

Annual Review of Resident Involvement 2014/15



What have residents done in 2014/15?

The short answer is – LOTS!

2014/15 has been another busy year, and our residents are key to our success. We hope you enjoy the following reminder of your hard work and achievements in the last 12 months.

Kath Reeves and Louise Leatherbarrow

Your Resident Involvement Officers at Twin Valley Homes

PERFORMANCE MONITORING GROUPS

Since the themed groups were established residents have worked hard to develop them into useful performance monitoring groups.

The groups:

- Neighbourhood Management and Environmental Services Group
- Anti Social Behaviour Group
- Repairs Group
- Improvements Group
- Retirement Living Group

Outcomes from the groups have included:

Review and amendment of various anti-social behaviour policies.



Monitoring Neighbourhood Management service standards.



Monitoring and reviewing Environmental Services standards.



Monitoring Repairs performance and service standards.



Monitoring Improvement programmes and service standards.



Monitoring and reviewing Retirement Living service standards.



OPEN GROUP

The OPEN group met quarterly with champions from each sheltered scheme to discuss issues, engage with each other, complete environmental projects and produce newsletters to network with each other, sharing good ideas.

The group arranged a visit to the Re-Use Centre in Blackburn, which they found useful and informative. Funding was secured for hanging baskets at Willow Gardens and benches at Lingfield Court via the Small Grants panel.

Macmillan coffee mornings were held by the sheltered schemes, collectively raising around £3,000. Willows Gardens held a party to celebrate their first year anniversary from when the scheme was opened.

EDITORIAL PANEL

The Editorial panel meets every quarter to review and analyse the Twin Valley “Homes Matters” magazine, and suggest items of interest for future editions.

FEDERATION EXECUTIVE

The committee members of the Independent Tenant Federation (ITF) meet bi-monthly and they are the link between Twin Valley residents and the Board. The meetings have a varied agenda and consist of feedback and discussion on how TVH deliver their services, to guest speakers from other Organisations and setting future agenda items.

The Independent Tenant Federation had guest speakers including Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) who came and gave a presentation about Welfare Reform and in particular Universal Credit. A talk from Newground about their Flood Watch project to raise awareness of high risk flood areas in and around our neighbourhoods and ask that residents report in any blocked drains they are aware of. Community Switch (energy comparison

site) talked about their services in trying to assist our residents to cut their fuel costs. Residents have received updates about the reduction in Supporting People Funding for Retirement Living and how future services will be delivered, as well as regular updates and discussions about the work of the resident Scrutiny Panel.

SCHEME EVENTS AND COMMUNITY DAYS

A total of 47 scheme events were held during 2014/15, including

- community clean ups and litter picks,
- family fun days,
- planting days,
- cookery days
- and WW1 commemorations.

These ‘grass roots’ events are vital for maintaining local links within neighbourhoods, promoting community cohesion and linking into Together Housing Group’s strategic aims.

If you know of anything happening in your area where it would be worthwhile for us to get involved please let us know!



TARA'S AND ACTION GROUPS

Twin Valley Homes currently work alongside 7 Tenants' and Residents' Associations (TARA's), and 6 Action groups. We also have close links with other local groups, including youth clubs, environmental groups, job clubs, credit union and breakfast clubs.

Staff work with and support these groups in a variety of ways that are tailored to specific needs, including helping to write constitutions or group rules, set up bank accounts and advertise meetings. Annual payments to cover administrative costs are provided as well as help with completing small grant applications for other projects.

If you are interested in setting up a new group in your area please give us a call to talk through your ideas – we are always keen to encourage local people in making their voices heard.

TRAINING

Over the last 12 months we have organised training for residents both in-house and with external trainers from Trafford Hall. Topics covered include:

- Committee Skills
- Chairing Skills
- 'Wider World'
- Food Hygiene
- Dementia Awareness

Residents have reported back to us that the training they have undertaken has been useful and has helped them to understand the reports and information they receive at meetings. Residents who have attended training at Trafford Hall said meeting people from other areas and different backgrounds is good for sharing ideas and understanding alternative perspectives on housing issues.

Trafford Hall have delivered training in-house at Twin Valley to 11 people, advising residents on the best methods of monitoring service areas and analysing data.

Three residents have received formal training to develop their skills and progress their housing knowledge.



YOUR YEAR OF INVOLVEMENT



Our involvement opportunities are open to all residents, regardless of tenure and we would be keen to welcome anybody who would like to come along and work with us to improve services.

SMALL GRANTS

2014/15 has been a busy year for small grants with Twin valley Homes granting 26 applications totalling £17,397.09.

Applications that were funded included events, activities, life skills training for volunteers, equipment for a volunteer sewing club, gardening projects and many more!

The applications are judged and scored by a panel of residents. All grant recipients were invited to share their experiences by completing an evaluation form.

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH OTHER TEAMS

Resident involvement is a cross-cutting area that forms part of every department's remit. However, we do have very close links with our Community Regeneration teams, having worked together to promote small grants and Newground Together funding.



VALUE FOR MONEY

The cost of providing the resident involvement function to Twin Valley tenants was approximately £14.24 per property, including staff costs.

We are always looking for ways that we can reduce these costs, without compromising opportunities for involvement.

Based on total costs and benefits, we've calculated that for every £1 invested we generated a return of £1.23 in terms of economic and social value to Twin Valley, and to our resident volunteers.

This figure is a conservative estimate based on what we can currently evidence, but there is so much other fantastic work being done by our local community action groups and Tenants' and

Residents' Associations that is much harder to 'measure' in terms of value, and which hasn't been included.

We're working on a system to be able to measure the value of more of the work that we do, so that we can continue to show the value of our resident involvement activities.

AND LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

To build on the success of the last 12 months with more groups and more community projects!





Twin Valley Homes
Prospect House,
Wharf St, Blackburn,
Lancashire BB1 1JD

Tel: 0300 555 5560
www.twinvalleyhomes.co.uk