

Social Housing Resident Panel – Meaningful and effective resident engagement

Panel Member Report – Focus Groups

Date: May 2025



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1. Introduction and summary of findings

Background to the Social Housing Resident Panel

In November 2022 the previous Government established the Social Housing Resident Panel, initially focusing on social housing quality reforms. In October 2024 this Government relaunched the panel with a broader scope across all social housing policy.

The panel brings together up to 250 social housing residents from across England to share their views with the Government and Ministers as policy is developed and reforms implemented.

The Department is committed to making sure social housing residents have their voices heard, with policy makers reflecting and acting on what they hear. Panel members take part in regular focus groups and online communities facilitated by Verian, as well as additional workshops and meetings organised by MHCLG.

Background to the focus groups

The report summarises the main findings of the focus groups that explored panel members' experiences of engaging with their landlord by influencing or aiming to influence their decision-making. This is an independent report, it does not necessarily reflect the views of the Department and nor is it a statement of policy.

Two focus group workshops took place on Tuesday 21 May and Thursday 14 November 2024.

The new consumer regulatory regime came into force on 1 April 2024. As such, more of the residents in the November session may have had experience of the reforms that had come into effect than those in the May session.

Both groups were conducted online via Zoom. The focus group workshops lasted 2 hours and in total 56 panel members attended. Both groups were conducted online via Zoom.

Each focus group workshop involved 6 smaller break-out groups of up to 6 panel members, each facilitated by a Verian moderator. Officials from MHCLG attended the workshops to observe the sessions. For further information about the focus groups and the demographic breakdown of panel members, please refer to Appendix 1.

Summary of findings

The majority of panel members who attended the focus groups had a lot of experience in engaging with their landlords to influence their decision-making. They saw meaningful and effective engagement as being dependant on opportunities to have a voice, being genuinely listened to, and seeing evidence that their input results in changes being made or is at least considered as part of their landlord's decision-making process.

Panel members highlighted the mutual benefits of meaningful engagement for both residents and landlords. While many panel members initially got involved with their housing management to address specific issues, they were also driven by a desire to improve overall housing standards, for themselves and others.

Panel members discussed 3 key areas essential for fostering meaningful and effective engagement:

1. Culture
2. Structure & resources
3. Stakeholders & roles

Culture: Panel members stressed the importance of respectful, honest, transparent, personal, and accessible communication between landlords and residents. Genuine interest from landlords, especially their senior management teams, was seen as critical to meaningful and effective engagement. At the same time, residents should seek to collaborate constructively rather than work against each other.

Structures & resources: Meaningful and effective engagement was felt to require governance structures that reflect resident involvement such as official tenant boards or panels. The size of landlords was generally felt to impact the effectiveness of engagement, with larger landlords being considered less effective than smaller ones. Similarly, where landlords are relying heavily on subcontractors, this could weaken the effectiveness of engagement as structures and responsibilities became unclear. Panel members also noted the impact of financial constraints and the need for practical resources such as IT equipment and physical meeting spaces.

Stakeholders & roles: Collaboration between landlords and residents was seen as essential, ideally functioning as a partnership. External organisations such as Tpas, the Government, the Regulator of Social Housing, and the Housing Ombudsman were also identified as key stakeholders for enabling meaningful engagement.

Panel members acknowledged that engagement often failed to be inclusive and the ‘typical’ residents who participated in engagement activities were not representative of broader resident communities. Key barriers to engaging a more diverse range of residents included time constraints, formal commitments such as a defined role or terms of service, a fear of speaking up, and what some perceived as intentional efforts by landlords to limit participation.

To encourage broader involvement, panel members suggested landlords should offer more flexible ways to engage, financial compensation for residents’ time, and training to upskill residents. They also suggested that landlords should promote engagement opportunities more actively while demonstrating the impact it can have. Additionally, panel members believed that stronger legislation and regulation were crucial to improving resident engagement in the future. For example, panel members recommended that the Regulator of Social Housing investigate the diversity of tenant representation and whether landlords are implementing the changes suggested by residents.

2. Experience of engaging with landlord

Modes of engagement

The panel members who attended the focus groups had experience with different types of influencing, scrutinising and engaging with their landlords, with tenant boards and panels being the most common. Engagement took the form of both formal and informal modes of engagement.

Formal engagement models were typically defined as long-term engagement activities with assigned responsibilities. This could be:

- tenant boards
- panels such as scrutiny or complaints panels
- special interest groups such as LGBT or disability groups
- tenant and resident associations
- being a tenant inspector or auditor.

Informal engagement was defined as being more irregular and ad-hoc and covered activities such as:

- townhall meetings
- community action groups
- focus groups, online communities or discussion forums
- feedback surveys
- mystery shopping.

What meaningful and effective tenant engagement means

The discussions with panel members aimed to understand what it means for tenant engagement to be meaningful and effective rather than just a superficial tick box exercise.

The discussions covered both informal and formal forms of engagement but highlighted there were 3 broad common characteristics to meaningful and effective engagement with residents:

1. Residents are provided opportunities to express their views.
2. Residents' feedback is actively and effectively listened to.
3. Change is made based on residents' input or there is evidence that their voices have been considered in the decision-making process.

“ Tenant engagement is seeing tenant voice in action. ”
- Panel Member

Panel members were aware that not every suggestion from residents can be implemented by landlords for a variety of reasons. When it is not possible for landlords to action the suggestions/changes made by residents, panel members felt that landlords should provide an explanation and communicate reasons openly and transparently.

Examples of meaningful and effective engagement shared by panel members included:

- A landlord that implemented adapted communications for vulnerable audiences based on the recommendations of a customer voice group.
- Residents being asked to input into a new housing development which resulted in them directly influencing room sizes.
- Residents co-authoring a vulnerable audience strategy and developing a service standard for residents with disabilities.
- A Tenant Influence Panel being consulted about how their landlord should handle complaints and their suggestions being implemented.

Benefits of meaningful and effective engagement

Panel members saw the benefits of meaningful and effective engagement as being better outcomes for both residents and landlords.

Meaningful and effective engagement was seen as a way to prevent or mitigate problems, and to improve housing conditions and landlord service provisions. Panel members believed that when residents scrutinise their landlord and raise concerns, it can help improve housing

conditions over time. For instance, reviewing what actions landlords are taking and flagging unresolved problems was seen as a way to push landlords to take action. Engaging vulnerable groups, such as residents with disabilities who might otherwise be overlooked by landlords, was considered particularly important.

Panel members felt meaningful and effective engagement was also beneficial for landlords, enabling them to run a successful business or organisation and ultimately improve tenant satisfaction. For example, involving residents in decisions was seen as a way to bring valuable views, experiences and expertise into the process that landlords might otherwise miss.

“ Landlords - whether they are a council or housing association ”
- need to realise that they might be the experts in running a business, providing new homes...But we're the experts in the community, we're the experts in our homes. And we do need to be consulted. We do need to be listened to.
- Panel Member

Motivation

Many panel members initially engaged with their landlord because they experienced specific issues they wanted to be resolved or addressed. For example, some joined complaints panels because their own complaint was not resolved, while others wanted to improve specific issues such as fire safety in their housing or to get answers to questions they had raised with their landlord in the past.

Panel members were also motivated by a passion for social housing and a desire to improve housing conditions for themselves and other residents. Some panel members felt that social housing residents are often overlooked and not taken seriously by landlords – something they were keen to address by getting involved.

Some panel members felt compelled to get involved in tenant boards and panels to try to hold landlords accountable for poor levels of service. They expressed the view that if landlords provided decent quality housing and handled complaints and issues effectively in the first place,

there would be less need for residents to have to join panels and boards to hold them to account.

“ I think it's the landlord's responsibility to check that that job has been done properly and not left to the tenant to shout about it. -

Panel Member

3. Drivers of meaningful and effective tenant engagement

Overview

The panel members who attended the focus groups discussed a variety of drivers of meaningful and effective engagement between residents and landlords. Key drivers identified were:

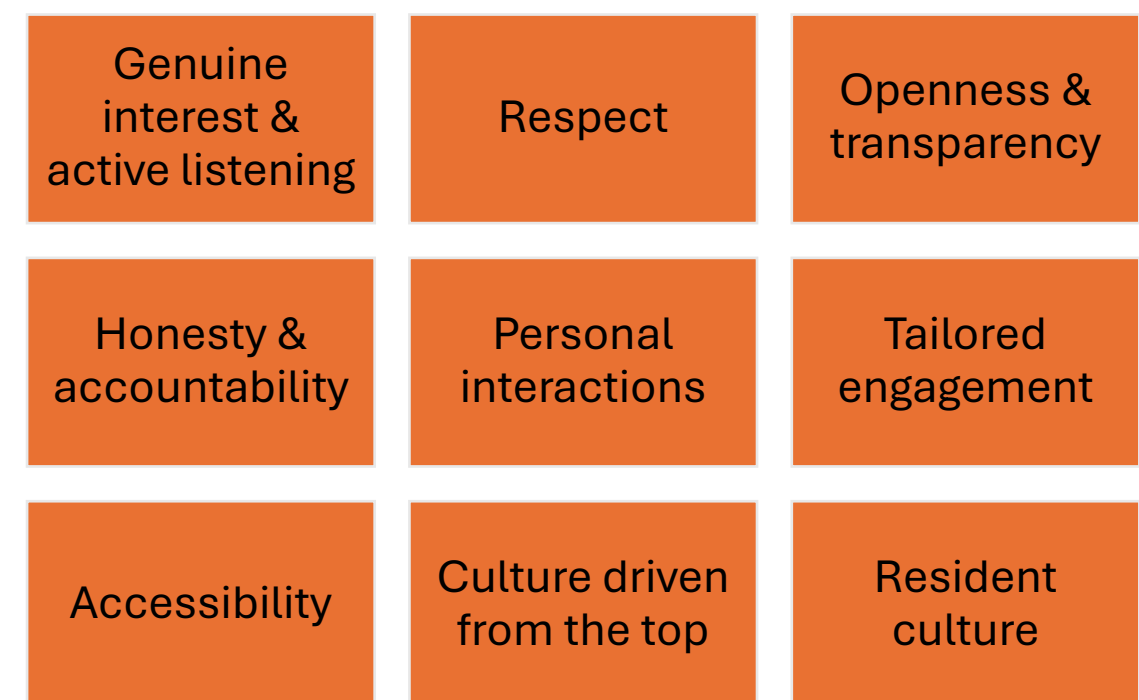
1. Culture
2. Structure & resources
3. Stakeholders & roles

Culture

The culture between landlords and residents was seen as essential for facilitating meaningful and effective engagement. Panel members described the different aspects of a positive culture between landlords and residents that can support effective engagement.

Figure 3.1 shows the cultural drivers of meaningful and effective engagement which are: genuine interest and active listening, respect, openness and transparency, honest and accountability, personal interactions, tailored engagement, accessibility, culture driven from the top, resident culture.

Figure 3.1



Genuine interest & active listening: Panel members felt that landlords need to have a genuine interest in their residents and actively listen to their opinions, needs and concerns. Providing decent housing and services that meet the needs of residents should be at the heart of landlords' operations and decision-making. Some panel members felt that their landlords' engagement with them failed to demonstrate this and was done purely to tick a box.

“ [Engagement] is a two-way street. Residents are engaging with the landlord, but landlords have to engage with the residents. They have to put the same motivation that engaged residents put in. (...)

I think a lot of frontline staff have lost the will to actively listen.

- Panel Member

“ I think there's very much a tick box exercise culture in all social housing because it's all been foisted upon them [landlords] to involve the tenants as much as possible. - Panel Member

Respect: Some panel members reported experiencing disrespectful and poor engagement practices from landlord staff that they attributed to the stigma associated with living in social housing. For engagement to be effective it should be founded on mutual respect, with landlords

recognising and prioritising the value of their residents. For example, some panel members suggested that landlords need to acknowledge that residents provide crucial income for landlords' businesses and that residents should therefore be treated with respect rather than as a burden.

Openness & transparency: The culture between landlords and residents should be based on openness and transparency. Most importantly, panel members felt that residents should be able to set or at least influence the agenda of formal engagement meetings.

Cases of poor engagement practices were often associated with landlord staff controlling the agenda or format of formal engagement and in doing so, preventing residents from having a voice. Instead, there should be flexibility to allow residents to speak openly about the issues important to them, rather than the landlord deciding what the agenda or format should be.

Similarly, panel members felt that landlords should communicate openly about the status and feasibility of requests. For example, landlords should communicate openly why certain suggestions cannot be implemented rather than shutting them down or leaving them unaddressed.

“ Landlords need to be realistic in their communication. Painting all roses in the garden picture will not resonate with tenants. If something is wrong, they need to be realistic and respectful - Panel Member ”

In general, panel members reported that landlord staff should be open to constructive criticism. Some panel members felt that staff, especially frontline staff, often struggled with criticism, sometimes reacting defensively or even aggressively. This was seen to be the result of poor training and skills as well as staff not wanting to hear that they are not meeting their professional obligations.

“ When you talk to an executive director and senior management, they take that critique on board, but it's those at lower levels of the management tree who find it very difficult because they don't want to be seen as not fulfilling their obligation. - Panel Member ”

“ They [landlord staff] just see us as a tenant who is complaining. They're not able to take constructive critique. - Panel Member ”

Panel members also felt that effective engagement needs to be based on the principle of transparency. Residents participating in formal engagement activities with their landlord should have access to relevant data and information e.g. financial reports, to make informed decisions. The landlord should proactively make reports available and provide regular feedback and status updates so that residents are clear about what progress is happening.

“ If customers are making suggestions, they need feedback on if those suggestions are being implemented, or if not, why. - Panel Member ”

Honesty & accountability: Panel members emphasised that landlords should be honest and accountable for their actions to ensure engagement is meaningful and effective. They expressed concerns that landlord staff often avoided taking responsibility for mistakes, instead shifting blame to subcontractors or hiding accountability behind complex organisational structures and systems.

Personal interactions: Panel members highlighted the importance of regular personal, face-to-face interactions with landlords, alongside online engagement. They stressed that residents should have opportunities to build and maintain personal relationships with landlord staff to foster meaningful and effective engagement. Poor engagement was often linked to high staff turnover and inadequate handovers, which made developing and maintaining positive interactions challenging.

Leading on from personal interactions, panel members also expected their landlords to be familiar with their residents but also the buildings and local environments they live in.

“ Put yourself in my shoes and see the world from my perspective. - Panel Member ”

Tailored engagement: Panel members expected landlords to understand and take account of the needs of different audiences, avoiding a 'one-size-fits all' approach to engagement. Instead of offering generic approaches, landlords should tailor their engagement strategies,

particularly for vulnerable residents, to ensure all residents are able to engage with them if they wish.

“ One size doesn't fit all and that's something that they've ”
[landlord] got to remember. - Panel Member

Accessibility: Landlords need to ensure engagement activities are accessible to all residents. Panel members emphasised the importance of using clear, straightforward language and avoiding technical jargon or overly complex terminology. This issue was seen as particularly relevant when residents are required to engage with technical topics or documents, such as financial reports.

“ Why is he [landlord] bothering reading that financial report to ”
all the tenants that they wanted to come? They [residents] can't
understand a word they're saying! They're talking in financial speak that
means nothing to the tenants. - Panel Member

Culture driven from the top: Many panel members reflected on the importance of the senior management team in driving a culture of positive and meaningful engagement through their organisation. This was seen to be particularly important for larger landlord organisations. Panel members described members of senior leadership teams having regular direct contact with their residents and being visible in their local area. This behaviour was seen as an important indicator of a landlords' intention to have meaningful and effective engagement with residents. The actions of CEOs and senior leadership were also seen to play an important role in overcoming the social stigma associated with living in social housing.

“ The CEO has never been out to visit an older property. They ”
go out to new developments and have their picture taken. But do they
visit you and me? - Panel Member

“ Our CEO - during COVID - put on his Hi-Vis jacket and he ”
went out cleaning communal areas and so he got first-hand experience
from the residents.
- Panel Member

Resident culture: Panel members largely agreed that cultural factors were predominantly influenced by the landlord. However, they also identified key attributes required of residents to foster a meaningful and effective engagement with their landlord.

Panel members emphasised that engaged residents - especially those involved in formal engagements with landlords - should be there to represent the interests of all residents rather than prioritising their own personal interests.

Additionally, panel members felt that engaged residents should demonstrate persistence to drive meaningful change, even when faced with challenges.

“ I think if we [residents] just keep on banging on about [issues], they're [landlord] going to have to listen eventually.
- Panel Member ”

Collaboration amongst residents was deemed essential, with an emphasis on residents working collectively, avoiding cliques, and remaining open to the landlord's perspective.

Structure & resources

While panel members identified a variety of cultural drivers they felt facilitated meaningful and effective engagement, they also highlighted the importance of structural factors and access to resources.

Figure 3.2 shows the structural and resource related drivers of meaningful and effective engagement which are: governance structures, size of landlords, use of subcontractors, financial pressure, IT equipment spaces and travel expenses.

Figure 3.2



Governance structure: Panel members felt it was important that engagement opportunities – both formal and informal – are reflected in official governance structures of the landlord. For example, landlords should have tenants on management boards to demonstrate that residents are at the heart of the decision-making process.

“ If tenants are to have influence it needs to be in the governance structure. - Panel Member ”

Large vs. small landlords: Discussions highlighted some differences between large and small landlords. Meaningful and effective engagement was seen as more difficult with larger landlords due a variety of factors. Large landlords were seen to be:

- ‘faceless’, distant and therefore generally difficult to engage with
- more difficult to get involved in formal engagements such as tenant boards due to size of the organisation and number of residents
- more process-driven and ‘corporate’ which negatively impacted the format of engagement opportunities
- prioritising making money over genuinely caring for their residents.

One panel member felt that the small size of their landlord was a key factor for facilitating a positive engagement experience as residents had more direct access to staff.

Use of subcontractors: The panel also discussed the use of subcontractors as a structural factor influencing meaningful and effective engagement. Some panel members expressed concerns that a high reliance on subcontractors—such as for repairs—could negatively impact engagement efforts by creating unclear structures and responsibilities.

Some panel members felt that their landlord used subcontractors to avoid responsibilities. Furthermore, subcontractors themselves could hinder communication by withholding or failing to share important information with landlords.

One panel member shared an example of how their tenant panel developed a code of conduct specifically for contractors. This initiative helped establish clearer expectations and contributed to fostering more positive engagement among all stakeholders involved.

Financial pressure: Panel members highlighted that a lack of financial resources posed a significant challenge for landlords, often hindering meaningful and effective engagement practices. Limited financial resources were felt to contribute to issues such as poor service provision, inadequate operations, low staffing levels, insufficient staff training, and the closure of physical spaces for tenant engagement.

Additionally, some landlords were seen to prioritise quick and easy fixes over addressing more complex or costly issues raised by residents, which limited the potential for meaningful, long-term change.

However, panel members expressed different views on this topic. Some argued that many cultural aspects of engagement—such as respectful communication—could be implemented regardless of financial constraints. Others felt that landlords often had sufficient budgets but chose not to allocate resources toward areas that would benefit residents.

“ I just don't believe it. What you hear is ‘we've got no money’, ”
but they've got millions coming in each month from rent. I cannot believe
just looking at the state of my own housing association that they
[landlord] are using that money wisely. - Panel Member

IT equipment, physical spaces & travel expenses: Panel members emphasised the importance of having sufficient resources such as IT equipment and physical meeting rooms, when formally engaging with landlords.

Panel members described that landlords often provided old and outdated IT equipment or simply relied on residents to use their own hardware. This could hinder effective engagement.

Some panel members felt that landlords relied too much on residents being 'tech savvy' which could result in older residents or residents without broadband connections being excluded from engagement opportunities.

“ There's far too much reliance on residents providing all of the equipment to have interactions with the landlord. - Panel Member ”

Panel members highlighted the importance of creating accessible engagement opportunities which could include ensuring accessible meeting spaces and covering any travel expenses if needed. One panel member explained how their landlord made it impossible for them to take part in a panel due to the high cost of transportation involved.

“ There's been a big shake-up at my landlord, they did away with an awful lot of panels, and they made it almost impossible to join any panels...they said 'if you want to be on a forum you've got to pay for your own transport'. It would cost £115 to pick up myself and a friend. I'm a pensioner on pension credit. There was no way I could afford that. – Panel Member ”

Stakeholders & roles

In addition to cultural and structural factors, panel members identified important drivers regarding the different stakeholders involved and their roles.

Partnerships: Some panel members raised concerns about an unequal power dynamic between landlords and residents, noting that landlords may have a disproportionate advantage due to their resources and ownership of buildings. Ideally, panel members felt residents and landlord staff, should work collaboratively as equal partners, united by a shared interest in providing decent housing for all.

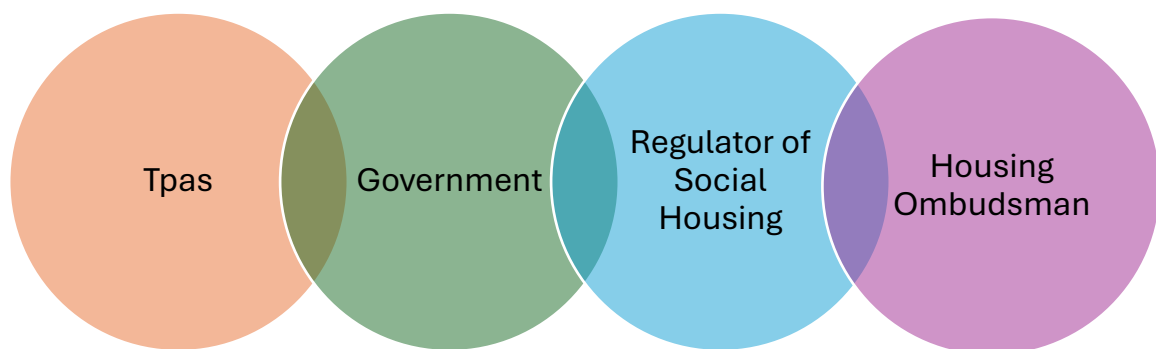
Panel members felt that landlords should not be forcing decisions on residents, but should take a collaborative and open approach when engaging with residents.

Panel members referred to their role as engaged residents as being a 'critical friend' to the landlord, underscoring the need for both partnership and constructive criticism.

“ A lot of landlords are still in that old mindset of ‘we'll tell you what you're getting, now you make it work for you’. – Panel Member ”

Figure 3.3 shows the relevant stakeholders beyond landlords and residents who are: Tpas, Government, Regulator of Social Housing, and Housing Ombudsman.

Figure 3.3



Tpas accreditation: Some panel members felt that their engagement with their landlord was meaningful and effective due to Tpas' accreditation of the landlord. In these cases, landlords have to demonstrate their commitment to resident involvement which was seen as a critical factor for driving meaningful and effective engagement practices.

“ We’re going through Tpas accreditation at the moment, so even we as tenants are under scrutiny. It’s a good thing because we’re always striving to look forward and improve. – Panel Member ”

Government & Regulator: Panel members recognised the role of the Government, specifically MHCLG, and the Regulator of Social Housing in creating effective and meaningful engagement.

Some panel members felt that the need for landlords to report tenant satisfaction measures had a positive impact on tenant engagement. This motivated landlords who do not want to be at the bottom of landlord rankings.

However, overall, panel members felt that landlords did not receive enough pressure from Government and the Regulator of Social Housing to improve and provide meaningful and effective engagement opportunities. Across both May and November focus groups, regulation was seen to be too lax and audits not going far enough.

There was mixed feedback regarding the new consumer regulatory regime. Some panel members felt that their voice of residents is now heard more effectively by their landlord because standards for engagement have tightened. Other panel members felt that the new regulation is not going far enough and still providing loopholes for landlords to not engage properly with residents.

“ There's no pressure apart from the Regulator saying we need you to have good resident involvement or tenant engagement. So how do they achieve that? And that's yet to be defined. I don't think 1 panel for a housing association with 6000 properties is good tenant engagement, and that's what I have with [landlord name]. We have one tenant panel. That's it. – Panel Member ”

Housing Ombudsman Service (HOS): Overall, panel members had mixed views about the influence of the Housing Ombudsman in driving more meaningful and effective engagement between landlords and residents. Some members felt that the Ombudsman can benefit residents by resolving disputes between landlords and residents. They also felt that HOS provided resources and guidance on the topic of resident engagement that could benefit landlords.

However, others felt that their landlord ignored the Housing Ombudsman's rulings following investigations into tenants' complaints and that HOS is generally overstretched and therefore too slow in responding. Since the HOS can only step in after the landlord's complaints processes have been exhausted and a resident is still dissatisfied, some have criticised that this limits the HOS's role to a last-resort measure, leaving a gap in early impartial support.

4. Diversity & inclusion

Representation

Panel members felt that representation in engagement activities, particularly formal forms of engagement, is currently not representative of wider tenant communities.

Panel members described the typical engaged tenant as being middle aged, retired and often living with disabilities to make sure landlord services meet their specific needs. Some panel members also felt that engaged residents are more likely to be White and more educated than the average tenant.

Barriers to engagement

Panel members identified a range of barriers preventing more residents, and in particular a more diverse or representative range of residents, from engaging with their landlords.

Time & formal commitment: Panel members highlighted significant barriers to tenant engagement, particularly for younger and working residents. The time commitment required, especially during working hours, was seen as a major obstacle. Additionally, a requirement for formal and regular involvement was seen as another deterrent for some who may prefer to engage on a more ad hoc basis. Panel members reflected that some residents only tended to get involved when problems arise, rather than committing to long-term, structured forms of engagement.

Fear of speaking up: Panel members felt that some residents were afraid to speak up or criticise their landlord due to concerns about potential repercussions, such as losing their tenancy. Others believed that residents might feel intimidated speaking in front of other residents, or fear being judged for lacking knowledge about social housing regulations. For instance, panel members noted that many residents

were confused about the roles and responsibilities of both landlords and residents.

Panel members also identified specific barriers on the landlord's side that prevented a more diverse range of residents from getting involved.

Deliberate barriers: Many panel members felt that their landlord was intentionally limiting engagement with more critical or outspoken residents. Others believed that landlords were actively preventing broader involvement by failing to promote engagement opportunities and limiting the impact of engagement by withholding relevant information from engaged residents. Panel members felt that this approach allowed landlords to avoid criticism and scrutiny while maintaining control over engagement activities.

“ Housing associations don't want people who can actually challenge them – the reality is for a lot of these organisations they don't want an independent tenant voice. – Panel Member ”

“ They [landlord] would rather cosmetically manipulate tenant panels to have those on the panels that are not as well informed on social housing and the regulations. – Panel Member ”

“ It's staff blocking further engagement. They [landlord] like to have limited engagement so that they can control to the best of their ability. They're advertising all the time. It's on the banner on the website. But do we see new members? No, we don't. (...) I've asked several times for numbers and then they sort of say they've just come up with lots of excuses. So, it's all smoke and mirrors. – Panel Member ”

Lack of impact: Panel members also explained they felt residents lose interest in getting involved when engagement is not making any difference or only leads to superficial changes.

“ There are lots of groups that make you think you're being listened to, there's lots of business but not a lot of doing, that's what happens. After 9 years I've not achieved anything, not one thing.” – Panel Member

How to get more residents involved

Panel members shared a variety of ideas for how to involve a more diverse range of residents.

1. **More flexible engagement & communication:** Panel members suggested offering more flexible engagement opportunities, such as hybrid meetings or evening sessions, to accommodate people with daytime commitments. Others suggested more flexible communication methods such as social media or text messages to engage younger residents.
2. **Financial compensation:** Panel members also felt that landlords should offer financial compensation for participation, particularly to cover travel expenses. However, some raised concerns about the potential negative impact of additional income on benefit payments.
3. **Training & education:** Panel members emphasised the importance of providing more training and education on social housing regulations and tenants' rights to give residents the knowledge and confidence to engage with their landlords. They suggested that landlords should offer this training, while the Ministry, the Regulator of Social Housing and the Housing Ombudsman should ensure residents are well-informed about their rights.

“ We have lots of people who wouldn't go on a board but with the right training they would be absolutely brilliant. – Panel Member ”

4. **More promotion:** Panel members also stressed the need for better promotion of engagement opportunities to increase awareness and participation. They believed landlords should make a greater effort to reach younger audiences. One panel member shared how switching communications from letters to text messages helped encourage more young residents to get involved.
5. **Demonstrate the impact:** Panel members emphasised the importance of landlords showing that getting involved can lead to

real change. Seeing issues get resolved was considered to be a key factor in encouraging residents to engage and remain involved.

“ You need to make it look attractive and that the time you’re giving is not wasted and there is an effect of your work. If you show this, you will get people engaged. – Panel Member ”

5. Regulatory standards

Panel members believed that stronger legislation and regulation were crucial to improving tenant engagement in the future. Many felt that meaningful change could only happen by raising the standards and requirements for landlords.

Across both May and November focus groups, panel members suggested that the Government and the Regulator of Social Housing must take a firmer stance on how landlords engage with their residents. For example, panel members recommended that the regulator investigate the diversity of tenant representation and whether landlords are implementing the changes suggested by residents.

“ You know, it's not a bashing of them [landlord], but legislation should be there to ensure that they engage properly with tenants. –
Panel Member

“ From the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government that's where the pressure has to come from. That's it. –
Panel Member

Appendix 1: Methodology

Recruitment and method

Tenant engagement was defined as going beyond everyday communications with landlords (e.g. complaints) by influencing or aiming to influence landlord's decision-making and operations.

The focus group workshops sought to understand:

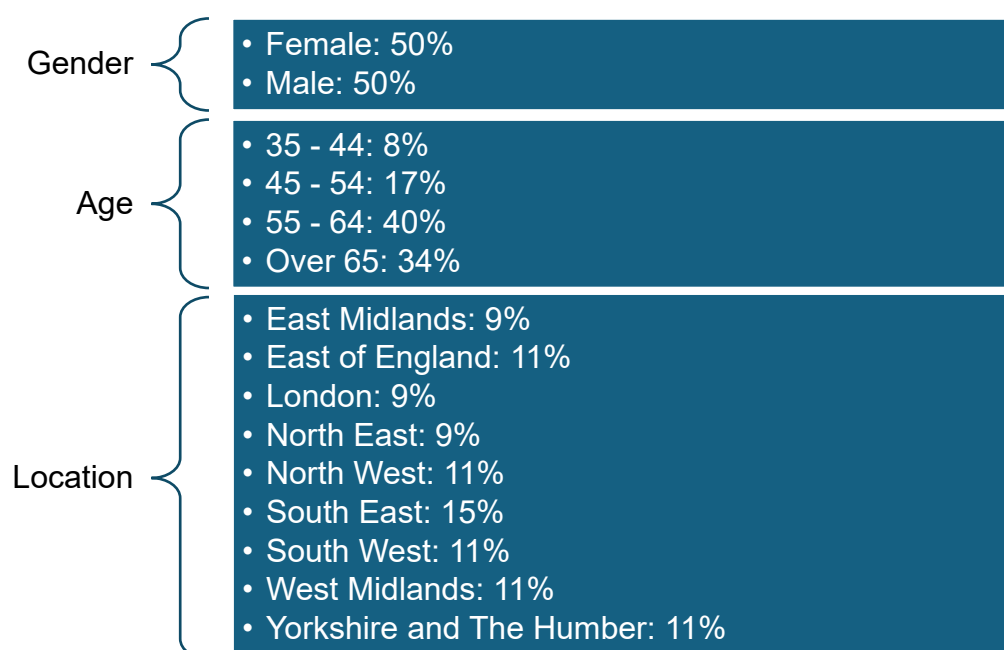
- experiences of current practices of tenant engagement
- what works well and what does not with regards to tenant engagement
- what makes tenant engagement meaningful and effective, regardless of the model.

Sample composition and segmentations

This section summarises the demographic sample of all 56 panel members who attended focus group workshops.

Figure A1.1 shows demographic information of panel members who attended the focus group workshops. Gender: females 50% male 50%. Age: 35- 44 8%, 45-54 17%, 55-64 40%, and over 65 34%, Location: East Midlands 9%, East of England 11%, London 9%, North East 9%, North West 11%, South West 15%, South West 11%, West Midlands 11%, Yorkshire and The Humber 11%.

Figure A1.1



Q. Please tell us your gender

Q. What is your age group?

Q. Where do you live?

Base: All panel members that attended the focus group workshops (56) Note: This data was collected at recruitment stage for the panel by MHCLG.