

Customer Voice

Welcome to the summer 2016 edition of the Customer Involvement Team bulletin for involved customers of Erimus Housing, Housing Hartlepool, Tees Valley Housing and Tristar Homes.

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Welcome

Welcome to the latest edition of the Customer Voice newsletter. In this bulletin we will update you on Customer Involvement activities and share information on what we have planned for the future.

You can also find out about upcoming training and information about our Community Fund.

If you have any comments or feedback about the newsletter or anything else, please contact the Customer Involvement Team. Please get in touch using the contact details on the back page.

Training opportunities

Since April 2015 the Customer Involvement Team has delivered training to over 200 involved customers on a range of different subjects.

Our aim is to build skills and capacity among involved customers to help them get the most out of the work they do with us and their communities.

We teamed up with Middlesbrough College to deliver the Skills for Involvement training which saw customers learn about topics such as confidence building and conflict

management. Skillshare also provided level two training in both food hygiene and first aid, and colleagues from teams across Thirteen have delivered training on information security, equality and diversity and Universal Credit.

We are looking forward to offering more training courses for involved customers in the coming months.

For more information on the training available, please contact the Customer Involvement Team using the details on the back page.



Scrutiny Panel

The Scrutiny Panel is currently reviewing the concessionary garden schemes on offer across the Thirteen Group.

This is the scheme that supports tenants to manage their gardens if they meet certain criteria (usually for older or disabled people). The current schemes on offer across the partner landlords are slightly different and offer subsidies ranging from 0-80%. The panel's report will be submitted for the September board meetings.

Complaints Panel

The Complaints Panel met recently to cover some refresher training and test satisfaction with how Thirteen managed recent complaints. The panel is looking forward to helping the Group with complaint prevention in the near future, once an internal review has been completed.

Community Fund

Thirteen has grants of up to £2,500 available for a range of community projects.

We welcome applications for funding to our Community Fund from voluntary and community groups and other organisations that contribute to our communities, helping to make them places where people want to live.

To apply for funding, visit the 'Get Involved' section of your landlord's website: (<https://goo.gl/7VY4zp>) scan the QR code with your smart phone or contact us using the details on the back page.



Thirteen Customer Council

By Jim Martin, Chair of the Customer Council

The Thirteen Customer Council (TCC) was formed with tenants from the four landlords within the Thirteen group - Erimus Housing, Housing Hartlepool, Tees Valley Housing and Tristar Homes.

The TCC is a panel that challenges Thirteen's performance and ensures customer interests are considered and taken into account in service delivery and strategic direction. There are eleven members and we have been meeting for around 18 months.

We report to landlord boards on our work and findings,

and share any concerns we have. We regularly meet with senior officers from Thirteen, the chairs of the landlords in the group, and attend board meetings to discuss performance and progress with service delivery for tenants and leaseholders of the Thirteen group.

We have a busy work programme and we meet

approximately once a month. We are looking for suitably experienced people to join the TCC and will be recruiting later in the year. If you would like to find out more about joining the Customer Council please contact the Customer Involvement Team using the details on the back page.



Meet the team

There have been some changes to the Customer Involvement Team over the past few months. Find out about the team and what we do.



(From left: Suzanne Moseley, Jane Slater, Katrina Johns, Terry Riley, Jenny Brereton, Laura Watson, Jeremy Brock, Matthew Trueman, Emma Maddison, Sarah Bage)

Customer Involvement Manager – Jeremy Brock

Jeremy is responsible for leading and managing the Customer Involvement Team, as well as supporting the Thirteen Customer Council.

Customer Involvement Co-ordinator – Matthew Trueman

Matthew supports the Scrutiny Panel, Complaints Panel and Customer Service Investigator projects.

Customer Involvement Officers

Customer Involvement Officers support neighbourhood-level engagement activity in the following areas:

- Middlesbrough - Emma Maddison
- Hartlepool - Jane Slater
- Stockton - Jenny Brereton
- Stockton - Katrina Johns (part-time)
- Middlesbrough - Laura Watson (part-time)

- Community Fund - Sarah Bage (part-time)
- Middlesbrough - Suzanne Moseley (part-time)

Customer Involvement Assistant - Terry Riley

Terry provides administrative support to the team.

You can get in touch with any member of the team using the contact details on the back page.

Virtual Panels

If you're unable to attend meetings you can still have your say about your landlord from the comfort of your own home.

If you send us your email address we will use it to add to a Virtual Panel. From time-to-time we'll send you surveys or questions so you can help give us feedback about our services.

For more details about the Virtual Panels, please contact the Customer Involvement Team.

Neighbourhood Panels

Neighbourhood Panel meetings give you the chance to meet with your landlord and other customers to discuss local issues.

The next Neighbourhood Panel meetings have been arranged for:

- Stockton North and South - Tuesday 20 September, 1pm - 3pm
- Hartlepool - Thursday 22 September, 1pm - 3pm
- Middlesbrough West - Tuesday 20 September, 1pm - 3pm
- Middlesbrough East - Thursday 15 September, 10am - 12pm

For more details about the meeting venues and to confirm your attendance and transport requirements, please contact the team using the details below.



Setting up a Tenants and Residents Association

We have produced a guide to help you to set up and run a Tenants and Residents Association (TARA).

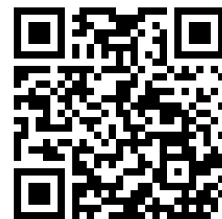
The information is only for guidance – you can choose how you want to run your association – but we may be able to provide support and advice to help you set up and run your own TARA in your area.

What is a TARA?

Usually TARAs are community groups made up of local volunteers to promote and protect the interests of tenants and residents in their area.

Any group of people living in the same area can set up a TARA. The new guide provides help and advice including details about links to local organisation including social housing landlords and the local council who could help solve problems in your area, get funding to improve local facilities and housing, and foster a sense of community.

You can access the guide in the 'Get Involved' section of your landlord's website (scan the QR code or visit: <https://goo.gl/7VY4zp>).



Contact the team

If you're interested in anything mentioned in this newsletter, or if you have any questions or comments, please get in touch with the Customer Involvement Team at:

- Tel: 0300 111 1000 and ask for Customer Involvement
- Email: customer.involvement@thirteengroup.co.uk
- Web: www.thirteengroup.co.uk

