



IMPACT ASSESSMENT JANUARY 2015-JANUARY 2016

Introduction from the Chair

Welcome to the Tenant Led Scrutiny Panel (TLSP) Impact Assessment for January 2015 to January 2016.

The TLSP was set up in 2012. We currently have 4 (March 2016) members who have been trained and supported to carry out independent tenant led scrutiny. The purpose and role of the Scrutiny Panel is to hold Acis to account and ensure that services are meeting the needs of residents. The TLSP decides what we investigate but we also consider proposals for review provided by the Board and Management Team. During the assessment period the Panel has completed 2 reviews - Empty Homes and Grounds Maintenance.

This impact assessment measures and evaluates the difference scrutiny has made to the services provided by ACIS, as well as highlighting the social value created through the engagement of the individual panel members. However, it should be noted that the outcomes of the Ground Maintenance review are not included in this report as it has not yet been to Board for approval. These outcomes will therefore be reported in our 2016 assessment.

To ensure a robust methodology was used, we developed a simple logic model for the scrutiny panel showing the inputs, outputs, and outcomes of the panel. By breaking the scrutiny function down in these components, the Panel was able to make a fair assessment on the level of impact and the overall value for money provided by the Panel. To give the process additional independence and validity TPAS were invited to be part of the impact assessment process.

We hope that you find our report interesting and informative.

Nigel Freeman

Chair of the TLSP

Inputs – what resources have gone into TLSP

People:

Volunteer time: (based on an average of 4 members)

Meetings 124 hours

Training 32 hours

Total = 156 volunteer hours

Staff Time: (based on 1 member of staff)

Meetings and Administration support = 37 hours attending and facilitating meetings.
Additional hours incurred supporting, recruiting, marketing and preparing reports which cannot be calculated.

Costs:

TPAS Mentor/Facilitator = £3339.78

Mileage = £1093.95

Communication expenses = £540

Refreshments = £134

Reality Checking Incentives = £320

Total cost = £5427.73 for the 12-month period

Activities and Outputs – What has the panel done?

12 Panel Meetings	2 review reports
19 void inspections	2 interviews
50 tenants surveyed	2 Focus Groups
2 Local Management Board meetings	6 Training sessions

Outcomes – what has changed or improved as a result of the TLSP?

1. Service Improvements

	Recommendation	Progress
1	Re-write Lettable Standard to incorporate changes and inclusions suggested by the TLSP	<u>Complete</u> See report AGL 72 15/16 and minute 13 of AGL Board meeting held on 17/9/16
2	Provide clear link to the lettable standard on the Acis Website	<u>Complete</u> See: Lettable Standard for Empty Properties Policy.pdf http://www.acisgroup.co.uk/download.cfm?doc=docm93jjm4n641.pdf&ver=4014 http://www.acisgroup.co.uk/our-homes-promise
3	Present 'Summary of Lettable Standard' on website in a friendly and engaging manner	<u>Complete</u> See http://www.acisgroup.co.uk/our-homes-promise
4	To provide a checklist to new tenants as part of the sign-up procedure to include cleaning and specification of void works	<u>Complete</u> Went live on 14/3
5	Carry out quality checks following relet works	<u>Complete</u> All relet works are post inspected by Empty Property Team Leader <i>Example copy of sign off sheet available from R&MM</i> Operations Director + Head of Customer Services undertook random visit to RTL properties in December 2015

		Board member visits undertaken on 28/9/15
6	Provide a list of any outstanding repairs and timescales for completion at the time of sign up	<u>Under Review</u> See proforma that is in use
7	Undertake awareness/refresher training for staff on the Lettable Standard	<u>Complete</u> Refresher training undertaken on 27/8/15
8	To present the scrutiny report, evidence, and findings to the team involved in empty property management	<u>Complete</u> Done at team meeting held on 3 rd August 2015
9	Ensure all external and communal areas are cleared and tidied prior to viewings and pick up by making it part of the void inspection process	<u>Complete</u> Both internal and external clearances are undertaken during the void works. Evidence: Going forward there will be photographs taken of all external areas at post let stage. This will include the communal areas.
10	For offer letter to Include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details of council tax bands • Photographs* *Subject to the timing of the offer + condition on inspection	<u>Complete</u> Council Tax band is included on all property adverts.

2. Social Value

As well as improving services and holding Acis to account, we also feel that the TLSP has delivered significant social value.

Volunteer input

In total the TLSP returned a total of **156** volunteer hours in the assessment period. Using an hourly rate of £11.09 to work out the overall volunteer value as recommended by the Community Development Foundation*, the TLSP produced **£1725.36** worth of value.

(*based on the Office for National Statistics gross median hourly rate in its 2010 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.)

Training and Development

TLSP Members have attended 6 training sessions ranging from presentation skills to co-regulation. They have found that the sessions have made a positive difference to both their skills and personal development.

In addition to this they found simply participating in meetings and undertaking the scrutiny function has also improved skills and development.

The testimonials below capture some of the positive impact TLSP members have experienced

In the short time I've been a member of the scrutiny panel, I can say that my eyes have been opened to new things and how housing associations run and makes decisions. I feel that the opinions of tenants and the TLSP are listened to and appear to be valued; it like a breath of fresh air. Acis is a very fair organisation. Being a panel member is enabling me to Improve my own skills and knowledge of the housing sector, and this is something that I would add to my cv in the future as a voluntary role but more importantly than that, acting on behalf of other tenants for 'the greater good'. Russel Coughlin

Before becoming a member of the TLSP I would have ran to the hills if someone said I had to do a presentation, but now I feel confident and can present to the Board, no problem" Nigel F

My confidence levels have grown so much since joining the Panel, so as my knowledge of Housing too. Nigel H

Overall Impact

We are pleased to report that Acis have implemented nine out of the ten empty homes review recommendations made by the TLSP. The remaining recommendation is still being considered by Acis but indications show that this will also be implemented. This clearly shows that the TLSP had a positive impact on the empty homes service and procedure.

Although we are unable to report on the impact of our grounds maintenance review at this point, we are confident that it will also deliver some key improvements to the service as we are confident that Acis will use the findings of the review to shape the new contract specification.

Overall therefore we feel that the TLSP provides good value for money; it has a relatively small cost at just under £5.5k per annum and for this it delivers a number of key benefits both in service improvements and social value. This judgement was also endorsed by TPAS who commented

“The impact assessment process clearly shows that although the TLSP operates on a very small budget in comparison to some other providers, it consistently delivers high quality reviews with key recommendations that improve the services for all Acis tenants.”

Whilst we welcome this endorsement from TPAS, we feel that it is important that the wider tenant base and other stakeholders also have the opportunity to assess the value for money of the TLSP, and make any suggestions for improvement. We will therefore be presenting this report to the Local Management Boards, publishing it on the Acis website and also referencing it in the tenants’ newsletter.

Next Steps

We have just undertaken a TLSP “health check” and have identified some areas for improvement and development. These are

1. Improve tracking system and process to ensure impact of recommendations is recorded effectively
2. Develop new methods to capture the social value of the TLSP
3. Explore ways to connect better with the wider tenant base

The above actions will form the basis of our TLSP improvement plan and we will report progress against these in our next impact assessment which will be published in March 2017.