, will identify work required to reduce or eliminate the risk of fire.

Can I see a copy of the Fire Risk Assessment?

- Yes, we publish all Fire Risk Assessments on our website. Further advice and information can be found at www.bykercommunitytrust.org
- You can also access safety advice from the Tyne & Wear Fire Service website at www.twfire.gov.uk

What construction is Tom Collins House and what type of cladding is fitted?

- Tom Collins House is predominantly brick faced to the north east and south east elevations with the south west facing elevation being constructed of a blockwork external leaf, with single skin steel white cladding
- There is no insulation behind the cladding and fire stopping materials have been fitted around your windows and on every floor externally
- The cladding on Tom Collins House is fire safe and meets Building Regulation Standards.



3

The fire safety of your home is extremely important. By signing your tenancy agreement with us, you have agreed to:

- Not store, manufacture, dispose of or allow to accumulate within your home or in its surroundings, refuse, barbecues, petrol, liquid petroleum, bottled gases such as those used in portable room heaters or other combustible substances
- Not leave or dispose of any items in communal areas
- Keep the interior of your home in a good and clean condition
- Keep in a good and safe condition any domestic appliances and other installations that you have brought into your home
- Not obstruct or deny access to your home to inspect or carry out repairs and servicing of installations.



Testing your smoke alarm

- You should test your smoke alarm every month, by pressing the test button (on the alarm)
- Once a year, you should gently vacuum clean the smoke alarm
- If your smoke detector is not working, please contact us immediately
- It is extremely important when redecorating, NEVER to paint over the smoke detector heads.

4

What if my smoke alarm goes off and it is a false alarm?

- If the smoke alarm in your flat activates, only your sounder will activate
- When this happens, your smoke detector automatically calls either the alarm monitoring centre or your Scheme Officer through your door entry handset and they will call you to check you are safe
- If the call is a false alarm, you will be asked to stay on the line until the smoke detector resets and the issue has been completely dealt with
- If they do not get a response from you, the Fire Service will be called immediately.

How do the Fire Service get into the building?

- Tyne & Wear Fire and Rescue Service do not need a fob to access your block. All entrance doors are fitted with a bi-lock which is a special lock that can be opened by a master key by the emergency services and will over-ride the door locking system.

What if I am blind or deaf?

- If you are blind, deaf or hard of hearing, we can provide specialist equipment so you can be alerted in the event of your smoke detector being activated. Please contact us for more details.

What if I have mobility problems and cannot use the stairs?

- You should inform your Scheme Officer. Information about any customers unable to escape via the stairs is held in the fireproof box on the ground floor. Therefore, the Fire Service have these detailed Fire Emergency Evacuation Plans immediately as they arrive, so should evacuation be necessary they will provide you with assistance.



Part of the Karbon family

This leaflet has been approved for publication and we've made a digital version available on our website. We've created a plain text version to support those using accessibility tools such as translation, audio, changes to the size of text, ruler and screen mask.

We also aim to make our information and services more accessible by using plain English in our communication and offering sign language and language interpreters where required.

If you would like this document in an alternative format or have any questions relating to this leaflet, please contact inclusion@karbonhomes.co.uk

Arabic

هذه المعلومات عن BYKER Community Trust جزء من Karbon Homes. إذا كنت ترغب بها بصيغة أخرى، مثل نسخة مترجمة أو صوتية، فيرجى إعلامنا!

Slovak

Tieto informácie sa týkajú organizácie Byker Community Trust, ktorá je súčasťou spoločnosti Karbon Homes. Ak si želáte obdržať tieto informácie v inom formáte, napríklad v preloženej alebo zvukovej verzii, dajte nám prosím vedieť!

French

Ces informations concernent le Byker Community Trust, qui fait partie de Karbon Homes. Si vous souhaitez obtenir ce document dans un autre format, par exemple traduit ou dans une version audio, faites-le nous savoir !

Czech

Tyto informace se týkají organizace Byker Community Trust, která je součástí společnosti Karbon Homes. Pokud byste chtěli tyto informace v jiném formátu, například v přeložené nebo zvukové verzi, dejte nám prosím vědět!

Polish

Niniejsza informacja dotyczy Byker Community Trust, części Karbon Homes. Jeśli chcieliby Państwo otrzymać tę informację w innym formacie, np. w tłumaczeniu lub w wersji audio, proszę dać nam znać!

Portuguese

Esta informação é sobre Byker Community Trust, parte da Karbon Homes. Se desejar esta informação noutro formato, por exemplo a versão traduzida ou em áudio, por favor informe-nos!



Part of the Karbon family



Fire safety in your home

Tom Collins House

We are committed to putting the safety of our customers first. This leaflet provides advice on what action you should take in the event of a fire.

Ref: SP TCH BCT JAN23

Contact us

Opening times: Monday to Thursday 9am–5pm, Friday 9am–4:30pm

Visit: 17 Raby Cross, Byker, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2FF
Call us: 0800 533 5442
Email: enquiries@bykerct.co.uk
Website: www.bykercommunitytrust.org
Facebook: [bykercommunitytrust](https://www.facebook.com/bykercommunitytrust)
Twitter: [@bykertrust](https://twitter.com/bykertrust)





STAY FIRE SAFE THIS SPRING

Over the coming weeks, schools will be breaking up for the Easter holidays, and at this time of year we have historically experienced an increase in cases of Anti-Social Behaviour, in particular, deliberate fire-setting within the local community.

We (Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service) understand that it's only a small number of young people in the immediate area who are responsible for these actions. But we would ask for the help and support of parents and guardians to ensure they know where their children are throughout the day and night.

We regularly work in partnership with local organisations to deliver community safety programmes that include the importance of fire safety at home, at play and at work. Always remember to bring in your wheelie bins after collection day, and to test your smoke alarms on a regular basis.



If you have any information then you can anonymously contact Firestoppers by calling **0800 1695558** or by visiting **www.firestoppersreport.co.uk**



KEEPING YOU SAFE IN YOUR HOME

If you live in our multi-storey blocks such as Tom Collins House, Mount Pleasant, Chirton House or the Byker Wall, you'll have received a leaflet about fire safety. Please, take the time to have a read and keep it safe!

It reminds you what the evacuation strategy is for your building, how to report a fire and how to contact the Fire Service in the event of a fire breaking out. It also highlights other safety instructions and advice such as testing your smoke detectors.

If you have fire doors, you will also have received an additional leaflet which outlines the importance of giving us access to carry out the necessary safety checks to these fire doors and how to report any faults or damages.

The leaflets have been produced with involvement from customers and approved by the Fire Service. More information is available on our website at www.bykercommunity trust.org and click on the 'fire safety' button.





Become a building safety champion

We're looking to set up a customer group that will give you an active role in ensuring the building you live in is safe for you and your neighbours.

By becoming a member of our customer safety panel, you'll be able to influence the way Karbon Homes reviews building safety issues in our blocks of flats.

All we ask is that you attend six meetings throughout the year and you'll also be able to meet other Karbon customers and staff. We'll also cover your travel expenses or arrange taxis to get you to and from meetings.

For more information or an informal chat, please contact Lewis Rimington our Customer Engagement Specialist at Karbon Homes on **07930 842 197** or email lewis.rimington@karbonhomes.co.uk

Keeping you safe in your home

COOKIE SETTINGS



In January, customers living in many of our multi-storey flats, sheltered accommodation and Extra Care homes received a leaflet about fire safety.

The leaflets, which are a requirement set out in the Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022, were produced with involvement of a Karbon Customer Scrutiny Group. They were also approved by the **Tyne and Wear Fire Service**.

We created the Scrutiny Group, which is made up of Karbon customers, to review how we meet our customers' needs and how we communicate and engage with them in respect of building safety assurance.

As part of their review, they visited some of our high-rise buildings, which are those over 18 metres or 7 storeys high. They spoke to other customers living in those buildings and the Fire Service. This helped them to produce a report with some recommendations for Karbon to consider and implement.

The leaflet, which they helped to create, is to remind customers:

- * what the evacuation strategy is for their building
- * how to report a fire
- * how to contact the Fire Service in the event of a fire breaking out in their building.

It also highlighted other safety instructions and advice, such as testing smoke detectors.

Customers with fire doors also received an additional leaflet which outlines the importance of giving Karbon access to their home to carry out the necessary safety checks to these fire doors and how to report any faults or damages.

We've updated our website with **information on fire safety** following feedback from the Scrutiny Group.

We'll be publishing regular fire and building safety information in our At Home customer magazine and on our social media channels. Look out for more details in the future.

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**Thank you for
listening.....
Q & A**