

### Tenant Participation in Other Organisations

Previously the Audit Commission carried out inspections and produced detailed reports assessing providers against their Key Lines of Enquiries including examples of good practice. These reports were a useful resource as they gave clear instruction on what was expected of service providers by the regulator. In addition, 'beacons' were identified as good practice providers in particular aspects of service delivery. Part of their role as a 'beacon' was to advise other providers on how they could improve.

Co-regulation and the new Regulatory Standards are less prescriptive and give landlords freedom to work with tenants to deliver services that meet local demand.

We use HouseMark to compare ourselves to other organisations and gain information about good practice. HouseMark is a subsidiary of the Chartered Institute of Housing and the National Housing Federation. HouseMark enables us to compare ourselves with over 970 other members including local authorities, ALMOs, housing associations and housing cooperatives.

When reviewing good practice it was confirmed that Chesterfield is already involved in tenant engagement activities that are recognised as good practice, have used these methods in the past or are proposing to do so in the near future. This was also the case when looking at neighbouring authorities tenant engagement activities.

**Rykneld Homes** is North East Derbyshire District Council's ALMO and has tenant representatives on their Board. Rykneld have two Service Improvement Groups that focus on Neighbourhood Services and Investment and Development. They have a Tenant Scrutiny Panel which monitors performance and scrutinises services. Rykneld has Tenant Inspectors who inspect void properties that are ready to let and conduct 'mystery shops' of services. There is also an Editorial Panel to ensure newsletters and leaflets are easy to read and understand.

Rykneld's housing stock is spread over a wide area covering both town and rural areas. Their tenant engagement activities are structured around Tenants and Residents Associations. The Federation of North East Derbyshire Tenants is an independent alliance of Tenant and Resident Groups that provides support and financial assistance to Tenant and Resident Groups.

Rykneld's Community Improvers is for 11-19 year olds living who volunteer to work on projects that benefit their local communities and earn Dreamscheme points. The number of young people who are involved in this scheme is quite small, currently less than 10.

**Bolsover DC** is in the early stages of establishing Tenant Scrutiny. Their tenant engagement activities are not promoted on their website although the

contact details of the Tenant Participation are. Tenants are invited to contact her for information about how they can get involved.

**High Peak Borough Council** has two residents associations and a Tenant Scrutiny Group. They have a Housing Select Committee which includes five tenant volunteers. The Committee scrutinises areas such as public and private sector housing, stock and homelessness and considers reports from the Tenants' Scrutiny Group. High Peak hold one off focus groups to address issues in neighbourhoods and have a programme of 'walkabouts' to identify issues on estates. High Peak also use tenant representatives to monitor performance on grounds maintenance.

**Futures Homescape** is Amber Valley's ALMO and has tenant representatives on their Board. They have a Scrutiny Panel and a Quality Circle Group who look at complaints, service standards and feedback from mystery shopping etc. There is also a Neighbourhood forum that looks at local issues on estates and environmental improvements as well as Tenants and Residents Associations. Futures offers a Community Grant Giveaway for community and voluntary groups. They have two focus groups one for Repairs and one for Re-lets and holds an annual independent living event. There are forums for older and younger tenants and one for independent living. Tenants can see staff locally at 'drop in' coffee mornings. Futures also participates in the Dreamscheme.

**South Derbyshire District Council** has a Performance Scrutiny Panel and holds Challenge Days with workshops designed to challenge specific areas of the service. There is a Sheltered Housing Working Group, a Publications Panel who contribute to publications and a Home Standard Panel to scrutinise the repairs and maintenance service.

South Derbyshire are running a pilot of the Dreamscheme.

**Dales Housing** was set following a stock transfer from Derbyshire Dales District Council and is now part of Acclaim Housing. There are tenant representatives of the Board. Dales has a Resident Scrutiny Panel, panels for sheltered housing, leaseholders and reading publications and a Disability Action Group. There are TARAs and special interest groups are held as and when they are needed.

The picture of local tenant engagement activities is similar to the examples given on HouseMark