

Annual Tenants' Event 2023 Report



North
Tyneside
Council

Introduction

Our Annual Tenants' Event was held on Friday 16 June 2023 at the Wallsend Memorial Hall in Wallsend. We were delighted that 39 tenants attended the event, including 17 who hadn't attended a tenants' event previously.

The event was an opportunity for Senior Managers and the Cabinet Member responsible for Housing to meet tenants, outline our plans for the future and gather views on how we can work together to continue to improve our homes, communities and services.

The main aims of the event were:

- To discuss potential budget challenges for the council and its housing service in the years ahead.
- To update tenants on which services have been reviewed and challenged over the last year.
- To get tenants' views on how we shape future engagement opportunities to meet their needs.
- To discuss future housing priorities and further involvement.

This was the first Annual Tenants' Event for several years, and we were overwhelmed with the enthusiasm shown by the attendees. Our team who attended the event really enjoyed meeting tenants and learned a lot from listening to their views. We were delighted to see that 100% of tenants who attended said they would come again!

We are committed to building on this event and offering even more ways for tenants and leaseholders to get involved and help us shape and improve our services.



Order of the day

The doors opened at 9.30am, allowing tenants to grab a cup of tea and meet members of the Housing and Property Services team. We invited several of our partners to share information and attendees were able to browse stalls hosted by:

- VODA
- Working Well and Adult Learning Service
- Holiday Activities and Food (HAF) Service
- Engagement Team
- Active North Tyneside
- Healthwatch
- North Tyneside Carers
- Newcastle United Foundation
- Citizens Advice
- Community Protection Team
- Harbour – Domestic Abuse Support Services

Presentations

Cllr John Harrison, the Cabinet Member for Housing, welcomed everyone to the event followed by an introduction by Peter Mennell, Director of Housing and Property Services, who gave an overview of the housing budget and service priorities.

This was followed by four short presentations that covered key areas within Housing and Property Services including:

- Housing Growth and Delivery
- Housing Options
- Housing Management
- Property Services

These presentations explained what the service does, highlighted some of their successes to date and gave a flavour of some of the priorities for the next 12 months. You can watch the presentations and provide feedback here:

<https://forms.office.com/e/kMYvpjc4wh>



Workshops

Following the presentations, tenants had the chance to share their views in two workshops covering tenant engagement and the Housing Revenue Account.

Workshop 1 – Tenant Engagement

Workshop 1 focused on how we can further publicise Our North Tyneside Voice (ONTV) – the new name for our residents' panel. Members of this will be contacted every time there is opportunity for them to share their views on services.

Tenants were asked: *'How we can best promote engagement opportunities to tenants to get more people involved'*.

Thanks to their feedback, we now have an action plan of how we will promote tenant engagement opportunities including:

- A promotional flyer to be included in the July rent statement to all tenants.
- ONTV graphic to be featured on all TV screens in GP waiting rooms.
- Sign up information added to the welcome letter for all new tenants.
- Promotion via council social media channels on a fortnightly basis.
- Article to be included in the summer edition of the Our North Tyneside magazine.

- Face-to-face activities promoting ONTV across all 20 wards in July and August.
- Reaching out to community groups and venues who were highlighted as part of the event and arrange visits to their groups/centres.
- Promotion at family fun days throughout the summer.
- Reaching out to local Facebook groups to ask them to share our social media graphics.
- Handing out 1,000 cards to tenants on estate clean up days.
- A link to sign up included in the Tenant Satisfaction Measures survey.
- Working with colleagues to promote opportunities to children and young people.
- Posters and leaflets to be featured in all libraries and leisure centres.

If you would like to see the full report on how we have promoted and will continue to promote tenant engagement opportunities, please email

engagement@northtyneside.gov.uk

Workshop 2 – How we spend your money

Workshop 2 focused on potential budget challenges in the coming years and how tenants' rent is spent. The presentation covered the following:

- Pressures to the housing revenue account.
- Maximising how our resources are used.
- How tenants' rent is spent.
- How to better manage demand.

Tenants were asked *'Based on the information you have seen, what do you think we should spend more on, and therefore what would we spend less on?'*

The feedback provided was very helpful and there was general agreement in the priorities that we should be focusing on. The main priorities were clear:

- Providing a high-quality repairs service and focusing on getting repairs 'right first time'.
- Setting and maintaining higher estate standards and increasing the visibility of staff.
- Continuing to focus on keeping communities safe and clean.

We are already working on several improvements around these priorities, as well as addressing many of the other comments that tenants gave to us. We will use this valuable feedback to inform our service plans and continue to focus on improving what we offer for tenants and their communities. We will continue to work hard to improve our services and look forward to updating all tenants on our progress.

Property Services

- More 'right first time' repairs, improve call centre diagnostics and reduce the number of reports that require multiple visits.
- Higher specifications for void properties – stop taking out fittings left by previous tenants, spend to save, and consider intruder alarms.
- Make our properties more environmentally friendly – more solar panels and more energy-efficient homes.

Estates & Communities

- Set higher environmental standards.
- Increase visibility of staff on estates.
- More grass cutting and weeding.
- Tackle untidy gardens and provide more help for those who cannot manage on their own.
- Tackle anti-social behaviour.

Other

- More bins for dog fouling.
- Free or cheaper bulky waste collection.
- More council homes.
- Produce an Annual Tenants' Report.
- Save money by sending less post to tenants.

Conclusion

The event was concluded by Director of Housing and Property Services Peter Mennell, who thanked the tenants for attending and gave a reminder that there are more opportunities for tenants to have their say. All tenants who are signed up to Our North Tyneside Voice will be contacted soon with opportunities to take part in budget workshops, the Big Community Conversation, reviewing our tenant engagement plan and helping to plan our next Annual Tenants' Event.



Tenant feedback

We asked all attendees to complete a feedback form to help us learn from the event and make our next one even better.

Feedback from the event was that it had been a positive experience and included the following:

- **98%** were very satisfied/satisfied with the information stalls.
- **86%** were very satisfied/satisfied with the housing presentations.
- **98%** were very satisfied/satisfied with workshop one.
- **83%** said that their favourite part of the event was the chance to talk to a housing officer.
- **60%** were very satisfied with the venue, **29%** somewhat satisfied and **11%** were neither satisfied or dissatisfied.
- **88%** were satisfied with the refreshments.
- **100%** said that you would join us again.



Tenant comments:

- Very interesting info about budgeting. Met some lovely people.
- Found it hard to hear, maybe get better sound equipment.
- For my first tenants meeting I found it very well presented.
- I found it all very interesting and very easy to understand.
- The sound system was very echoey and kept cutting out.
- Staff were keen and willing to help and discuss topics.
- Clearer signposting of lifts. Better venue.
- Thanks for putting on an enjoyable event.
- I will attend if another venue was considered.

What happens next. You said, we will.



You said	We will
That you would like to be involved again.	We will involve you in the review of the new Tenant Engagement Strategy and future consultation events.
You told us a substantial list of venues to help promote Our North Tyneside Voice.	We have used your suggestions to form an action plan for our future marketing.
You suggested that we look for a more suitable venue for our next event.	We are using your comments to help us find a venue for next year's event. We will involve tenants in the planning of next year's event.
That your favourite part of the event was the chance to talk to a housing officer.	We will ensure that there are officers at the next event to discuss any housing issues.

If you need us to do anything differently (reasonable adjustments) to help you access our services, including providing this information in another language or format, please contact **0191 643 2828** and **engagement@northtyneside.gov.uk**