

- **Commitment to tenant involvement** - A key priority for Housing Leeds is to develop a tenant engagement and community development framework which builds on the positive work carried out by the former ALMOs, but based on one citywide involvement framework. Officers are working with tenants to develop a citywide tenant involvement approach which gives tenants a stronger strategic influence in decision making.
- As a social landlord we are required to meet the **Home and Community Agencies' Tenant Involvement and Empowerment Standard**. This standard makes the landlord responsible for ensuring that tenants are given a wide range of opportunities to influence & be involved in developing housing related policies regarding housing services, decision making, setting services standards, scrutiny of performance, the management of repairs & maintenance services, and agreeing local offers for service delivery.
- **Tenant Scrutiny Board (TSB)**. The TSB now sits within the council's scrutiny function and is co-ordinated by the Head of Scrutiny and Member Development. The role of this Board is to challenge and drive improvements to the housing service.
- **Housing Advisory Panels (HAPs)** The 11 former area panels are now operating as Housing Advisory Panels (HAPs), with a consistent Terms of Reference. Each HAP has a budget of £120,000 to invest in local environmental and community projects. The HAP's are also developing a 'plan on a page' which outlines both the service and funding priorities for the panel area. This will demonstrate how the HAP will support the city priorities whilst taking into account the make-up and needs of the local area.
- The 11 Chairs of the Housing Advisory Panels have come together to form the **Cross City Chairs Group (CCCG)** to represent tenants and their panel at a city-wide level
- **Service or Customer Specific Forums.**
  - **Leeds High Rise Group (LHR)**. Membership is made up of tenant representatives and lead staff from key service areas, including repairs and maintenance and anti-social behaviour. The aims of the group are to work together to understand the needs of local communities and to influence future investment and service delivery
- Work is underway to develop other service or customer specific forums which represent the views of particular groups across the city, including citywide forums for older, disabled and Lesbian, Bisexual, Gay or Transgender (LGBT) tenants.
- **Leeds Tenants Federation (LTF)**. A key priority over the next few months is to work with LTF to strengthen the links between LTF and Housing Leeds, and to ensure that LTF are embedded within the overall Housing Leeds Tenant Engagement Framework.
- **Tenants and Residents Associations (TRA's)**. TRA's and Area Representatives continue to play an important role within their communities. The annual 'offer' to TRA's and the criteria, along with the cross city procedures and documentation, are currently being developed. We need to ensure the appropriate level of support is provided to enable groups to operate independently and to their full potential.

- **Deaf Forum**

The Deaf forum was set up as a result of a complaint made by one of our deaf tenants regarding the service that he was receiving for repairs at his property. In the course of resolving the complaint a number of steps were put in place to ensure that in future, this customer receives as good a service as our hearing customers. It was then decided to hold a deaf forum to ensure that all our Deaf tenants receive a better service as the original complaint flagged up some potential improvements which could be made.

***Aims and Objectives;*** to start regular communication between Housing Leeds and its Deaf customers, continuously improving the level of communication, identifying barriers to services for Deaf tenants and improve the level of access for Deaf tenants to external services.

- **West Yorkshire Diversity Forum**

The cross sector Diversity Forum was established in 2004. The group is a network of local employers who are responsive to the needs of the local labour market. The group develop initiatives that provide employers with improved access to sources of labour, increase job opportunities for people who face barriers to entering the labour market, and increase skills in the workforce. The remit of the group is to encompass all aspects of recruitment and retention, focusing on support for Jobcentre Plus clients to get, stay and advance in work and to increase their skills. The group meet on a quarterly basis. The group covers all aspects of the diversity agenda, but will focus on support for disabled and black and minority ethnic jobseekers and employees within West Yorkshire. This forum enables members to share information on current initiatives and to highlight any shortfalls in current government funded provision around recruitment, retention and workforce development and to identify potential solutions.

- **Sheltered Housing Forums**

Sheltered Housing Forums have been established with meetings taking place based on geographical Sheltered Housing Cluster.

Sheltered Forums have given tenants the opportunity to become involved and give their views on a wide range of issues including the provision of key safes, the provision of activities, contributing to the Sheltered Housing Guide and the Care Ring scheme.

2014/15 update – this group will be reviewed in the emerging Customer and Community Involvement Strategy. It is intended that this group will be enhanced to cover the city wide region. There will be several localised forums and an overarching strategic working group.

## **LOCAL PROJECTS**

### **HUGO BUS Project**

HUGO is an impressive digitally enabled bus bringing an internet style cafe to the doorstep, flooding free Wi-Fi across each neighbourhood it visits & inspiring and engaging people of all ages to become confident and engaged within the global digital community.

HUGO is a resource that we are using to help our tenants to get online for free, with officers on board offering guidance on how to improve their digital skills. It is also a great facility for staff as it enables them to work online within their local areas

This is currently used in South and being trialled in West and will hopefully roll out to use in East.

### **Mystery Shopping of Hate Incident Reporting Centres**

Following the Hate Crime Conference in December 2013, involved tenants in West suggested we undertake mystery shopping of our Hate Incident Reporting centres (West).

The purpose was to assess the services that customers experience at our reporting centres. The findings were mainly positive. All staff recognised the serious nature of what was being reported with the need for further staff guidance on the recording and reporting of incidents

### **Tenant Inspectors**

#### Ready to Let Voids

They have been inspecting our ready to let Void properties. The inspectors look to see if these properties meet the lettable standard, making sure the void is ready to let at the first viewing, and reporting back findings the voids team. They make suggestions on improvements to our services. Suggestions include: to help reduce mould in properties to provide information sheets re ventilation etc. Also look at when the cleaning services are going in to clean voids, to go in after any work has been completed.

#### Advertised Estate Walkabouts & Spot Checks

Estate walkabouts are advertised monthly. Local Tenant inspectors assist in inspecting our estates with the Neighbourhood Management Officers and the Inspectors give an independent score of the estates. Tenant Inspectors have also undertaken spot-check estate inspections, where a poor performing estate has been identified by the Area Performance Manager.

### **New Group in Seacroft – Inclusive and active Group**

This group was set up to introduce people with learning disabilities to get together in a safe environment and be active in various projects and day trips, it is now self-managing and has the services of a volunteer driver who was trained to drive our company minibus, all the volunteers are CRB checked.

The projects range from all sorts of tasks including a photography course and crafts, this has helped to boost confidence and mix with other people.

### **Digital Inclusion and Age UK courses**

These very popular & successful groups were formed to help to support residents from all our areas who have no computer skills and can join a free course that is separately funded from UK Online to acquire an accreditation in basic & level 1 advanced computing under the guidance of a Business Support and Development Tutor

- To help seek employment
- Produce better correspondence
- Help with group activities

### **Computer Skills drop in Sessions**

Tenants can drop in between 10 and 12 on a Friday to Cottingley Community Centre LS11. They can go on line and use the computer or ask for help on how to do this.

### **Junior Wardens**

Since 2010 we have been running a wardens scheme at local schools and the 3 Junior Wardens schemes in the East of the City are now coming to an end for this academic year. 30 Junior Wardens have successfully completed a programme of activities/visits throughout the Year, such as visits to West Yorkshire Police, Fire stations, Redhall Nursery, Growing Zone at Kippax and a local quarry, they also carry out clean ups around their areas. The Wardens will be rewarded with a visit to the Laser Centre on 23<sup>rd</sup> July. They are taught how to develop personal, social & life skills. Recruitment for 2014/15 Academic year will commence shortly.

### **Goals Uk/Job seeking skills**

This is open to all our residents who wish to improve their job prospects and applications, these are free, accredited courses built around producing CV's and how to apply for employment, applicants receive a BTEC level one certificate at the end of the course which will enhance their CV's and help to promote their prospects when applying for jobs. Seven trainees gained apprenticeships and 3 gained full time employment.

### **Volunteer Pool (2014)**

The volunteer Pool now has successfully placed 11 of our residents with project across the East of the city. Our volunteers play a major part in ensuring that projects in the communities continue, such as Active and Inclusive groups, and Gardening Groups. In addition we have also successfully trained two residents to become volunteer drivers, assisting staff with activities and events. The volunteer Pool is an on-going scheme; all interested residents are given relevant training, such as safeguarding and Risk Assessment

## **Moortown over 50's**

The group has been meeting since 2006 and are one of our most successful groups. The group have sustained themselves throughout this period and are successful in applying for/accessing funding for their events and activities.

## **Halton Moor Youth distraction project – football coaching (2014)**

Following concerns raised within the community the football coaching project was set up after consulting with the young people in the area asking them what they would like to do on an evening. Over the last twelve months more than 500 young people have attended the sessions which run on Thursday evenings at the local leisure centre during the winter and on the terminus during the lighter evenings.

Since the project has been running anti-social behaviour in the area has fallen to an all-time low! The young people on the estate have become more integrated and racial tensions in the community have also seen a decrease. The sessions are supported by two qualified coaches and funded by LASBT East. The project has also been successful with a funding bid to keep the project going for a further twelve months which has been supported by the East HAP.

## **RHS training for community Gardening**

The community gardening was set up to promote healthy eating for our local residents, in particular for those who live in high rise properties. Fifteen local residents signed up to the project and have been attending the sessions facilitated by staff from Housing Leeds and the Royal Horticultural Society as part of a partnership.

Residents are shown what and when to plant seeds and how to get the best crops, along with tips on soil types and irrigation. The scheme has encouraged residents to take away ideas that they have learnt and develop their own growing areas around the blocks where they live. Two sites have been identified and raised beds developed in Seacroft and Gipton.

The residents will soon be harvesting fruits and vegetables from the Seacroft site.

## **Leeds Swahili Cultural Community Group**

Leeds Swahili Cultural is a community group, which provides educational support, religion education and cultural training for children from Swahili speaking families in the Leeds area.

The group was established 8 years ago and is still active to support and serve the Swahili community within the Leeds and beyond.

The group activities aimed to:

- Provides English, Maths and Science classes to support the Swahili children aged 5-16.
- Promoting cultural integration between peers and their families
- Preparing students to understand the cultural differences
- Setting up group activities and trips for the Swahili children

### **Community Parenting Programme 2014**

Community Parenting Programme is a free eight-week course. The programme aims to identify, develop, help and support East North East Tenants to establish strong families through providing sustainable Parenting course programmes to impact our Black Minority Ethnic (BME) community and improve relationships. This project is run in partnership with Women Together Project and Family and Childcare Trust organisation to empower parent's mums and dads aged 16-45 years old to improve their families and parenting skills. Through the course, we found different ways to approach with our BME parents by deliver positive parenting sessions, workshops about Domestic Violence and the Domestic Violence impact on children and cultural differences.

### **Roadshows**

We started Roadshows in 2011-12 to go into those areas that suffer from little or no Resident Involvement.

It allowed the residents to discuss issues around ASB, Drugs and Benefits enquiries, people also enquired how to set up residents groups.

Housing Support officers and benefit advisors attend the shows; they were staged in an accessible position in all 4 areas. We are planning new roadshows for this year.

### **Editorial Panel/Home Consultation Panel**

We have a group of committed tenants who are available on line for us to share our newsletters etc and ask for constructive feedback on content and design.

### **Satisfaction Surveys**

We have a range of surveys across Housing Leeds. These are currently under review, to make sure we are asking the right questions and not asking the same questions too many time causing survey fatigue.

### **Gala's**

We attend and support local galas where ever we can.