



Award for Gainsborough organisation that puts customers first

It was celebrations all round after Gainsborough housing association, Acis Group, gained accreditation with the Tenant Participatory Advisory Service (TPAS).

The quality mark demonstrates that the housing association has made strides forward in its commitment to involving its customers. As part of its ongoing aim to put its customers first and listen to their needs, it has officially met the high standards set by TPAS - the leading national tenant participation organisation.

TPAS actively promotes tenant empowerment and works with social housing residents and landlords to help improve tenant influence. Acis began working towards the accreditation in January 2008. Having already been working closely with its customers to improve participation, a process was set in place to demonstrate the way in which it was currently effectively involving residents.

"We are extremely happy to have been awarded this accreditation," said Acis Group's Chief Executive, Valerie Waby. "The award demonstrates our commitment to listening to our customers and ensuring we are customer led in all of our activities. So much work has gone into improving resident involvement over the past few years and the feedback has been fantastic.

"We have increased the opportunities for involvement, which can be tailored to suit anyone dependent on their needs. We are really keen to get more customers involved to help us to keep making a difference!"

Acis believes in involving its customers every step of the way as it means that it can ensure that its services meets their needs and that it plays a part in creating better communities. It has in place a number of measures to involve its customers in the decisions that affect their homes and neighbourhoods.

There are tenants' and residents' associations, a resident advisory panel and local management boards. There are also regular residents' meetings, focus groups and service improvement sub-groups. Acis also has an 'armchair consultation'

email group, where people can get their views across through the use of email. It means that they don't need to leave their home to have their voices heard and can have their say at any time.