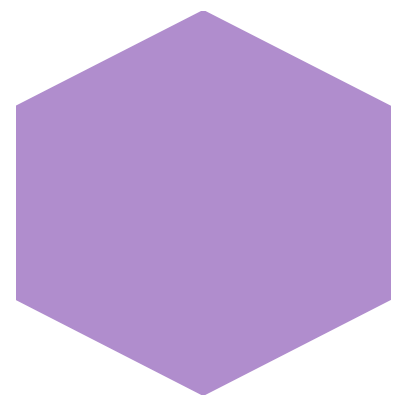
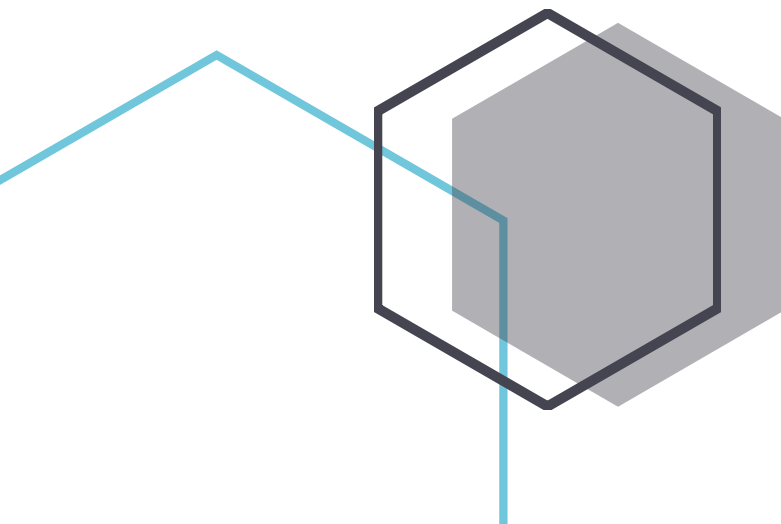




Newcastle Independent Tenant Voice

ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2018 – MARCH 2019

The third annual report from Newcastle Independent Tenant Voice
outlining key work and achievements during the 2018-19 financial year



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Foreword

Hello, as the recently appointed Chair, I am delighted to welcome you to Newcastle Independent Tenant Voice's (NITV) third annual report. It has been a busy 12 months for our panel, as we have grown in numbers and undertaken a number of consultations both locally and nationally. The purpose of the panel is for both tenants and leaseholders of the Council to come together on a regular basis and have a 'conversation' regarding current and future services.

As a council tenant, I became involved with NITV as I wanted to meet other like-minded tenants and leaseholders, and have constructive conversation to help shape existing and future services. Our panel members come from all different backgrounds which helps us consider issues from different perspectives. By engaging and listening, the panel have already started to make a real difference. Our mission statement that underpins all the work we do is: *"Empowering tenants and leaseholders, making a difference to real lives"*.

Here are some of our achievements over the last twelve months:

- Consultation and feedback into the new YHN tenancy agreements;
- National and local consultation on Domestic Abuse;
- Hate Crime Awareness and Offences training;
- Hosting Social Housing Workshops and submission of findings to the Chartered Institute of Housing;
- Undertaking safeguarding training;
- Hosting drop in sessions to raise awareness of NITV;
- Submitting written representation to the Government concerning the Green Paper on social housing;
- National and local recognition for our tenant engagement;

Moving forward to the next year, we want to encourage all council tenants and leaseholders across the City to join us and have a conversation on what matters to you. We will continue to host open days and drop-ins to promote NITV. We will continue to engage with you on future relevant national and local consultations on the issue of social housing and make our voices heard.

Lastly, NITV's panel members (including myself) are all volunteers who generously give their valuable free time. Without everybody's involvement, NITV would not work. I'd like to thank everyone for their time and contributions, it is very much appreciated!

Best Wishes,

Fiona

Background

An Introduction to Newcastle Independent Tenant Voice

Context

The national regulatory framework consists of four consumer standards which are: Tenant Involvement and Empowerment; Home; Tenancy; Neighbourhood and Community. The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment standard includes a requirement to ensure tenants are offered a range of ways to be involved.

Tenants and Leaseholders in Newcastle can get involved with Newcastle City Council and/or Your Homes Newcastle in a variety of ways. The model consists of three component parts:

- **The Newcastle Independent Tenant Voice (NITV) who focus on the housing policies and housing investment functions of the Council;**
- Scrutiny Involvement for Tenants (SIFT) who scrutinise services which are funded by the Housing Revenue Account;
- The Customer Service Committee (CSC) who provide input and oversight to the operational delivery of Your Homes Newcastle policies and services;

About NITV

Newcastle Independent Tenant Voice (NITV) gives Newcastle City Council's 26,500 tenants and leaseholders a voice on important social housing issues using a range of engagement and consultation methods. It is completely independent to Newcastle City Council and their Arms-Length-Management-Organisation (ALMO) Your Homes Newcastle.

NITV will hold consultations when Central Government make changes to housing policy, or if the Newcastle City Council proposes changes that will impact those living in a council property, for example, how homes are allocated.

How it Works

When NITV have a 'live' consultation we set up lots of opportunities including specific events and send/email surveys to our contacts. We will post information on our Facebook page and the Council's website so tenants and leaseholders can find out how to get involved and stay up to date with progress.

Depending on the consultation topic and who would be affected, on some occasions we will focus our engagement on a specific demographic as opposed to all tenants and leaseholders.

When consultations are completed, we feedback the general response and how tenants have made a difference, including proposed changes. We will communicate this via Facebook, the YHN newsletter, and where appropriate, directly to those who participated.

The Importance of Engagement

"Effective resident engagement can benefit everyone – landlords and residents as well as the wider community..."

... we (the government) want to ensure a more consistent picture across the country of genuine engagement with residents, to ensure they have influence over the decisions that affect their lives."

The Social Housing Green Paper: A New Deal for Social Housing

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

NITV Panel

The NITV Panel is a group of Newcastle Tenants and Leaseholders who come together to support the work of NITV. They promote, analyse and interpret consultation results, make recommendations to Newcastle Council based on findings and tenant engagement activities. They act as a 'sounding board' for Newcastle Council in relation to strategic housing policy matters and help to make decisions on funding applications.

The Panel meet monthly at an accessible, central location, alternating between lunch time and early evenings. As well as face to face, we are also able to offer 'virtual' meetings so members can join us via Skype. This flexibility helps to ensure everyone can easily participate, though we recognise there will be occasions where members cannot attend.

The Panel are also involved in ad-hoc work and decisions which sometimes require additional meeting(s) in person, other times this can be done via email.

Panel members are given training and support to assist them in their role, this includes the provision of tablet technology so they can participate digitally.

“The training and support available to panel members is amazing; I have attended conferences, completed accredited training and I know my views are an important part of NITV”

NITV PANEL MEMBER 2018

Panel Members

Over the last 12 months the NITV Panel membership has fluctuated between four and eight members. At time of writing this report the end of the 2018-19 financial year we had four active members; three tenants and one leaseholder.

At the time of writing this report, a further two potential members were in the process of signing up and had membership application forms mailed to them.

Vision and Mission

NITV's Vision and Mission have been developed with the support of our Panel.

Our Mission

Bringing social housing tenants and leaseholders together from all communities to encourage active dialogue, so that Registered Social Landlords can:

- *Better understand and work towards delivering more relevant homes for today and for future generations;*
- *Promote dignity and respect for all tenants and leaseholders both young and old;*
- *Ensure that social housing is relevant, suitable and accessible to all sections of society;*
- *Encourage all Newcastle citizens to be caring and active in modern Britain;*
- *Influence future policies that affect Social Housing.*

Our Vision

- *Ensuring safe and secure homes that are suitable and accessible to the customers' needs;*
- *To be mindful that a one-size-fits-all approach does not work;*
- *Promoting inclusion and not exclusion;*
- *Recognising that better homes lead to brighter communities.*

Meet the Panel

The NITV Panel is currently a diverse group of four dedicated and passionate individuals, they have each provided a short overview of themselves and have outlined their interest in NITV.



Chair: Fi Leslie

Having come from a rural area, I was so in awe of the wonderful City of Newcastle when I moved here back in 1991. Having made my home here, I was lucky to have a diverse career, & became involved with running a tenant's resident group.

My decision to join NITV came about because I felt passionate of being able to rent a Council House. I wanted to ensure that meeting with like-minded tenants and leaseholders, who felt the same passion, could ensure that future generations who maybe could not afford to buy a home, could rent a home instead.

The highlight for me, was that last year I was able to address the Chartered Institute of Housing Newcastle conference. From that, we have been able to link with another social housing tenant's panel and there are other links for us to pursue as well.

Moving forward for the future, I hope & urge that more YHN Tenants & leaseholders, join our panel and have their say. Your voice however small, can make a difference.

I came to the UK 20 years ago as a student and stayed on to work as a lecturer. I live with my partner Kit and our cat, Kitty. I became involved in the residents' group at Queen's Court about ten years ago and this developed my interest in housing, community cohesion and environmental issues in the neighbourhood. I wanted to have a better understanding of these issues in order to be able to influence them, hence my joining NITV.

I have a fair amount of experience in qualitative research, I am an experienced communicator, with a good understanding of internal and external communication processes. During my student days, I worked part-time as a community interpreter which enabled me to gain a fair amount of knowledge about the various local communities in the North East, especially in the more deprived areas of the region.

So far, the piece of NITV work I have enjoyed most has been this year's independent assisted living consultation. I felt that our work was directly helping the people living in those communities, and it gave me an entirely new insight into housing issues. One of my favourite bits of the role is that I am learning all the time.

Another part I enjoy is the social aspect of working with the other members of NITV as well as the NCC officers supporting the group.



Vice Chair: Liviu Popoviciu



Panel Member: Jan Shortt

I have been an NITV member for two years now. I honestly believe in 'social housing' and it is important that we continue to bring affordable housing into Newcastle.

My experience of being part of the team has been really good. I have learned a lot and hopefully have also contributed to discussion and ideas.

The team is friendly and accommodating, but we also get through a lot of work together.

I can thoroughly recommend being part of NITV.

My Name is Lynn Graham and I have worked for Womble Bond Dickinson since 2002, before that I was at PWC for 17 years. I have been married to my husband Mark for 25 years and we enjoy going on holidays, going out for meals and spending time with friends.

I joined the NITV team as I had an interest as a landlord and as a leaseholder. I am very passionate about the treatment of Council tenants and I care about people and if I can help in even a small way then it has been worthwhile. We are a small team, but we are very effective when working together, we all have different skills we bring to the team.



Panel Member: Lynn Graham

Panel Plans and Future Ambitions

The Panel have outlined a number of objectives for themselves and NITV in general, these are:

- To establish personal development plans for each Panel member, tailored to individual;
- To secure joint training for all Panel Members to help develop the group as a whole;
- To double the size of the Panel (attract another 4 members in the next 12 months);
- To develop closer working links with NCC's Scrutiny group (SIFT) and YHN's Customer Service Committee;
- To help promote NITV by distributing the new literature across personal networks;
- To develop the online and virtual offer of NITV to increase engagement and involvement opportunities;
- To participate in the design and delivery of a 2019-20 promotional roadshow;
- To identify opportunities to meet involved tenants and leaseholders from other social housing providers and share ideas and best practice;
- Contributing to the 2019 '100 years of social housing' commemorative events planned for Newcastle;

Tenant Fund

The Tenant Fund is open to all Newcastle Council tenants and leaseholders. Individuals, tenants and residents' groups (TARAs) and community groups who want to make a positive difference in their neighbourhood can apply. All applications to support existing TARAs will be discussed on an individual basis. The intention of the fund is to encourage tenants and leaseholders to participate in housing policy and practice.

Communication

Publicising the fund is a feature of any meeting or event with tenants and leaseholders, and the regular pop ups. Additionally, information is posted on Facebook at regular intervals.



Information about the fund was also posted and emailed to all the Tenants and Residents Associations (TARAs) in May 2019.

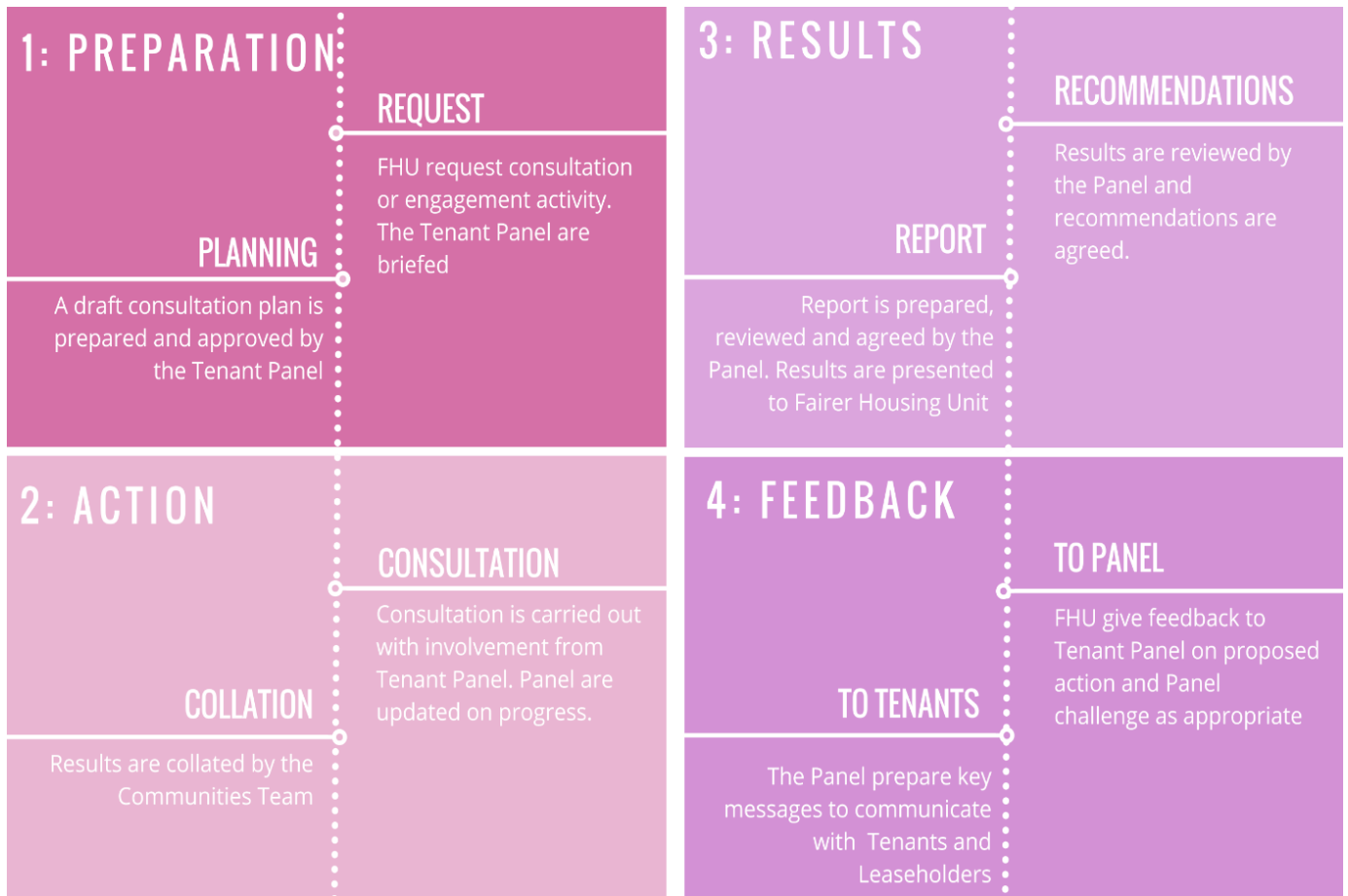
New Criteria

Due to low levels of take up it was agreed the Tenant Fund criteria would again be revised. The original fund was geared towards individuals and tenant groups and did not offer specific support to TARAs. Last year the criteria was updated to support the creation of new TARAs where there was a high concentration of YHN (Council) properties.

Taking on board feedback that existing TARAs are, in some cases, struggling to attract funding, NITV amended their criteria to support existing TARAs and representatives are encouraged to contact NITV for an informal chat. Literature and guidance have been updated and NITV will promote the new Fund criteria in the 2019-20 financial year.

Consultations

Consultation Process



Consultations during 2018-19

During 2018-19, NITV undertook the following consultations:

1. Independent Supported Living Engagement

NITV were asked to engage with tenants living in supported accommodation about the service they receive. Focus was on the following three areas:

- What it was like to live in the scheme
- What they think about the area and neighbours
- If living in this type of accommodation has improved their life and why

The context of this engagement was the preparation of new accommodation blocks awaiting new tenants later in the year. Understanding what current tenants like about where they live, and what they would like to be improved will shape the service provided in the new blocks. The findings of the project were reported to the Supported Housing Panel to help inform future developments and allocations decisions.

The engagement period ran from 21st May 2018 and concluded on 15th June 2018. During this time each tenant was given the opportunities to complete a paper surveys and attend a drop-in session which took place at each location. Newcastle has five Concierge Plus housing schemes supporting people with learning disabilities, accommodating around 70 tenants. 39 tenants took part in this consultation representing 56% of the total number of residents across the schemes.

2. Social Housing Green Paper: A New Deal for Tenants

Following the release of the Government's Social Housing Green Paper 'A New Deal for Tenants', NITV engaged with the tenants and leaseholders of Newcastle City Council to gather local views on what was set out.

More than 80 individuals were consulted and a report was produced which captured the feedback and made up NITV's formal and independent response to the consultation.

On the whole there was support for the green paper, not least that it represents the start of a long overdue conversation about social housing in Britain; addressing important topics like the supply of social homes, tackling the stigmatisation of social housing tenants, the role of the regulator, the complaints process, empowering and involving residents and perhaps most importantly following Grenfell, ensuring homes are safe and of a decent standard.

Programmed Consultation Work

During 2018-19, NITV began preparation for two consultations scheduled for delivery in 2019-20:

1. Tyne and Wear Homes Consultation

The project aims to understand the future of Tyne and Wear Homes from a customer perspective. This will be an extensive piece of work aiming to engage as many tenants as possible across the city.

The consultation will include face to face focus group sessions and digital survey engagement.

2. New Build Housing Delivery Consultation

The scope of the project is to share information with the NITV Tenants Panel on the Council's new build housing programme, and benefit from the group's support during the development process. The elements of the project will include:

- i. Introductory session(s) re: Newcastle housing delivery models and housing types and information sharing on the FHU's consultation process.
- ii. Project planning session to determine the methods of involvement for NITV in scheme specific consultations and to confirm their role.
- iii. Tenant and Leaseholder involvement in scheme specific consultations.

The consultation will be citywide and comprise of both digital and face to face engagement. Face to face sessions will be focussed in particular geographical areas where new affordable social housing is proposed.

Training and Events

The Panel and the NITV Team have had a busy 12 months attending a number of training courses and events, these opportunities build knowledge, increase our networks and raise the profile of NITV.

CIH Green Paper Workshop

In the lead up to the release of the government's social housing green paper, the Chartered Institute of Housing (CIH) hosted workshops for housing staff, tenants and leaseholders. These workshops were designed to capture the views of attendees about what they would like to see contained within the paper. The workshop proved a useful introduction to the green paper and the anticipated consultation.

CIH North East Conference

NITV were delighted to be invited to the CIH's regional conference during 2018-19. After hearing about our proactive work to engage and involve tenants and leaseholders with strategic housing policy matters, the NITV Chair Fi Leslie, was asked to speak about our work and our views on the social housing green paper



NITV Panel Chair, Fi Leslie – CIH North East Conference

Broadacres – North Yorkshire

Following our presence at the CIH North East Conference, NITV were approached by Broadacres Housing Association based in North Yorkshire. Impressed by Fi's conference address and the work we have undertaken to date, they asked if they could visit us in Newcastle to meet the rest of the Panel and find out more about our approach and future ambitions. The visit was a great success and the favour was returned when NITV were invited to visit their offices to meet their customer panel and key officers including their Chief Executive. We were able to share our experiences and understand the differences in our organisations, but also appreciate where we had common issues to overcome. We remain in touch with Broadacres and hope to make contact with other social housing providers passionate about tenant engagement.



NITV visit Broadacres Housing Association to meet their Panel and Officers

YHN Customer Service Week

NITV Panel Member Liviu Popoviciu holds a seat on YHN's Customer Service Committee, this ensures the work of NITV is fed into YHN's customer involvement structure. Between 1st – 5th October, YHN celebrated Customer Service Week, hosting six pop-up celebration events across the city. They talked to lots of customers and raised awareness of some vital and often hidden services including Support and Progression, Financial Inclusion, Employability, Safe Living, Ostara, and Estate Services.

Liviu took part in an estate walkabout in West Denton where he attended an empty property Inspection in the West End with our Housing Services Teams who explained about how customers can get involved in improving their neighbourhoods and understand the customer experience in relation re-lets and allocations.

WISH Conference

On International Women's Day NITV attended the North East launch for WISH – Women in Social Housing. The afternoon was a celebration of the role women in play in the social housing sector, both as paid staff and those taking on volunteer roles on customer panels and governing boards. The day had a fundraising aspect and £7.5k was raised.



NITV attend the North East launch of WISH – Women in Social Housing

New build insight training

Earlier this year the panel took part in a 'housing delivery training' session in preparation for our consultation later in the year. The training highlighted the processes for the following:

- Identifying desirable neighbourhoods that offer a range of affordable/quality homes
- Identifying attractive well-used and popular public spaces and facilities
- Accelerating development of land for housing
- Assessing general needs and specialist housing

Site visits have been arranged for July in the next steps to the consultation.

Housing Insight Survey

In January 2019, panel member Liviu, attended a session to help create and influence the content of the new housing needs survey that is delivered to everyone household in Newcastle.

This survey helps the Council to understand what type of homes are needed in the city now and in the future, and helps to collect information about who you are, where you live, and what is important to you when deciding where you live.

Achievements, Influence and Recognition

Promotional Materials

The team refreshed the NITV promotional leaflet during 2018-19. This is displayed in key locations such as Housing Hubs, the libraries, local community organisations, and local shopping centres. It was also sent electronically alongside our second e-newsletter.



The new NITV leaflet is folded on four sides and is free standing. It is designed to appear like a tower block with text contained within.

Newcastle Independent Tenant Voice

Empowering Tenants and Leaseholders, making a difference to real lives

Who are we?

Newcastle Independent Tenant Voice (NITV) gives Council tenants and leaseholders a voice on important local and national social housing issues.

This includes when the government decides to change housing policies, and when the council makes decisions affecting YHN tenants and leaseholders. This could include how properties are allocated, where houses are built, and changes to the tenancy agreement.

All 26,500 Council tenants and leaseholders are welcome and able to share their views with Newcastle City Council on major issues.

How it works?

When we have a 'live consultation' we will set up specific events and send out surveys to all our contacts. We will post information on our Facebook page and the Newcastle City Council website, to keep you up to date on progress and how to get involved.

Afterwards we will let you know what the general response was and how your feedback has made a difference.

Sometimes we work with specific groups when changes only affect them. We will communicate what we have done and what has changed through Facebook and the YHN newsletter.



Come and join us

The Tenant and Leaseholder Panel are the heart of NITV, and give the project true independence. They are involved in every part of the consultation processes and they shape and drive the workflow when there is no active consultation taking place.

The Panel meet on a monthly basis to discuss current consultation projects, plan forthcoming projects and explore training opportunities. The Panel has very active members who have a range of interests that complement the role of the panel.



Join the panel

Our Mission

- Bringing social housing tenants and leaseholders together from all communities to encourage active dialogue, so that Registered Social Landlords can:
- Better understand and work towards delivering more relevant homes for today and for future generations;
- Promote dignity and respect for all tenants and leaseholders both young and old;
- Ensure that social housing is relevant, suitable and accessible to all sections of society;
- Encourage all Newcastle citizens to be caring and active in modern Britain;
- Influence future policies that affect Social Housing.

Our Vision

- Ensuring safe and secure homes that are suitable and accessible to the customers' needs;
- To be mindful that a one-size-fits-all approach does not work;
- Promoting inclusion and not exclusion;
- Recognising that better homes lead to brighter communities.

What we have done so far

National Influence:

- **Shelter - Big Conversation Report** 'A vision for social housing' was published in January 2018, the final report boasts about NITV being a model of best practice within the social housing sector;
- **Chartered Institute of Housing - NITV** were invited to attend a North East conference in November 2018 to talk about the successes of the programme and to explore the major challenges housing organisations face, including: An overview of the major housing challenges in the region, a detailed look at the economic climate and how it relates to housing organisations, the role regeneration can play in solving our housing crisis, the challenges and opportunities resulting from digitalisation and what should customer excellence look like in housing;
- **Government Housing Green Paper - NITV** in partnership with YHN have successfully submitted recommendations to the Government about the 5 core themes: Tackling stigma and celebrating thriving communities, Expanding supply and supporting home ownership, Effective resolution of complaints, Empowering residents and strengthening the regulator, Ensuring homes are safe and decent. Panel members attended a North East Conference where they met with the Housing Minister Heather Wheeler MP;
- **Housing Quality Network - A national organisation** delivering high quality advice, tailored support and training to housing associations, council ALMOs and other housing providers. Our digital communication methods we use daily with Facebook, website etc have used as a model of best practice in how to engage with tenants in their training modules.

Local Influence:

- **Independent Supported Living - The local consultation** June 2018 in Newcastle, identified a number of crucial recommendations for improvements to supported living accommodation, day-to-day operations and tenant safety.



Future consultations

- **Live and Wear Homes - A consultation** about what service users would improve with the service;
- **New build affordable and specialist housing;**
- For more information follow us on Facebook  or website [etc](#)

How to get more involved

- **Drop In and Information Sessions - We** have regular sessions at different locations across the city to speak to tenants and leaseholders about the work NITV and the Tenant Panel are doing, and to get your views.
- **Workshop and Events - We** run workshops, training and events about topics of special interest. If you are part of a group and would like to know more about NITV, please get in touch and we can come out and talk to you.

Funding for tenants and leaseholders

- The fund is open to all tenants and leaseholders of YHN properties;
- Funding available to individuals or groups;
- To help encourage more involvement in housing issues;
- Applications between £30 - £500 greatly received;
- More information, application forms available at nitv@newcastle.gov.uk

Get in touch and follow us

If you have any further questions or if you are interested in joining the Tenant Panel, please get in touch with the NITV team.

- ✉ Email: nitv@newcastle.gov.uk
- ☎ Call: 0191 277 1807
- 📘 Like: www.facebook.com/NewcastleIndependentTenantVoice
- 🌐 Visit: www.newcastle.gov.uk/nitv

NEWCASTLE INDEPENDENT TENANT VOICE

The official newsletter of the NITV



Welcome!

FRONA LESSIE, NITV CHAIR

Hello, as the recently appointed Chair, I am delighted to welcome you to Newcastle Independent Tenant Voice's (NITV) second newsletter. It has been a busy 12 months for our Panel, we have grown in both skills and confidence having undertaken a number of consultations both locally and nationally. Perhaps one of the most significant, a consultation around the proposals set out in the government's social housing green paper 'A New Deal for Social Housing' - you can read more about this and other pieces of work in the newsletter.



As a tenant of Newcastle Council, I became involved with NITV as I wanted to meet other like-minded tenants and leaseholders, and have constructive dialogue to help shape existing and future services. Our panel members come from all different backgrounds which helps us consider issues from different perspectives. By engaging and listening, the panel have already started to make a real difference. Our mission statement that underpins all the work we do is: "Empowering tenants and leaseholders, making a difference to real lives".

Moving forward to this new year, we want to encourage all YHN tenants and leaseholders across the City to join us and have a conversation on what matters to you. We will continue to host open days and drop-ins to promote NITV. We will continue to engage with you on future relevant consultations around the issue of social housing and make our voices heard.

Lastly, NITV's Panel members are all volunteers who generously give their valuable free time. Without this involvement NITV would not work so I'd like to thank everyone for their input and commitment.

Best wishes

Fiona

SNEAK PEEK

Greetings from the NITV Chair

What is NITV anyway?

Highlights from 2018 and plans for 2019

Join us! Perks of the Panel

The Tenant Fund - open for applications!

The NITV FREE prizedraw - you've got to be in it to win it!

STAY IN TOUCH

Email: nitv@newcastle.gov.uk
 Call: 0191 277 1807
 Like: www.facebook.com/NewcastleIndependentTenantVoice
 Visit: www.newcastle.gov.uk/nitv

Social Housing Green Paper

Perhaps the biggest piece of work this year, and indeed to date, was our consultation with tenants and leaseholders about the content and proposals set out in the government's social housing green paper - 'A New Deal for Social Housing'. The key headings from the document are:

1. ENSURING HOMES ARE SAFE AND DECENT
2. EFFECTIVE RESOLUTION OF COMPLAINTS
3. EMPOWERING RESIDENTS AND STRENGTHENING THE REGULATOR
4. TACKLING STIGMA AND CELEBRATING THRIVING COMMUNITIES
5. EXPANDING SUPPLY AND SUPPORTING HOME OWNERSHIP

Over a two month period digital and face to face engagement took place and the views of more than 70 tenants and leaseholders were captured. On the whole people were supportive of the proposals though there were some concerns raised as to how some of the suggestions were actually going to be put into practice, for example, financing the build for new affordable rental properties.

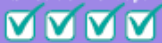
Once completed, a final report was produced and submitted to government as an Independent response from NITV. We are now looking forward to seeing the white paper to understand how feedback collated nationally can influence policy.

"An independent body that speaks on behalf of tenants from a national perspective would be a welcomed move"



TARA TALKS

FREE information and health-checks for Tenant & Resident Groups



Are you part of a Tenant and Resident Group (TARA)?

Are you interested in setting up a TARA?

The NITV Team are again offering a FREE complimentary 'group health check' to tenants and residents groups. This check will help groups to identify their strengths as well as any support needs.

We can also talk to you about:

- Our Panel and the possibility of co-opting a member from your group onto it.
- Our Tenant Fund and whether you are eligible to apply.
- Our consultations and how you and your group can get involved.

To arrange a time for us to come and talk to you email us at nitv@newcastle.gov.uk or call us on 0191 277 1807

The NITV Tenant Fund

OPEN FOR APPLICATIONS!

WHO IS THE FUND FOR?

The fund is open to all tenants and leaseholders living in a Newcastle City Council property. Individuals, tenants and residents' groups (TARAs) and community groups who want to make a positive difference in their neighbourhood can apply.

WHY ARE WE OFFERING THIS MONEY?

- We want to encourage people to be involved in housing issues
- We want people to share information or learn new skills

HOW MUCH IS AVAILABLE?

There is £5,000 available in amounts from £50 - £500

WANT TO APPLY?

email nitv@newcastle.gov.uk or call us on 0191 277 1807

*CONDITIONS APPLY, CONTACT US TO FIND OUT MORE

SO WHAT IS NITV ANYWAY?

Newcastle Independent Tenant Voice (NITV) gives Newcastle Council tenants and leaseholders a voice on important local and national social housing issues. This includes when the government decide to change housing policies, and when the council make decisions affecting tenants and leaseholders.

The Panel is at the heart of NITV and is made up of council tenants and leaseholders who meet monthly to plan for upcoming work, explore training opportunities, and drive the workflow.



When a consultation is live the NITV staff team, supported by the Panel, will set up specific events and send out surveys to all contacts. We will post information on Facebook page to keep you up to date on progress. Afterwards we will let you know what the general response was and how your feedback has made a difference.

Recent Work

Over the last 12 months we have been involved in a range of exciting activities including training and consultation work.

NATIONAL INFLUENCE:

• **Shelter** - Big Conversation Report 'A vision for social housing' was published in January 2019, the final report boasts about NITV being a model of best practice within the social housing sector;

• **Chartered Institute of Housing** - NITV were invited to attend a North East conference in November 2018 to talk about the successes of the programme and to explore the major challenges housing organisations face, including: An overview of the major housing challenges in the region, a detailed look at the economic climate and how it relates to housing organisations, the role regeneration can play in solving our housing crisis, the challenges and opportunities resulting from digitalisation and what should customer excellence look like in housing;

• **Government Housing Green Paper** - NITV in partnership with YHN have successfully submitted recommendations to the Government about the 5 core themes - read more about this consultation on the next page;

• **Housing Quality Network** - A national organisation delivering high quality advice, tailored support and training to housing associations, council ALMOs and other housing providers. Our digital communication methods we use daily with Facebook, website etc were used as a model of best practice in how to engage with tenants in their training modules;

LOCAL INFLUENCE:

• **Independent Supported Living** - The local consultation June 2018 in Newcastle, identified a number of crucial recommendations for improvements to supported living accommodation, day-to-day operations and tenant safety.

To find out more about our work to date and to get involved with future consultations or our Panel, please get in touch!



ENGAGEMENT IN ACTION - NITV ABOUT AND ABOUT IN VARIOUS SETTINGS TALKING TO TENANTS AND LEASEHOLDERS

Perks of the Panel

Wondering who the NITV Panel are? Perhaps you'd like to join? Read on to find out about the role of the Panel and what's in it for you!

JOIN US AND JOIN IN!

What is the Tenant Panel?

The Tenant Panel is a group of Newcastle Tenants and Leaseholders who come together to support the work of NITV. They promote consultations, analyse and interpret consultation results, make recommendations to Newcastle Council and Your Homes Newcastle based on consultation findings and tenant engagement activities, act as a 'sounding board' for Newcastle Council in relation to strategic housing policy matters, and help to make decisions on Tenant Fund applications.

How often does the Panel meet?

The Panel meet monthly at an accessible, central location, alternating between lunch time and early evening. As well as face to face, we are also able to offer 'virtual' meetings so members can join us via Skype. This flexibility helps to ensure everyone can easily participate, though we recognise there will be occasions where members cannot attend. The Panel are also involved in ad-hoc work and decisions which sometimes require additional meeting(s) in person, other times this can be done via email.

What training and support is on offer?

Panel members are offered access to formal and informal training opportunities to help them succeed in their role, this can be tailored to the individual. And whilst Panel members are not paid, all expenses are met and training courses are free. To help perform Panel duties, members are provided with a tablet and keyboard* and travel and accommodation is covered where appropriate events and conferences require Panel representation.

Find out more

For an informal chat about becoming a Panel Member, please get in touch via our contact details on the first page. *qualifying period applies

WHAT'S NEXT?

NITV have a number of exciting plans in the pipeline, from roadshows to consultations!

HOUSING DELIVERY PROGRAMME CONSULTATION

NITV will be supporting Newcastle City Council with the public consultation plan for Annual Lease Back Model (ALBM) building schemes and protecting the social value of council housing. We will also be providing intelligence on community issues.

ANNUAL LETTINGS REVIEW CONSULTATION

Each year the Council's Fairer Housing Unit (FHU) produces a review of the demand and supply of social homes (council houses) in Newcastle called the Annual Lettings Review. The purpose of this is to help the Council understand housing trends which help inform any changes required to policy and procedures. NITV will carry out a consultation to find out the appropriateness of the of the current allocations policy and processes.

SUMMER ROADSHOW

The NITV Team will be back out over the summer months to sign more tenants and leaseholders up to our mailing lists so they can join in with more of our consultations. Follow us on facebook to find out when and where we will be going!



Fancy £50 of Eldon Square vouchers to enjoy this Summer?

Follow us on Facebook to be entered our FREE prizedraw!

Search: **NewcastleIndependentTenantVoice**
 (winner will be selected at random 31st July 2019)

Recognition

As a direct result of work undertaken by NITV, we have received praise and/or recognition at both a local and national level.

Shelter

Big Conversation Report 'A vision for social housing' was published in January 2019, the final report boasts about NITV being a model of best practice within the social housing sector.

Housing Quality Network

A national organisation delivering high quality advice, tailored support and training to housing associations, council ALMOs and other housing providers.

Our digital communication methods we use daily were used as a model of best practice in how to engage with tenants in their training modules.

Chartered Institute of Housing, North East Conference 8,9 November 2018

NITV Chair, Fi Leslie, was invited as a guest speaker to deliver a presentation around the 'rethinking of social housing' agenda which focused on the following three themes:

- a) what is Social Housing?
- b) what does social housing do?
- c) who is social housing for?

As a result of the conference and other research, the panel have since learnt about the major housing challenges in the region and how this effects the economic climate.

Also, how it relates to housing organisations, the role regeneration can play in solving our housing crisis, the challenges and opportunities resulting from digitalisation and what should customer excellence look like in housing.

Government Housing Green Paper – A new deal for social housing 8 October 2018

NITV were invited to a meeting with the Housing Minister Heather Wheeler MP to discuss the social housing green paper. The paper is aiming to rebalance the relationship between landlords and residents, tackle stigma and ensure social housing can act as a stable base and support social mobility.

NITV and YHN, successfully submitted independent recommendations to the Government about the 5 core themes: Tackling stigma and celebrating thriving communities, expanding supply and supporting home ownership, Effective resolution of complaints, empowering residents and strengthening the regulator, ensuring homes are safe and decent.

Independent Supported Living

A local consultation carried out in June 2018 in Newcastle, was praised by the Assisted Living Officer after identifying a number of crucial recommendations for improvements to supported living accommodation, day-to-day operations and tenant safety.

Looking Forward

Targets and Ambitions

Our targets for the next 12 months plan to determine a timetable for ambitious growth and efficiencies for NITV. These targets introduced will ensure improvements to the panel processes and panel application forms to the tenant fund encouraging wider participation from Taras for economic benefits and the creation of awareness of NITV.

We invite views and recommendations received regarding how we can improve our service and continue to embed tenants and leaseholders in decision making.

2017-18 Ambition	2017-18 Target	2018-19 Update	2019-20 Ambition/ Target
Continue to recruit to the Tenant Panel	2 new active members	1 new Panel member recruited but 2 stepped down	4 new Panel members but can be digital/ part time
Develop the digital panel offer	Digital panel to be established by March '19.	All Panel members digitally connected and capable but no digital Panel	Invest time, training and explore costs associated with sophisticated and accessible digital meetings plus online conferencing software
Refresh and reshape the Tenant Fund	4 successful applications	Target achieved but all applications were outside of fund criteria	Criteria updated, to be approved by Programme Board
Expand reach of digital offer	Increase Facebook likes by 100%	Not achieved, this area has been hold in 2018-19 whilst new NCC website, social media and GDPR criteria have been embedded	2017-18 target to be revisited
Increase attendance at events, workshops etc	Increase event attendance by 100%	Achieved via community roadshows – holding events locally has worked better than those centrally at the Civic Centre	Host 1 x promotional community roadshow plus 1 x community based Panel meeting during 2018-19
Increase total number of tenants and leaseholders directly engaged with NITV	Increase engaged by 15%	Achieved	Increase engagement figure by a further 15% during 2019-20
Ensure compliance with GDPR	Communicate with all contacts, and create new email database	Achieved	Remain compliant and adhere to GDPR guidance
-	-	Poor take up of Tenant Fund despite promotion and revisions	Further revisions to be agreed by Programme Board Widespread marketing once revisions agreed 10 successful fund applications during 2018-19