



TENANT ENGAGEMENT EXPERTS

**tpas**

# Our year in review 2018

Celebrating 30 years in engagement



# Reflections from our Chief Executive, Jenny Osbourne

**2018 was a bumper year for us with massive growth in our landlord membership network and the year being topped off by hearing of my nomination for an MBE in the New Years Honours List. I was surprised and delighted to have been awarded an MBE and feel very fortunate and humbled to have been nominated to receive it.**

Celebrating 30 years in engagement in 2018, Tpas had a fast paced, exciting and productive year. Turning 30 is no small achievement. We are proud of our longevity, our reputation, our integrity, our impact and our role in influencing and helping the sector.

We embarked on our continuous improvement journey to raise the standards of tenant and community engagement across the social housing sector.

We moved to new premises, created a new set of standards for Independent Tenant Advisors and developed relationships with all three housing ministers. Alongside all this change we grew our membership network by 20% - bringing our current landlord membership to 220 with more joining us every week.

We increased our events programme by introducing highly responsive pop up events, webinars and collaborated with new partners to bring expert speakers, such as the Housing Ombudsman, direct to our members and clients.

Engagement was high on the political and sector agenda in 2018. Our expert team have been busy with media enquiries, keynote speaker slots and policy roundtable meetings to comment, shape and influence on sector pressures including regulation, supply, affordability, stigma, and value for money, amongst others. We have never had such a powerful influence on the sector as we do now.

We've exploited this power by promoting independent tenant voices, critical thinking, developing confidence in using evidence and ensuring decision-making is grounded in knowledge. With our events, training, consultancy, membership network and policy work we aim to enable a skilled, confident and influential sector that are focused on improving services, saving money and bring lasting change to communities.

By blending robust research evidence such as our national engagement survey along with continuously meeting and working with housing professionals and tenants across the country we can ensure our views, experience, resources and training materials are rigorous and relevant.

Thank you to our members, clients, partners, staff and board of directors. We're proud of our achievements in 2018 and we'd like to share some of the highlights with you.



Tpas chief executive, Jenny Osbourne cheering on England the semi finals during the National Tenant Conference evening meal.





We're proud to deliver the Tpas awards which are dedicated to residents, landlords and contractors working together.

A year of

# influence

## Our relationship with MHCLG and the Regulator of Social Housing

It is great for engagement that we are working with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and the Regulator more than ever before helping them think about and shape the policies and practices that will affect us all in the future. Being 'at the table' gives us a powerful voice to represent our members, examine proposals and challenge or support the new policies that impact on the way we engage with residents. We have been particularly involved in firstly contributing to and subsequently responding to the Hackitt Report.

## Rethinking Social Housing

Rethinking social housing was a major new project by the Chartered Institute of Housing which aimed to help shape the future of social housing.

Rethinking social housing combined original research and engagement with the sector, tenants, politicians and the public to explore fundamental questions about the future of social housing. Jenny, our CEO, was part of the project group ensuing tenant and engagement views were always at the forefront.



## Independent Tenant Advice

In 2018 we were proud to launch our very own Good Guide to choosing an Independent Tenant Advisor. This set out the standards tenants and landlords should expect from their independent tenant advisor and we will use this as a tool to raise the standard of ITA's for all.

When organisations are involved in regeneration, stock transfers, mergers and demergers, structural or governance changes their tenants clearly have questions and can become worried about their home.

We are specialists at offering good, honest and transparent support for tenants and landlords by acting as their Independent Tenant Advisor. Launching our Good ITA guide has been a highlight of our influencing work.



## Green Paper

We all welcomed the **Green Paper** when it was launched in August 2018. The Green Paper gives the opportunity to swing the tenant engagement pendulum right back again.

We at Tpas grasped the opportunity by submitting a strong response to the consultation on the Green Paper with a firm focus on the need for changes in culture and regulation.

We encouraged our members to respond to the consultation individually and were on hand to make sense of the questions to ensure people understood what it would mean for their organisation with our national Green Paper summits and at our regional member events.



## Sector Panels

Tpas chief executive, Jenny Osbourne is a founding stakeholder in The Women's Housing Forum. Formed in July 2018, the group was set up to research and address the challenges that women face in accessing and keeping housing. The group raises awareness of the link between women's housing needs and gender inequality. The steering group of the forum comprises residents and women working in different parts of the sector.

Jenny was also invited to sit on the Affordable Housing Commission, funded by Nationwide. This new stand-alone Commission is being chaired by Lord Best with 15 leading players from across the housing world. Its core objectives are to examine the causes and effects of the affordability crisis and how it relates to tenure, place, demographics, incomes, wealth distribution, life chances, as well as the social and economic impacts.

Tpas also sit on the Regulators Sounding Board and the Fees and Resources Advisory Panel. For all these groups we ensure we represent the views of our members on the importance of great engagement.

# A year of delivery

## Introduced a new 'Resident Engagement in Building Safety' Course

In response to Grenfell and the Hackitt Report we introduced a pioneering new Resident Engagement in Building Safety course. Designed specifically for landlords who own and manage high rise, complex buildings or sheltered accommodation and tenants who live in them, we've developed this new course offering the best practice ways to engage with residents on fire and building safety.



## Behavioural Insight

Tpas have teamed up with Collaborative Change to develop a powerful and innovative approach to increasing engagement that you may have never tried before. The **Engagement Maximiser** is a service that we've introduced and designed to help organisations increase levels of engagement. As a result, you will see greater numbers of residents engaging and improved levels of diversity leading to greater impact.

The use of Behavioural Insight approaches to improve outcomes is not a new science; it has been well tested across the private sector. Building on this pilot approach, in 2019 we hope to publish the results to evidence how it can work in the housing sector too.

## New trends ebook

In 2018 we launched our very first 'Future Trends of Engagement' ebook. We explored seven trends, identified as the hot new techniques to engage residents and drive better service delivery.

Some of the trends we explored sparked debate and challenge within the sector including behavioural insight. We stuck to our guns and have seen growth in the techniques we identified including gamification and digital e-learning. Watch out for 2019 trends book.

## ASH and Equality Commission

One of the growing areas of our work was our partnership working. Managing the largest network of involved social housing tenants and housing professionals in the country offers Tpas the distinct advantage of tapping into voices that are usually difficult to reach. Last year we worked collaboratively with ASH and the Equality and Human Rights Commission to provide valuable, undiscovered insights.

We supported outside sector organisations to develop different ways of engaging with lots of different people including people who are rarely heard in traditional consultation processes.





# A year of growth

## Landlord members

Over the last twelve months we have seen significant growth in our landlord membership network. We've adapted our team to respond to the sharp rise in the volume of advice, support, guidance, resources and events that our members benefit from. There has been huge rewards for both Tpas and our members as our network has expanded, enabling us to deliver new innovative ways of keeping connected including introducing a new events programme, webinars and the members networking events becoming mini conferences in their own right.

## National conferences and events

Another growth area has been our conference and events. This year over 400 delegates joined us at our flagship conferences for both tenants and housing engagement professionals. We heard from inspirational speakers, learnt from experienced workshop leaders, connected with like-minded tenants and staff from across the country and helped shape best practice to drive improvements across landlord organisations.

We've also partnered with organisations such as the Housing Ombudsman to enable us to deliver more 'pop up' style events that are responsive, practical and topical.

## Awards

We're proud to deliver the only awards dedicated to shining a spotlight solely on the special successes that can only be achieved when residents, landlords and contractors work together.

We are making changes for 2019 with a new venue, categories and format which will offer even greater value for money, accessibility and experience for our award nominees in 2019 and beyond.



# A year of learning

## PlaceShapers

In June, Tpas and PlaceShapers, the national network of over 100 community-based housing associations, came together to explore and find answers to the question of the future shape of tenant engagement within PlaceShapers organisations. We discovered what will be fit for purpose and effective today and for years to come.

Following a series of regional roundtables, we published a report to set out findings and next steps which included how members could test the theories with their residents. Read the full report on-line.



## Local Government Association - LGA

Tpas was appointed to work in partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA) in order to identify and share good practice in tenant engagement nationally with findings of good practice drawn from Councils in England. We were united in our ambition to make sure tenants are at the heart of council owned housing and that now is a critical and unique time to have a direct influence that could shape an offer for tenants for years to come. Read the full report on-line.

## A Voice For Tenants



**A Voice for Tenants (AV4T)** was set up in the wake of the Grenfell Tower tragedy to seek the establishment of a national body in England to speak on behalf of social housing tenants.

Tpas, along with others such as TAROE, National Confederation of Co-operative Housing, ARCH (the Association of Retained Council Housing), the National Federation of ALMOs and the National Federation of TMOs have started to explore the viability of creating a tenant-led process to establish a national body

to champion tenants' rights. During the year we've learnt a lot about what it would take to scale up a local and regional tenant voice onto a national platform. Our learning journey is far from over and we're looking forward to supporting AV4T in 2019.

**By bringing our knowledge of the sector plus our unique relationships with tenants and housing professionals we've helped explore the fundamental questions about the future of social housing to stimulate positive change for the future.**

# What's ahead for 2019?

2019 looks to be an extremely busy year again for Tpas. We will continue to work across England delivering on hundreds of projects with our clients ranging from engagement reviews, scrutiny, tenant led governance, accreditations and independent tenant advice.

We will review our engagement standards to make sure they continue to be the best tool they can be to help support staff in the sector to deliver great engagement.

We will press to ensure the momentum for change continues. We want 2019 to be the year we see engagement embraced and embedded again within the whole sector. Tenants and our communities deserve nothing less.



To find out more about Tpas visit:  
[www.tpas.org.uk](http://www.tpas.org.uk)



@tpasengland



tpasengland